

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

16-145

Marion

N,
AB

MRN.285

Town/City: MARION

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

Photograph



Address: 24 South Street

Historic Name: Polly and Rowland Luce, Jr. House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: [1836-1844]

Source: Deed research

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard, wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*)*:

Rear additions (1937)

*Based on Property Card and/or observation

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.42 acres

Setting: This house is located on the south side of South Street, near the intersection with Front Street. The surrounding area is densely-built with 19th and early-20th century houses, most set fairly close to the street on small parcels. There are three churches nearby on Front Street. This house is set on a slight rise. The front yard is landscaped with lawn and tiered planting beds. An asphalt driveway leads along the west side 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

24 SOUTH 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 house, built in ca. 1836-1844, and its neighbor at 28 South Street (MRN.287) built in 1841, are two of the larger and higher style examples of the Greek Revival style on South Street. The Greek Revival style, popular from ca. 1825 to 1860, was inspired by new Greek archeological discoveries, and employed temple forms and details for domestic American architecture. The house's form consists of a 2 ½-story, gable-front main block, a shallow bay on the left (east) side elevation, a two-story rear ell, and a one-story, gable-roofed addition on the east side of the rear ell.

This house, like most 19th century houses in Marion Village, rests on a raised, rough-cut granite foundation. The front elevation is clad ("dressed up") in wood clapboard, and the remaining elevations are clad in wood shingles. The main block has broad corner pilasters (flat columns). The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (wood shingles originally), and a broad brick chimney rises from the main roof. The roof has a projecting, molded box cornice with partial returns across the front gable, and two-part frieze boards along the side elevations (intended to evoke Greek temple details which inspired the style). The rear ell appears to have similar roof cornices.

Fenestration consists primarily of modern, replacement 6/6 windows - 6/6 was almost certainly the original muntin pattern. The windows on the front elevation, and most of the side elevations of the main block, have some of the more ornate window surrounds in the Village with three decorative blocks along the lintels. Two windows on the right side elevation have simple surrounds, likely because this was the location of a small bay that was later removed (compare Photos 2, 3). The side-hall front entry consists of a wood panel door set in a surround with panels where sidelights might originally have been, and pilasters all surmounted by a broad molded lintel. The front door surround, corner pilasters, and roof cornice are all character-defining features of the Greek Revival style.

Sometime after the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map was prepared (Figure 1), an elaborate entrance porch and a one-story bay on the right (west) elevation were added (see Figure 2 and Photo 3). The entrance porch and bay were subsequently removed, possibly in an effort to return to the original Greek Revival style. Narrow paired windows in the front gable peak shown in Photo 3 were also later replaced with a single 6/6 window.

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.¹ 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. 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 4).

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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The majority of houses in place along this block of South Street on the 1855 Walling Map are shown with members of the Luce family. Many of the Luces who built or owned houses in the 19th century in Marion can trace their lineage back to Tisbury-born Major Rowland Luce (1756-1835). He 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.² Rowland and Elizabeth Luce and their descendants would go on to have a great impact on the development of the village.

This house was built by Capt. Rowland Luce, Jr. of Marion, son of the aforementioned Major Rowland Luce. The deed wherein he acquired this land has not been identified. Capt. Luce (1791-1851) married Polly Hiller (d. 1860) in 1819. As noted above, South Street was not formally in place until ca. 1836, so the house would likely have been built sometime between 1836 and 1844, when they sold it to his brother, Stephen C. Luce.³ The house is shown with the name "S. C. Luce" on the 1855 Walling Map (Figure 4). Stephen C. Luce (1796-1874) married Eunice W. Delano (1803-1866) in 1826. Stephen Luce was a mariner, who rose to master mariner (sea captain), like his brother.

The house is shown on the 1879 Plymouth County Atlas with the name "G. L. Luce," referring to George L. Luce (1825-1893) (Figure 5). He was the nephew of Stephen C. Luce, who had no children with his wife, Eunice. Perhaps this house was inherited by George Luce. He married Sophia Delano (1830-1913) in 1852 (Sophia's possible kinship to Eunice (Delano) Luce unknown). Like his uncles, George Luce rose to become a master mariner, and was retired by 1880. He also acquired the former Congregational Parsonage next door in 1882 (28 South Street, MRN.287). Sophia Luce held onto this house after her husband's death. Following her death in 1913, this house was inherited by their four children, and three of them conveyed it to the fourth, George I. Luce (1862-1936).⁴ Like so many of the Luce men, he too was a mariner who rose to sea captain, and was retired by 1920.

The house remained in the Luce family until 1945, when Idella Luce, widow of George and Sophia's son, James Delano Luce, sold the house to Thayer and Agnes (Adams) Francis of Marion.⁵ Thayer Francis Sr. (d. 1958) founded Francis Associates in 1940, evolving, together with W. Van Alan Clark, into The Sippican Corporation. The Marion-based company manufactured and designed defense systems, primarily focused on systems and accessories for anti-ship missile defense, anti-submarine warfare training and specialized meteorological and oceanographic data gathering and processing.

