

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

16-156

Marion

N,
AB

MRN.278

Town/City: MARION

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village -
South Street (MRN.AB)

Photograph



Address: 7 South Street

Historic Name: Lemuel C. Kelley House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: [1855-1861]

Source: Historic maps, vital records, *Sippican Sentinel*

Style/Form: Greek Revival, Italianate influence

Architect/Builder: Unknown/Lemuel and George Kelley
(possibly)

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite, brick

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Addition (2006)

*Based on Property Card and/or observation

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acres: 0.21 acres

Setting: This house is located at the eastern end of South Street. The surrounding area is densely-built with 19th and early-20th century houses, most set fairly close to the street on small parcels, and houses set back on larger parcels along Water Street. The front yard of this house is secured by low granite curbstones, and is landscaped with lawn, mature trees and foundation plantings. There is a small gravel parking area east of the house.

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

7 SOUTH STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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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.

The form of this house consists of a 2½-story, side-gable main block that is five bays wide and three bays deep, with a stepped-back two-story ell with flat roof on the east side, and a rear two-story ell (Photo 4). This house is similar in form to the ca. 1813 Luce-Bates House at 2 Main Street (MRN.220). However, while the Luce-Bates house is an example of the Federal style, this house, built almost 50 years later, is an example of the Greek Revival style, while also hinting at the Italianate style that emerged in the mid-19th century. 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.

The main block of the house rests, like most 19th century houses in the village, on a raised granite block foundation, and the east ell rests on a brick foundation, an indication that the ell was a later addition. In fact, the 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows that this ell began as a one-story porch (Figure 2, Photo 3). The first story is still a screen porch, but an enclosed second story was later added. The rear ell is not present as of 1908, but was in place on the 1921 Sanborn map. The Property Card for the house lists a 2006 addition – that may have been when the porch was expanded to a two-story ell.

The elevations are clad in wood clapboards with prominent corner pilasters (flat columns) that have recessed panels and round medallions on the capitals. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (wood shingles originally), with solar panels, and has a deeply-projecting, molded box cornice with partial returns across the gable ends, and broad, two-part frieze boards below. The corner pilasters and roof cornice are character-defining features of the Greek Revival style. The hint at the Italianate style is the use of S-shaped brackets across the entablature. Paired (not single) brackets became one of the character-defining features of the Italianate style. The Italianate style, popular from ca. 1840-1885, was a reaction against the formalism of earlier styles, and was intended to create a more “picturesque” effect reminiscent of Italian villas and farmhouses. This unusual use of single brackets was also employed at the ca. 1849 John and Nancy Luce House at 20 South Street (MRN.284).

As is typical of this house form, the front elevation of the main block is symmetrically arrayed with a center entrance. The entrance is also characteristic of the Greek Revival style and consists of a four-panel wood door set in a surround with partial sidelights, pilasters similar to those at the building’s corners, and a broad lintel above, again the single brackets. Fenestration consists primarily of modern, replacement 6/6 windows set in surrounds with projecting molded lintels. The 6/6 muntin pattern was common for Greek Revival-style houses.

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, maritime-related development accelerated into the early-1800s, as happened in so 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.¹ Residential development was initially concentrated along Main Street, and the harbor became the site for maritime-related utilitarian buildings and wharfs. On an 1830 state road map of Rochester, only Front, Main and Pleasant Streets were in place. Based on deed research, South Street was not laid out until ca. 1836. By the time the 1855 Walling Map was prepared, Main Street from the harbor west to Pleasant Street was the most densely developed street in the village, but there was also substantial residential development along this eastern block of South Street, although this house had not yet been built (Figure 3).

¹ 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.

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According to a 1999 article in *The Sippican Sentinel*, this house was built in 1866 for Lemuel Kelley. The article further states that Kelley had hoped to marry Jane D. Luce, but she married a Cobb and lived across the street, so Kelley never lived here. This story does not appear to be entirely accurate. Lemuel Kelley died in 1861, so if he did build it, it would have been earlier than 1866.

This parcel was sold to Lemuel Kelley in 1843 by Rowland and Polly Luce.² Capt. Rowland Luce (Jr.) was the son of Maj. Rowland and Elizabeth Clark. Tisbury-born Maj. Rowland Luce (1756-1835) married Elizabeth Clark (1762-1833) in Marion in 1778, and they went on to have ten children. In 1779, Elizabeth's mother, Thankful Clark (1734-1812), sold Rowland Luce over 35 acres of land for 2,000 pounds, including 5 acres in Marion Village.³ Rowland and Elizabeth Luce and their descendants would go on to have a great impact on the development of the village.

Lemuel C. Kelley (1814-1861) was a ship carpenter who never married. If the *Sippican Sentinel* article has any credence, perhaps it might explain why a bachelor would have built such an imposing house. Indeed, Jane D. Luce married Harvey Cobb in 1844 in Plymouth, and they built the house across the street, 12 South Street (MRN.8), around the same time (ca. 1855-1860). Perhaps Kelley was hoping to woo Jane Luce away from Harvey Cobb with this imposing house.

