

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

16-93	Marion	N, AB	MRN.405, 572
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Town/City: MARION

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

Photograph



Address: 31 South Street

Historic Name: Elizabeth and William Coulson, Jr.
House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1963

Source: Deed research, Assessor

Style/Form: Postwar Traditional

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete

Wall/Trim: Brick, shake shingle/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Former shop (ca. 1900, Photo 3, MRN.572)

Major Alterations (*with dates*)*:

None on record

*Based on Property Card and/or observation

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.35 acres

Setting: This parcel is bordered by both South and Front Streets. The house is centered on its lot, facing South Street, and a small former shop is set close to Front Street. The parcel is enclosed by a fence with granite posts and wood rails, and landscaped with expanses of lawn and foundation plantings. An asphalt driveway off Front Street leads to a long, attached carport northeast of the house. The surrounding area includes two churches, and 19th and early-20th century houses set close to the street on small lots.

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

31 SOUTH STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

N, AB

MRN.405,
571

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 can be classified as Postwar Traditional, the term used for Colonial Revival-style designs that were built after 1945. This 1½-story, side-gable house has a prominent cross-gable ell on the left (west) side of the front elevation with an oriel (a bay that does not extend to the ground) that has a shed roof. This equation is essentially reversed on the right side, where the shed roof carries down farther, creating an ell that is punctuated with a gable-roofed oriel. Both the left oriel and the right oriel are supported by decorative brackets. A broad, multi-paned window system is centered on the front elevation. To its left is the front entrance which consists of a 6-panel wood door with bull-eye panes, flanked by fluted pilasters (flat columns). Additional fenestration includes modern, replacement 4/4 and 6/6 windows. The elevations are composed of red brick, one of the few brick dwellings in Marion Village. The oriels and dormers, and the upper portion of the side gables are clad in broad shake shingles. A long carport is accessed off Front Street and connected to the rear of the house.

The property includes a ca. 1900 former store in the northeast corner of the parcel, facing Front Street (Photo 3). This one-story, gable-front store has a centered entrance flanked on each side by 6/6 windows. An open porch with shed roof spans the front of the store and is supported by square posts.

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. 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. There was also substantial residential development along the eastern block of South Street, but this western block was not yet in place. By the time the 1879 Plymouth County Atlas was prepared, this block was labelled as "(contemplated)" with some development near the intersections with Front and Pleasant Streets (Figure 1). By the early-20th century, a substantial number of houses (and a fire station) had been built along this western block of South Street (Figure 3).

In this location, there was originally a mid-19th century house set close to and facing Front Street. That house was still present on the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figure 3), and on the 1933 Sanborn Map. The former house, owned by Job Blankinship and then James H. Allen, was sold out of the Allen family in 1940 to Frederick B. Barden (1877-1963) and his wife, Jennie (Richards) (1876-1964).² Frederick Barden founded Barden's Boat Yard in 1927. The Bardens conveyed this property in 1958 to their daughter, Elizabeth B. Coulson (1905-2004), and in 1963 she conveyed it to herself and her husband, William Coulson, Jr. (1904-1972).³ William and Elizabeth Coulson had purchased Barden's Boat Yard from her parents in 1953. The house has an Assessor date of 1963, so perhaps that is an accurate date for this Postwar Traditional house.

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 1796/ Page 512.

³ PCRD, Book 2611/ Page 376, Book 3015/ Page 206.

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Elizabeth also inherited from her parents the houses at 157 Front Street (MRN.204) and 159 Front Street (MRN.396), and purchased from the Hiller family the former coal shed at 11 Hiller Street (MRN.213). Following Elizabeth Coulson's death, this house was conveyed to their daughter, Jane MacDonald. Jane MacDonald was a receptionist/switchboard operator for Tabor Academy (or she was while I attended Tabor ☺).

This property includes a small shop that fronts on Front Street. This former shop was originally connected to the house next door, 35 South Street (MRN.406). The house on that parcel was built in ca. 1900 for William and Hannah Gurney, and both the house and this shop are shown on the 1903 Plymouth County Atlas (Figure 2).

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.

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

1933, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1933.

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.

