

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

15 74

Marion

N,  
AA

MRN.260

**Town/City:** MARION

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 76 Main Street

**Historic Name:** Nathan and Betsey Savery House

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

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

**Date of Construction:** [1842-1855]

**Source:** Title research, 1855 Walling Map

**Style/Form:** Greek Revival/ Full Cape

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown/Nathan Savery, possibly

### Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

### Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

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

Large renovation (2013)

\*Based on Property Card and/or observation

**Condition:** Good

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

**Acreage:** 0.30 acres

**Setting:** The surrounding area includes mostly 19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century houses sited relatively close to the street and to each other along Main Street, although less densely developed than lower Main Street. The immediate surroundings also include the former Tabor Academy across the street. This house is set close to the street on a rise. The raised front yard is secured by a fieldstone and granite retaining wall along the street. The front yard is landscaped with lawn and foundation plantings. Granite steps lead to the front entrance. This parcel backs up to Briggs Lane where there is a bluestone driveway leading to an attached garage.

## Locus Map



Aerial Imagery, 2021

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

**Organization:** Sippican Historical Society

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

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

76 MAIN STREET

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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 is a good example of a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Greek Revival-style Full Cape. 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. Unlike some Full Capes on Main Street which appear to have begun as Half Capes (three bays wide with off-center entrance) that were later asymmetrically expanded into Full Capes (five bays wide with center entrance), the front elevation of this house has an overall symmetry which suggests it was originally built as a Full Cape.

The house rests, like most 19<sup>th</sup> century houses in Marion Village, on a raised, rough-cut granite foundation. The elevations are clad in wood shingles. The corners of the main block are ornamented with pilasters (flat columns) – a Greek Revival feature. The roof has a projecting molded box cornice with partial returns across the gable ends, and broad frieze boards on the front elevation – also Greek Revival features. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (wood shingles originally), and a substantial brick chimney rises from the center of the main roof ridge in alignment with the front door.

The front entrance has a paneled door set in a surround with sidelights (that appear to have been partially infilled), and broad pilasters. This house has a fairly low stud wall. As a result, the door surround does not have a broad lintel above. Instead the pilasters directly abut the roof frieze boards. Fenestration includes replacement 2/1 windows set in frames with flared lintels that also abut the roof cornice frieze boards. The original windows likely would have been wood, 6/6 double-hung sash (the typical muntin pattern for Greek Revival-style houses). A new sliding glass door has been added to the east side elevation.

In addition to the 1½-story, side-gable main block, there is complex series of rear ells/additions (Photo 3). Other than a few additions, the rear ells have the same footprint now as that shown on the 1933 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figures 1, 2).

## 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.*

The dense development pattern along Main Street, starting in the early-19<sup>th</sup> century with increasing maritime-related prosperity, extended only as far west as Pleasant Street. Although Upper Main Street (as it is locally called), was set out in 1829, residential development was limited to a few houses on large parcels. The building of the Public Library in 1872 and Tabor Academy in 1876 along Spring Street may have inspired increased residential development in the surrounding area. By the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, owners of the larger tracts of land on upper Main Street began to build additional houses on their land and/or sell off portions to others.

The south side of Main Street, across from the former Tabor Academy campus, was a single parcel up to the early-20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1842, Paddock Bates sold that parcel, without buildings, to Nathan Savery.<sup>1</sup> Nathan Savery (1774-1858) married Betsey Gammons (1772-1845) in Middleborough in 1796. They would go on to have seven children. Nathan Savery was a carpenter, so it is possible this house was built by him. It is unclear exactly when after 1842, Savery built the house. What is clear is that by the 1855 State Census, he was living here at the age of 82 with his daughter Patience (1803-1885), her husband Benjamin Chamberlain (1803-1874), a blacksmith, and their three children. This house was inherited by Patience and Benjamin Chamberlain, and they were living in Carver in 1866 when they sold it to William Handy.<sup>2</sup> The house is shown in an isolated setting on the 1879 Plymouth County Atlas with the name “W. Handy” (Figure 3).

<sup>1</sup> Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 206/ Page 217.

<sup>2</sup> PCRD, Book 339/ Page 217.

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William Handy (1831-1904) was listed as a mariner and sea captain in Census records and, by 1900, was retired. He was living here with his second wife, Ellen (Downing), whom he married in 1890, and two of their children. Ellen Handy (1853-1902) was 22 years younger than William Handy, and it was her second marriage as well. It was William Handy who built the other two houses to the east as rental properties – 70 Main Street (ca. 1885, MRN.258) and 72 Main Street (ca. 1900, MRN.259). The three houses are shown on the 1903 Plymouth County Atlas (Figure 4). In ca. 1904, Handy built a fourth house, what is now 90 Main Street (MRN.262).

This house remained in the Handy family after William and Ellen Handy's deaths. In 1918, three of William Handy's children – Leon C. Handy of Boston, Josephine Glidden of Falmouth, and Harry Handy of Scituate – sold just this house to Tabor Academy.<sup>3</sup> Tabor likely bought the house for faculty housing. This parcel originally included additional land to the west, which was subdivided and sold off in 1960 (now 82 Main Street). Tabor Academy owned this house until 1978.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Maps and Atlases:

1855, Walling, H. F. *Map of the Town of Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*, 1855.

1879, *Atlas of Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. Boston: Geo. H Walker & Co, 1879.

1903, *Atlas of Surveys of Plymouth County*. Springfield, MA: L. J. Richards Co., 1903.

1933, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1933.

Ancestry.com – Vital records.

Dempsey, Claire. MHC Area Form AA, Main Street, 2021.

Gordon, Edward. MHC Area Form N, Wharf Village, 1998.

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Sippican Historical Society Collections.



Photo 2. View from Main Street, looking southwest.

<sup>3</sup> PCRD, Book 1315/ Page 272.



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Main Street, other two Handy houses to the east).

## 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.

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\*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).