

# FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

14 51

Marion

N,  
AA

MRN.253

**Town/City:** MARION

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village -  
Main Street (MRN.AA)

## Photograph



**Address:** 55 Main Street

**Historic Name:** William and Jane Taylor House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1834

**Source:** Title research, vital records

**Style/Form:** Greek Revival

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Granite

Wall/Trim: Stucco/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Garage/apartment (early-20<sup>th</sup> c., see Photo 2)

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*)\*:

West ell, stucco siding, new windows (dates unknown)

\*Based on Property Card and/or observation

**Condition:** Good

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** 0.36 acres

**Setting:** The surrounding area includes historic houses sited relatively close to the street and to each other along Main Street. This house is also set close to the street. The front yard is enclosed by a low privet hedge. A curved cement walkway leads to the front porch and entrance. The front yard is landscaped with lawn and foundation plantings. A gravel driveway leads along the east side of the house to a detached garage behind the house.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant

**Organization:** Sippican Historical Society

**Date** (*month / year*): February 2023

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

55 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

N, AA	MRN.253
-------	---------

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

*Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

This 2½-story, gable-front house, built in ca. 1834, is an example of the Greek Revival style. The Greek Revival style, popular from ca. 1825 to 1860, was inspired by then new Greek archeological discoveries, and employed temple forms and details for domestic American architecture. One of the primary character-defining features of the style found here is the projecting, molded box roof cornice with partial returns across the gable front – evoking the Greek temple form. There may also have been corner pilasters (flat columns), and broad frieze boards below the roof cornice, that have been removed when the elevations were clad, unusually, in stucco. The house would have originally been clad in wood clapboard and/or shingles.

The house rests, like most 19<sup>th</sup> century houses in Marion Village, on a granite block foundation. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (wood shingles originally). Fenestration consists primarily of modern, replacement 6/1 double-hung sash set in molded surrounds. The shallow ell on the right (east) side has an unusual detail – the ell is recessed on the first story, creating a hexagonal bay, and the squared-off second story above is trimmed with decorative vergeboards.

In addition to the gable-front main block and shallow east ell, there is a longer ell stepped back on the west side elevation. A comparison of the current Assessor sketch (Figure 1) with the building footprint on the 1908 and 1933 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (Figure 2, 3), appears to show that an open deck originally spanned the entire front elevation and part of the left (west) elevation. The west ell had not yet been built. The current porch is supported by grouped Tuscan columns that rest on broad bases, and the porch roof has a pediment aligned with the front door.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

While there had been some economic activity and residential development in Sippican Village prior to the Revolution, residential development accelerated in the early-1800s, as happened in many coastal Massachusetts towns, with boat building, whaling, coastal schooner trade, and the salt industry driving the economy. The construction of the First Congregational Meeting House in 1799, now Marion General Store (140 Front Street, MRN.22), also helped make Sippican Village the center for spiritual and civic life.<sup>1</sup> Residential (and limited commercial) development was initially concentrated along the Front Street/Main Street axis, and the harbor became the site for maritime-related utilitarian buildings and wharfs. By the time the 1855 Walling Map was prepared, additional streets had been laid out, but Main Street from the harbor west to Pleasant Street was the most densely developed street in the village, including this house (Figure 4).

This house was built on land that Hiram Look sold to William Taylor in 1834.<sup>2</sup> Capt. Hiram Look lived next door at 51 Main Street (MRN.251). This land was described as being “on the north side of the road leading from the village to the Universalist Meeting House” (80 Pleasant Street, MRN.49). William Taylor (1807-1883) was born in Pelham, MA. He married Marion-born Jane D. Hammond (1808-1880) in 1832. Perhaps this house was built shortly after they bought this land in 1834. They appeared to be living here in the 1840 and 1850 US Census. He was consistently listed as a stone mason<sup>3</sup>.

The house is shown with the name “S. W. Hadley” on the 1855 Walling Map of Marion (Figure 5). By that time, the Taylors had moved to Northampton, MA. They rented this house to Stephen W. Hadley, and then sold it to him in 1856.<sup>4</sup> Stephen Hadley (ca.

<sup>1</sup> Marion was first settled in 1679 as Sippican, a district of Rochester, and was not incorporated as a separate town until 1852. The name Sippican Village continues to be used interchangeably with Marion Village.

<sup>2</sup> Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 182, Page 163

<sup>3</sup> The Taylors moved back to Marion late in life and built the cottage at 13 South Street (MRN.282) in ca. 1875-1879.

<sup>4</sup> PCRD, Book 274/ Page 90.



**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

MARION

55 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

N, AA	MRN.253
-------	---------



Photo 2. View from Main Street, looking northwest (garage at right).