After Kelley's death in 1861, this house was inherited by Lemuel Kelley's brother, George H. Kelley (1820-1895), a house painter. He sold the house in 1868 to S. Wyllis Pomeroy of Pomeroy, OH.⁴ The South Street Area Form (MRN.AB) provides a good summary of the Pomeroy family:

Samuel Wyllis Pomeroy, Jr. (1802-1882) was a partner in the firm of Pomeroy Sons & Co. founded by his father and based in the eponymous town in Ohio, where he resided. This town was founded by Samuel W Pomeroy, Sr., a native of Boston, in 1804 through a purchase of large acreage from Elbridge Gerry, vice president under James Madison, one of the original proprietors in the Ohio Company. Pomeroy, Sons & Co.'s partners included sons Samuel W Pomeroy, Jr. and C. R. Pomeroy and sons-in-law V. B. Horton and C. W. Dabney, who operated successful coal mining and shipping operations to the east coast via the Mississippi River and the port of New Orleans.

In 1877, S. Wyllis Pomeroy conveyed this property to his daughter, Clara Alsop Pomeroy, "in consideration of love and affection and one dollar."⁵ The Pomeroy family were still living in Ohio, so this house was clearly intended for seasonal use, an early example in Marion Village. The Bay View House (later Sippican Hotel) was in place by that time across the street. In 1906, Clara Pomeroy was living in Brookline, MA when she sold this property for \$2,000 to her brother, George B. Pomeroy of NY, NY.⁶

George B. Pomeroy (1838-1930) was a Harvard Medical School-educated physician who appears to have lived in New York City all his adult life. He never married, and up until the 1880 Census, when he was 40 years old, he was still living with his parents. In 1916, he sold this house for a nominal sum to Mary D. Sargent of Marion.⁷ It is unknown if there was a personal connection between the two. She owned this house until her death in ca. 1937 and was living in Marion when she died, but nothing has been discovered about her life. In 1937, her estate sold this house to long-time Marion resident, Helen Billings Tucker. Tucker owned this house until 1972. Subsequent owners were listed living elsewhere in deeds, suggesting the house has most frequently been used as a summer house.

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.

1908, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1908.

1921, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1921.

² Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 210/ Page 68.

³ PCRD, Book 60/ Page 80.

⁴ PCRD, Book 348/ Page 105.

⁵ PCRD Book 433/ Page 190.

⁶ PCRD Book 957/ Page 373.

⁷ PCRD, Book 1240/ Page 123.

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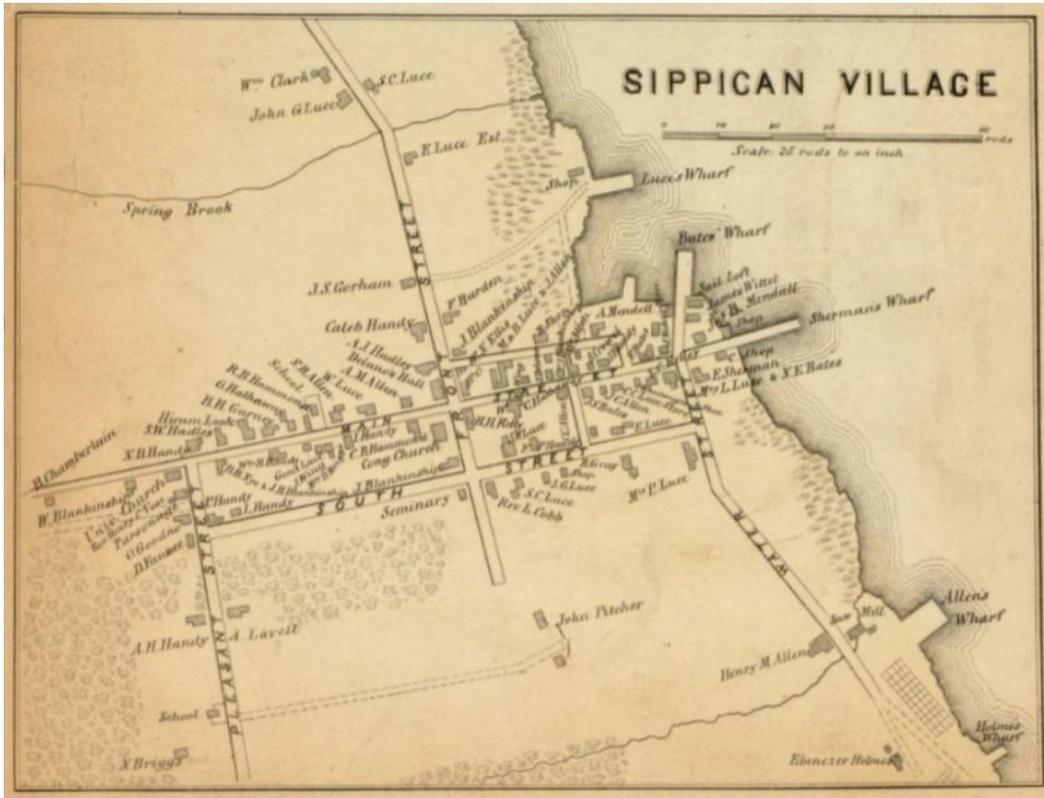


Figure 3. 1855 Walling Map of Marion, Sippican Village Inset Map.

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).