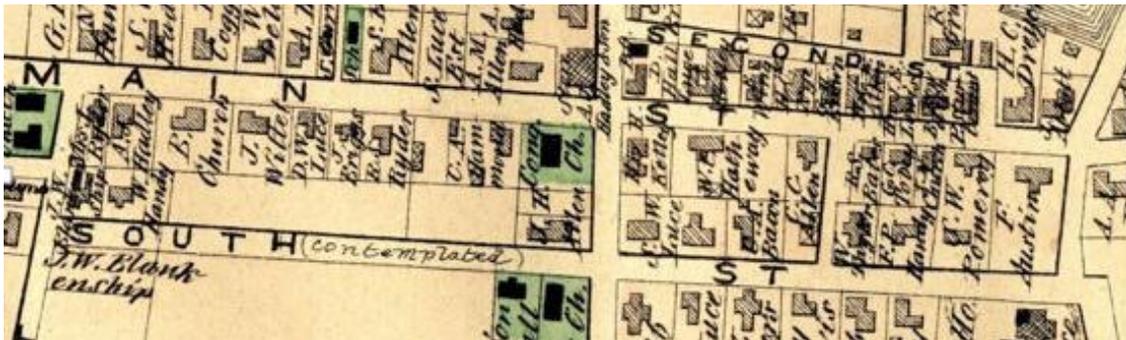


Figure 1. Detail of 1879 Plymouth County Atlas.

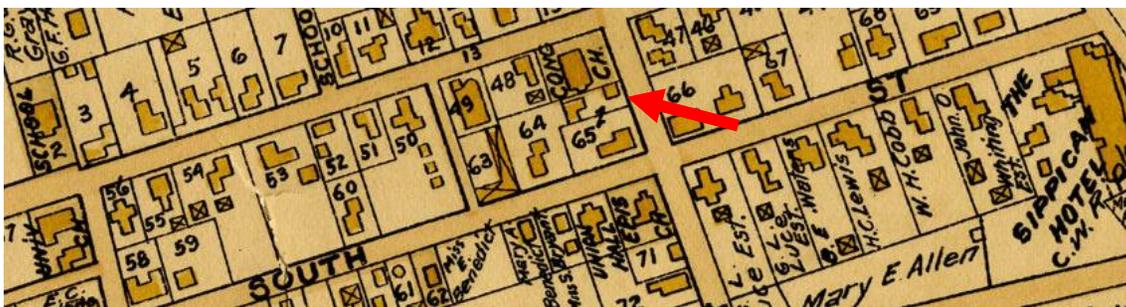


Figure 2. Detail of 1903 Plymouth County Atlas (arrow to shop added).

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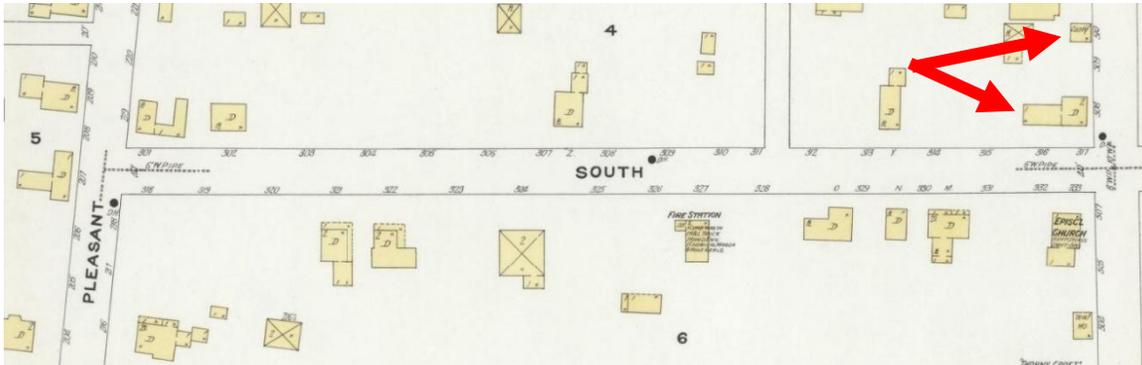


Figure 2. Detail of 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (arrows added).



Photo 2. View from South Street, looking NNW.

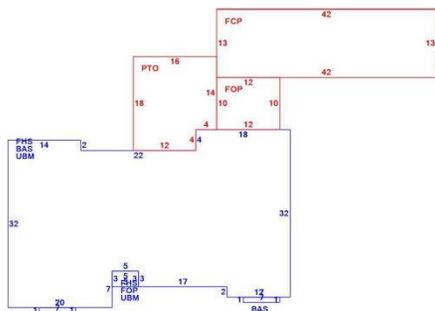


Figure 3. Marion Assessor Sketch (decks, porches and carport on red).



Photo 3. View of carport and shop, looking west from Front Street.

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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).