

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 73	Marion	N, AH	MRN.262
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Town/City: MARION

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Marion Village –
Upper Main Street (MRN.AH)

Address: 90 Main Street

Historic Name: William Handy House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1904

Source: 1903 Atlas, Title research

Style/Form: Queen Anne

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Rough cut granite/stone

Wall/Trim: Synthetic clapboard/ wood (clad)

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Garage (likely 21st c., see Photo 3)

Major Alterations (*with dates*)*:

Synthetic siding, new windows, door (date unknown)

*Based on Property Card and/or observation

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.13 acres

Setting: The surrounding area includes mostly 19th and early-20th 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 property across the street. This house is also set relatively close to the street. The front yard is minimally landscaped with lawn. This parcel backs up to Briggs Lane where there is a modern garage.

Photograph



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

90 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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 one of the larger houses built along upper Main Street in the early-20th century. The form consists of a 2½-story, gable-front block. The house can be characterized as a modest example of the Queen Anne style. The Queen Anne style, popular from ca. 1880-1910, employed different roof shapes and surface materials to enliven a building's elevations and create a more "picturesque" effect than earlier, more formal styles. In this case, the front elevation is animated by a two-story hexagonal bay. The right (west) elevation has a one-story bay.

The house rests, like most historic houses in the village, on a rough-cut granite/stone foundation. The elevations are clad in synthetic clapboard siding. Some or all of the original siding may lie beneath, and may show varied materials and patterns typical of the Queen Anne style. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (likely wood shingles originally). The roof has a projecting molded box cornice with partial returns across the gable ends. The windows consist of modern, replacement 6/1 double-hung sash. The front entrance appears to be a replacement that is more simply framed than the original might have been.

The small rear ell may be a replacement. A larger ell is shown on the 1933 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. The 1933 map also shows that there was a one-story porch across the front elevation that has since been removed (Figures 1, 2). The garage shown on that map appears to have been replaced by the current garage which rests on a concrete foundation.

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-19th 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-19th 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 1903 Plymouth County Atlas illustrates the pattern of development on upper Main Street (Figure 3). At that time, what is now 90 Main Street was part of the large parcel across from Tabor Academy with the name "Wm. Handy." This refers to William Handy (1831-1904). The first house, 76 Main Street (MRN.260), was built in ca. 1842-1855, and sold to William Handy in 1866. That remained the only house as of the 1879 Plymouth County Atlas (Figure 3). On the 1903 Atlas, there are two more Handy houses clustered together with 76 Main Street at the east end of the parcel with the Handy name, 70 Main Street (ca. 1885, MRN.258) and 72 Main Street (ca. 1900, MRN.259) (Figure 4).

William Handy (1831-1904) was listed as a mariner and sea captain in census records and, by 1900, was retired. He was living at 76 Main Street 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.

This house is not shown on the 1903 Atlas, but the following year, William Handy sold this property, with reference to buildings, to Abby S. and Hiram Nye of Marion.¹ That would mean that Handy built this house in 1903 or 1904. Hiram Nye (1842-1920) was

¹ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 878/ Page 564.

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listed as a sea captain (1900 US Census) and boatman (1910 US Census). He was living here on Main Street with his second wife, Abby (Delano) (1851-1920) whom he had married in 1899, after his first wife Lucy's death in 1897.

Shortly after his wife Abby's death in 1920, and shortly before his own death, Hiram Nye sold this house to John W. and Charlotte Richards of Marion.² At that time, the Richards were renting a house on Main Street, and he was working as a superintendent of water works, and would later become Commissioner of Public Works, Superintendent of the Highway Department, and Cemetery Commissioner. Dedham-born John Wesley Richards (1874-1949) married Charlotte Barden (1879-1944) in Marion in 1899. This would be the first house they owned. Following their deaths, members of the Richards family sold this house in 1955 to Donald and Helen Dickerson.³ Donald Dickerson (d. 2017) was a decorated WWII veteran. They moved to Marion in 1954 and he worked as a Marion police officer and then for the US Post Office in Marion for 26 years.

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.

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

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Sippican Historical Society Collections.

Smileged, Lynn. MHC Area Form AH, Upper Main Street, 2022.



Photo 2. View from Main Street, looking south.

² PCRD, Book 1355/ Page 530.

³ PCRD, Book 2424, Page 341.

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Photo 3. View of rear elevation and outbuilding, looking north.

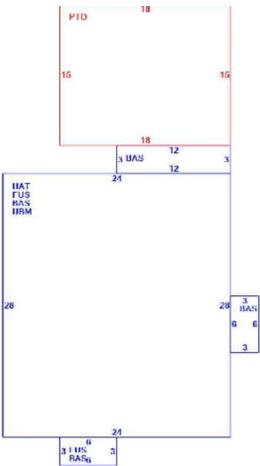


Figure 1. Marion Assessor Sketch.

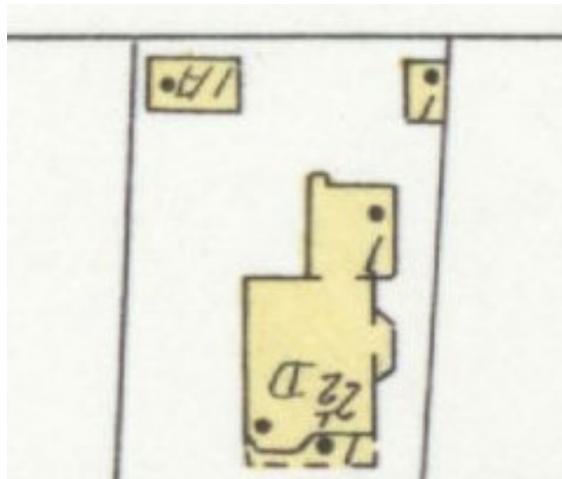


Figure 2. Detail of 1933 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.



Figure 3. Detail of 1879 Plymouth County Atlas (arrow added to location of future 72 Main Street).

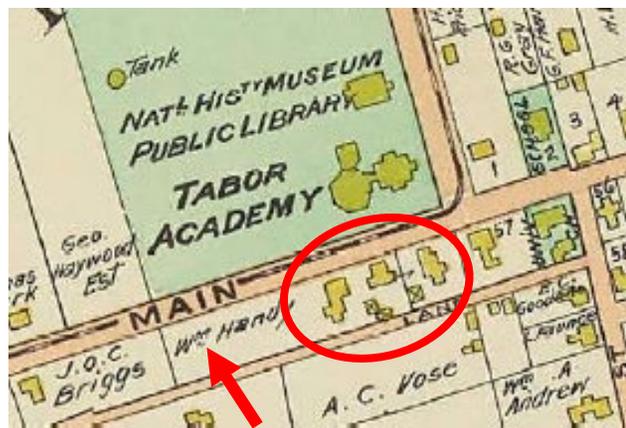


Figure 4. Detail of 1903 Plymouth County Atlas (arrow added to site of 90 Main Street, three existing Handy houses circled).

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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-18th century. With the rise of saltmaking, shipyards, and whaling, maritime activity increased dramatically into the mid-19th 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-19th 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).