

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

16-152

Marion

N,
AB

MRN.404

Town/City: MARION

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

Photograph



Address: 21 South Street

Historic Name: Frederick P. and Sylvia Handy House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: [1849-1855]

Source: Deed research, 1855 Walling Map

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown/ Frederick Handy
(possibly)

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite, concrete

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard. Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Wood shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Garage/cottage (2009, Cover photo, at left)

Major Alterations (*with dates*)*:

Rear additions (poss. 2009)

*Based on Property Card and/or observation

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.20 acres

Setting: This house is located on the north side 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. A picket fence borders the sidewalk. The front yard is landscaped with a lawn and foundation plantings. A gravel driveway leads along the west side of the parcel to a detached garage/cottage.

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

21 SOUTH STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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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 house, built in ca. 1849-1855, can be classified as a modest example of the Greek Revival style. The 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 original core of this house appears to have consisted of the 1½-story, gable-front main block with a small one-story rear ell. That is the footprint shown on the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figure 2).

The house, like most 19th century houses in Marion Village, rests on a raised, rough-cut granite foundation (although the east porch and ell are on a concrete foundation). The front elevations are clad ("dressed up") in wood clapboards, and the remaining elevations are clad in wood shingles, with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in wood shingles, and the main block has a projecting molded box cornice with partial returns across the front gable (intended to evoke Greek temple fronts which inspired the style).

The front elevation has what appear to be carefully preserved original or early wood, 6/9 and 6/6 double-hung sash, with exterior wood storm panels that have the same muntin pattern. Remaining windows are mostly modern, replacement 6/6 windows. The main entrance is located in a small, one-story side ell which may be early or original. As can be seen comparing the current Assessor sketch with the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figures 1, 2), there have been a series of additions, including the enclosed porch, dormers, and the rear additions (Photo 2). The original front porch shown in Figure 2 has been removed.

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 the eastern block of South Street, including this house (Figure 3).

This house was built on land that David Haskell sold in 1849 to Frederick P. Handy, both of Marion.² This house is shown on the 1855 map with the name "F. P. Handy" (Figure 4). Frederick P. Handy (1812-1887) was a carpenter, so perhaps he built the house himself sometime between 1849 and 1855. He had married Sylvia Berry (1817-1874) in Marion in 1837. No deed has been located wherein they sold this house. The chain of title is picked up again in 1863, when Russell and Sarah B. Gray of Marion owned this house, but how or why they came to own it is unclear. The Grays were living across the street in the house they built in ca. 1843-1855, 10 South Street (MRN.7), and Russell Gray was one of the investors in the Bay View House (later Sippican Hotel) at the end of the street.

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.

² Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 234/ Page 184.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

21 SOUTH STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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Photo 2. View from South Street, looking northwest.

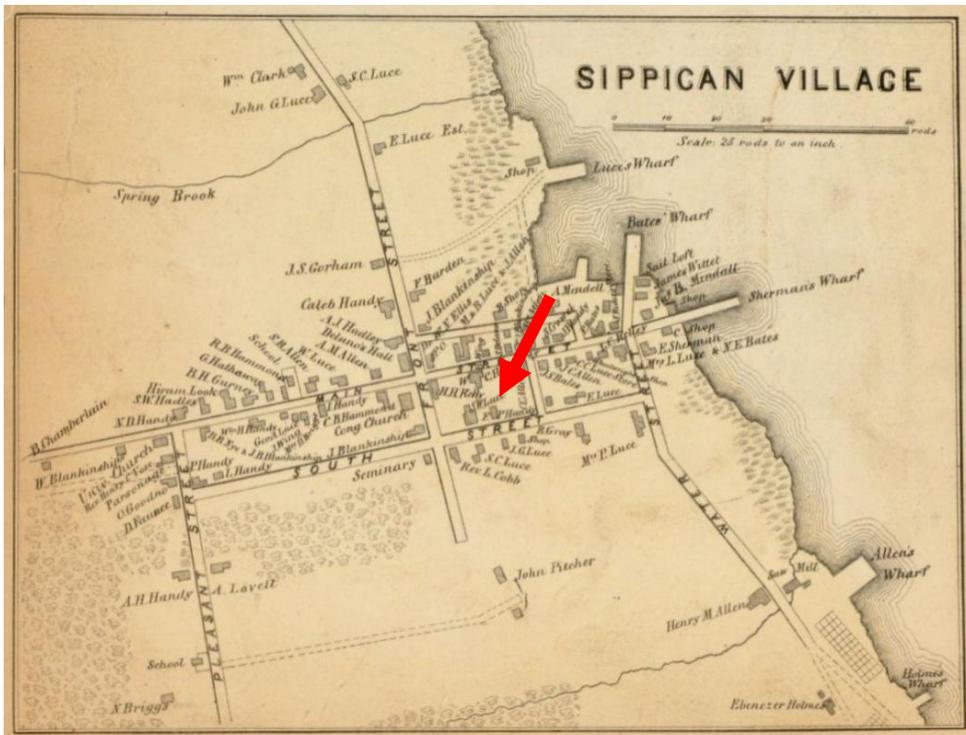


Figure 3. 1855 Walling Map of Marion, Sippican Village Inset Map (arrow added).



Figure 4. Detail of Sanborn 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).