In 1960, Agnes Francis sold the house to Arthur and Margaret Warner of Marion.⁶ In 1964, the Warners were living in Columbia, SC when they sold it to W. Graham and Mary E. Campbell of Marion.⁷ In 1971, the Campbells sold it to Charles C. and Sandra R. Parsons.⁸

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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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.

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Dempsey, Claire. MHC Area Form AB, South Street, 2021.

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

² Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 60/ Page 80.

³ PCR, Book 222/ Page 242.

⁴ PCR, Book 1227/ Page 55.

⁵ PCR, Book 1890/ Page 465.

⁶ PCR, Book 2774/ Page 266.

⁷ PCR, Book 3147/ Page 372.

⁸ PCR, Book 3695/ Page 189.

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Parsons, Sandria. "24 South Street." Email, 2023.

Pitchbook. "Sippican Overview." Accessed February 11, 2023. <https://pitchbook.com/profiles/company/13182-31#overview>.

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Sippican Historical Society Collections.

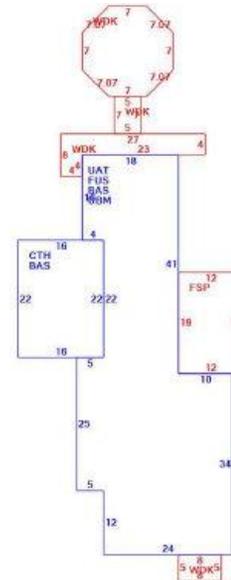
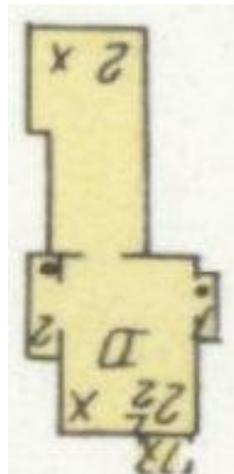
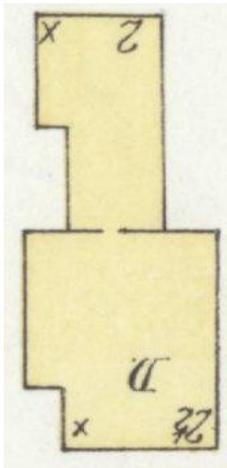


Figure 1. Detail of 1908 Sanborn Map.

Figure 2. Detail of 1933 Sanborn Map.

Figure 3. Marion Assessor Sketch (decks, porches in red).



Photo 2. View from South Street, looking southeast.



Photo 3. Post 1908 view of house, looking southeast. Front entrance porch, paired windows in gable peak, and west bay later removed (SHS 2004.019.174).

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

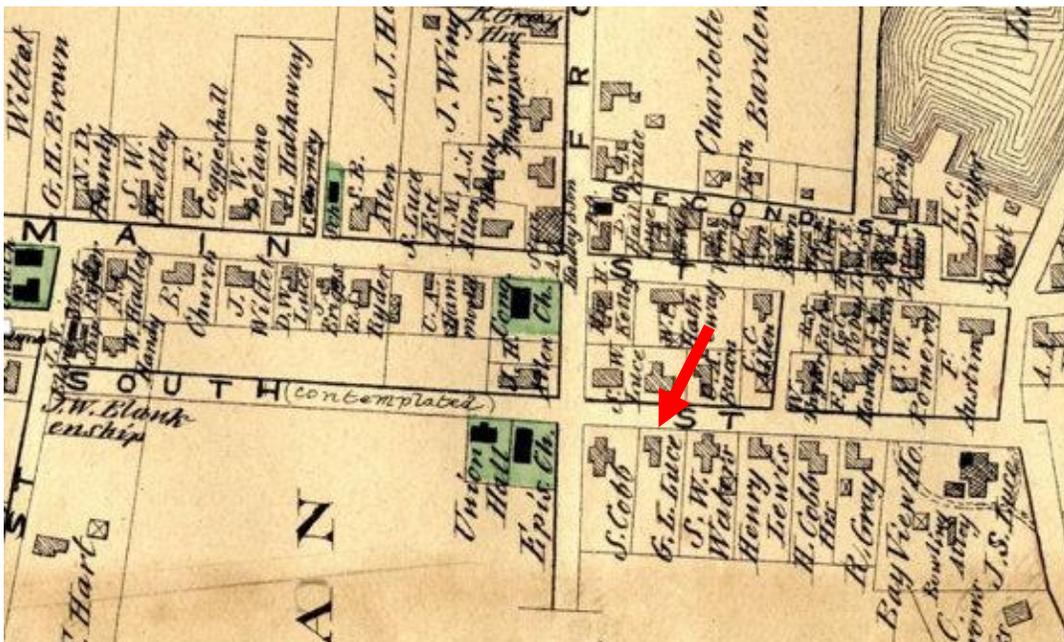


Figure 5. Detail of 1879 Plymouth County Atlas (arrow added).

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-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).