

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

16-151

Marion

N,  
AB

MRN.286

**Town/City:** MARION

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 25 South Street

**Historic Name:** Polly and Samuel W. Luce, Jr. House

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

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

**Date of Construction:** [1836-1855]

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

**Style/Form:** Greek Revival/ Full Cape (altered)

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Granite

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

None

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

Dormers (early-20<sup>th</sup> c.)

Rear addition/garage (late-20<sup>th</sup> c.)

New windows (2008)

**Condition:** Good

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

**Acreage:** 0.41 acres

**Setting:** This house faces South Street but the parcel stretches to Front Street. The surrounding area is densely-built with 19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century houses, most set fairly close to the street on small parcels, and three churches nearby on Front Street. A wood picket fence runs along both streets, and the yard is landscaped with lawn and foundation plantings. A cobblestone and gravel driveway leads along the east side of the house 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

25 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 ca. 1836-1855, began as a 1½-story Full Cape, perhaps with a one-story rear ell. It was built during the period when the Greek Revival style was in vogue. 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. However, there few details which clearly express that style on this house.

The main block is five bays wide with centered entrance typical of the Full Cape form. A comparison of the current Assessor sketch to the 1908 and 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (Figures 1, 2, 3), shows how the building has evolved over time. On the 1908 map, the main block is still 1½-stories with a one-story rear ell. On the 1921 map, the main block and rear ell are now both two stories, and there is a small ell extending from the east side of the rear ell. The cartographers likely determined in 1921 that the house was now two stories tall because the extensive dormers had been added. The smaller rear ell was later extended and now includes an attached two-story garage. There is a screen porch off the right (east) side of the house (also shown on the 1921 map).

The original block of the house, like most 19<sup>th</sup> century houses in Marion Village, rests on a raised, rough-cut granite foundation. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (wood shingles originally), and there is a box cornice across the front elevation. The centered main entrance has a surround with partial sidelights and pilasters surmounted by an unusual louvered lintel (the only details which could be considered Greek Revival). A shallow pergola frames the entrance.

Fenestration includes modern, replacement 12/12 windows on the first story, and 8/12 windows on the second story. The windows are set in frames with flared lintels. The original muntin pattern would most likely have been 6/6. Many windows have modern louvered shutters. The dormer on the front elevation has a centered small gable under which there is a window topped by a wood louvered fanlight and keystone, and the windows on the rear ell each have their own gabled dormer (Colonial Revival-style details).

## 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.<sup>1</sup> 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, including this house (Figure 4).

This house was built on land that Capt. Rowland and Polly Luce sold to their nephew, Samuel W. Luce, Jr. in 1836.<sup>2</sup> The parcel description is worth noting; it describes what was then the easterly portion of the lot that now stretches to Front Street:

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 195/ Page 90.

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...[B]eginning at a stake situate 70 feet East of a cross road leading South from the Congregational Meeting House in said Village [meaning Front Street], and running Easterly by a contemplated East and West road [meaning South Street] ninety five feet to a stake and stones, thence Northerly One hundred and ten feet to the corner bound between land of Paddock Bates, and Ansel Hardy, thence Westerly by the line of said Hardy and the line of Charles O. Luce Ninety five feet to a stake and stones, thence Southerly by land of Roland Luce One hundred and ten feet to the first mentioned bound....

Many of the Luces who built or owned houses in the 19<sup>th</sup> 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 that likely included this land.<sup>3</sup> Rowland and Elizabeth Luce and their descendants would go on to have a great impact on the development of the village.

Capt. Samuel W. Luce, Jr. (1807-1885) was a grandson of Maj. Rowland and Elizabeth Luce. He had married Polly Handy (1803-1858) in 1830, and then married Mary Allen (1825-1914) in 1860. How soon after the 1836 purchase of this land Luce build this house is unknown, but the house is shown on the 1855 Walling Map with the name "S. W. Luce" (Figure 5). The house, and a store fronting on Front Street, are again shown with his name on the 1879 Plymouth County Atlas (Figure 6). By that time, he was a retired sea captain living here with his second wife.

A pre-1930s view shows this commercial building (Photo 4). The Sippican Historical Society provides the following description for this photo in their digital archives:

Was Drug Store on corner of South and Front Sts. in Marion, Mass. The store was a butcher shop for Ben Waters' father who came from England in the 1800's. Later became a store for Dr. Ellis's brother. This is the present location of the Robert and Joanna Bennett house [this may not be accurate]. Was a store and post office at that location for many years. Later was the P. C. Blankinship grocery store. Moved to center of Marion in the 1930's and later became Browne's Drug Street [146 Front Street, MRN.200].