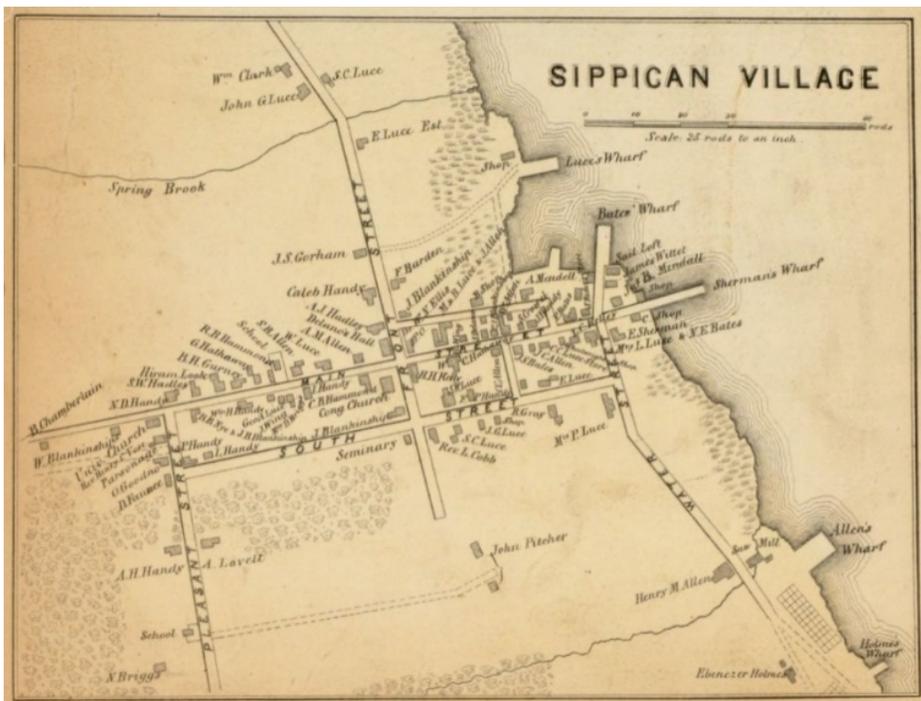


Figure 4. 1855 Walling Map of Marion, Sippican Village Inset Map.



Figure 5. Detail of 1855 Inset Map (arrow added).

**National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form**

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible       Eligible **only** in a historic district
- Contributing to a potential historic district       Potential historic district

Criteria:     **A**     **B**     **C**     **D**

Criteria Considerations:     **A**     **B**     **C**     **D**     **E**     **F**     **G**

Statement of Significance by Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant for Sippican Historical Society  
*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

This property is a contributing resource in the combined Areas of Wharf Village-Sippican Village (MRN.N) and Water Street (MRN.L), hereinafter referred to as Marion Village.\*

Marion Village is recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Maritime History. Marion Village contains the great majority of buildings connected to Marion’s historical maritime development beginning in the late-18<sup>th</sup> century. With the rise of saltmaking, shipyards, and whaling, maritime activity increased dramatically into the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, as did residential development in Marion Village. In addition to the houses built by those in the maritime industry, Marion Village contains numerous buildings and structures associated with maritime industrial activity, including a chandlery, sail loft, cooperage, and wharves. As Marion Village’s prosperity became linked to Sippican Harbor, Marion Village also became the commercial, political and institutional center of the town.

Marion Village is also recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/ Recreation. Starting in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, maritime activity declined significantly. The decline in maritime activity was eventually replaced by the rise in the 1870s of a summer colony as Marion Village emerged as an elite summer resort. This was facilitated by the arrival of train service in the 1854. Summer visitors, including artists and writers, were drawn Sippican Harbor’s beauty and tranquility. A large hotel, the Sippican Hotel, was located at the corner of South and Water Streets, and a few houses were converted to inns. While the hotel was town down in 1929, a large livery complex built by the Hiller Brothers at 147 Front Street (MRN.216) is extant. They provided horse-drawn vehicles to summer visitors registered at the Sippican Hotel, and ferried guests back and forth between the hotel and the train depot. In Marion Village, ownership (or occupancy through rental) of many houses began to shift from local maritime families to seasonal residents, including nationally-noteworthy politicians, businessmen, artists and writers. During this period, Marion Village also saw the addition of high style, architect-designed summer cottages and recreation resources.

Marion Village is recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Marion Village is a remarkably intact historic town center, including a compact collection of historic dwellings, along with a few churches, schools, commercial buildings and recreation buildings. Marion Village contains a great concentration of Federal and Greek Revival houses; and examples of later Victorian-era styles, including high-style examples of summer house architecture along Sippican Harbor and large institutional buildings not found elsewhere in Marion.

The great majority of resources in Marion Village retain substantial integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association.

\*The potential Marion Village district boundaries include surveyed areas within the boundary of MRN.N completed in 2020-2022 for Barden-Hiller (MRN.Y), Cottage Street (MRN.Z), Main Street (MRN.AA), South Street (MRN.AB), Upper Pleasant Street (MRN.AC), and Upper Main Street (MRN.AH).

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

MARION

55 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

N, AA	MRN.253
-------	---------

---