They had no children, and after Samuel W. Luce's death in 1885, this house passed to his wife, Mary D. (Allen) Luce. She is listed living here in the 1900 US Census with her three sisters. According to her will, she left this house to those sisters, and it then came into the ownership of Matthew J. Allen. His kinship to them is unclear. Matthew J. Allen (1856-1931) was born in Marion, but by 1900 was living in Kansas and working as a farmer, where he lived the rest of his life. He was the son of Charles and Phebe Allen who had 16 children (and owned at 18 South Street, MRN.283, from 1868 to 1874). In 1924, he sold property that included this house to his sister and brother-in-law, Capt. William H. and Henrietta M. Cobb of Marion.<sup>4</sup> At that time, the property stretched from South Street north to Main Street.

According to the 1998 Wharf Village Area Form, William Cobb (1845-1922) was the captain of a coastal schooner, and he was active in local affairs, serving in 1919 as a Selectman, Assessor and an Overseer of the Poor. He married Henrietta Allen (1847-1945) in Marion in 1898. The Cobbs also owned 12 South Street (MRN.8) from 1888 to 1924. In 1938, Henrietta registered the land here and recorded a two-lot subdivision, creating separate parcels on Main and South Streets. That same year, she sold the lot with this house to widow Amelia J. Angier of Newton.<sup>5</sup>

Scotland-born Amelia Gill (1870-1944) had married Missouri-born George Angier (1867-1926) in Boston in 1896. Her husband was listed as an owner of a chemical manufactory in Census records. They had two children, Albert and Donald. Albert Angier was killed in France during World War I. This house passed to their other son, Daniel Angier. In 1973, the estate of Daniel Angier sold this house out of the family. Amelia Angier had also built 17 South Street (MRN.403) in 1939, and that too passed to her son.

## 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.

<sup>3</sup> PCRD, Book 60/ Page 80.

<sup>4</sup> PCRD, Book 1460/ Page 28.

<sup>5</sup> PCRD, Cert. of Title 6380.

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1921, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1921.  
Ancestry.com – Vital records.

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

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

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Sippican Historical Society Collections.

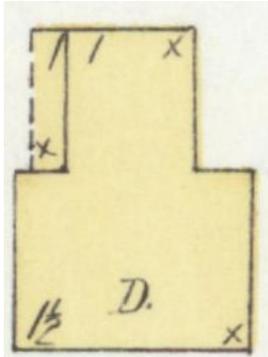


Figure 1. 1908 Sanborn Map.

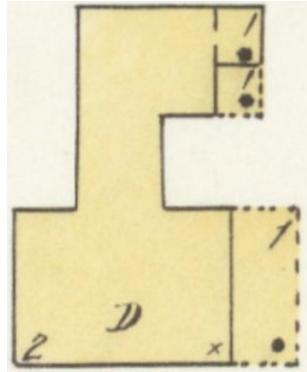


Figure 2. 1921 Sanborn Map.

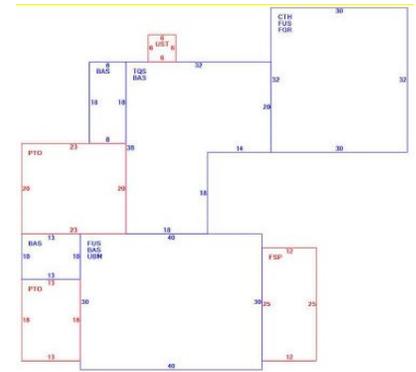


Figure 3. Marion Assessor Sketch (porches, decks in red).



Photo 2. View from South Street, looking northwest.



Photo 3. View from Front Street, looking east.

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



Figure 5. Detail of 1855 Walling Map (arrow added)

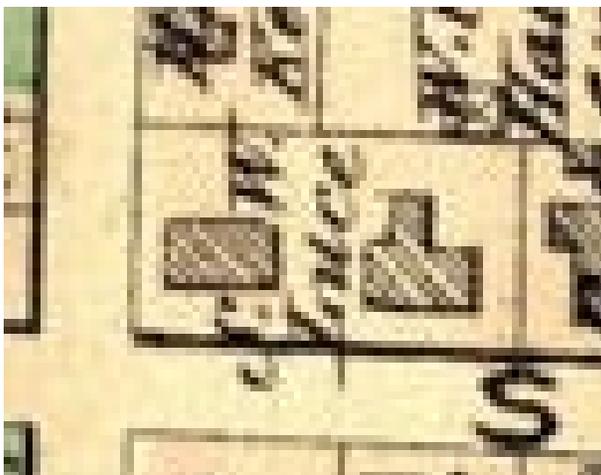


Figure 6. Detail of 1879 Plymouth County Atlas.



Photo 4. Undated view from Front Street, looking northeast (SHS 2004.019.027).

**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.

\*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).