

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

16-83	Marion	N, AB	MRN.297
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**Town/City:** MARION

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 49 South Street

**Historic Name:** Timothy H. and Rachel H. Luce House

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

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

**Date of Construction:** [1910-1920]

**Source:** Deed research, 1920 US Census

**Style/Form:** Colonial Revival

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown/ Timothy Luce, builder  
(likely)

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Granite, fieldstone

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
None

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

Large addition (2000)

\*Based on Property Card and/or observation

**Condition:** Good

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

**Acreage:** 0.26 acres

**Setting:** This parcel is located at the west end of South Street. The surrounding area includes late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century houses, most set fairly close to the street on small lots. A gravel driveway leads to a newly-built attached garage. The front yard is landscaped with lawn and foundation plantings.

## 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

49 SOUTH STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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 first appeared on the 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figure 4), and is a modest example of the Colonial Revival style. The Colonial Revival style began in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century with a new interest in the country's own architecture of the Colonial-era and early Republic, and was a style that remained popular well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As can be seen when comparing the current photos and Assessor sketch (Figure 1) with the house's footprint on the 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figure 2), the house originally had no side ell, and the open porch only spanned the front elevation. Perhaps the porch was rebuilt when it was expanded to connect to the new side ell.

The original block of the house rests, like most 19<sup>th</sup> century and early-20<sup>th</sup> century houses in Marion Village, on a foundation that appears to be composed of both rough-cut granite and fieldstone. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (wood shingle originally), and has a projecting molded box cornice with partial returns across the gable ends (reminiscent of the Greek Revival style). The main roof is side-gabled with a centered cross-gable wall dormer on the front elevation (a wall dormer is a dormer that shares the wall plane below). This part of the roof has the same roof entablature and is likely original to the house. Fenestration consists primarily of replacement 6/6 windows. There is an original attic window on the left (west) side elevation with an unusual starburst muntin pattern. The large addition on the left (west) side was built in 2000.

## 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. 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 3). By the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, a substantial number of houses (and a fire station) had been built along this western block of South Street, including this house (Figure 4).

This house was built on land that Richard W. Clark of Marion sold to Timothy H. Luce in 1909.<sup>2</sup> Timothy Hiller Luce (1855-1928) was the great-grandson of Rowland and Elizabeth Luce. 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.<sup>3</sup> Rowland and Elizabeth Luce and their descendants would go on to have a great impact on the development of the village.

Timothy H. Luce married Nova Scotia-born Rachel Sunder (1856-1941) in Marion in 1881. They were listed living on Main Street in the 1910 Census, but were on South Street by the time the 1920 Census was prepared. He was listed as a house carpenter in

<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 1040/ Page 19.

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

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census records, which likely means he built this house himself sometime between 1910 and 1920. They had three children – James (b. 1883), Henderson (1893-1964) and Bertha (1890-1982). They all lived in this house after their father died. The two brothers never married. James Luce worked as a house painter (1930), farmer (1940), and was retired by 1950. Henderson Luce worked as a foreman for a cordage company throughout his life. Bertha Luce married Nova Scotia-born Lee Somerville Bethel (1888-1966). In 1956, James Luce conveyed the house to his nephew, John Bethel.<sup>4</sup> He sold it out of the family in 1976.

## 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.

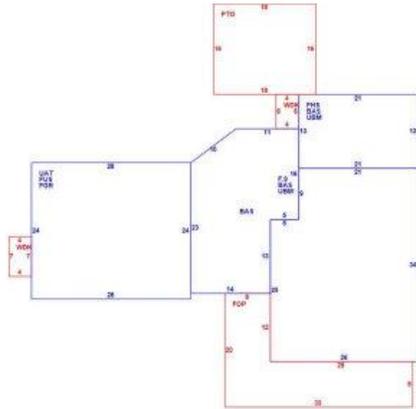
Ancestry.com – Vital records.

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.



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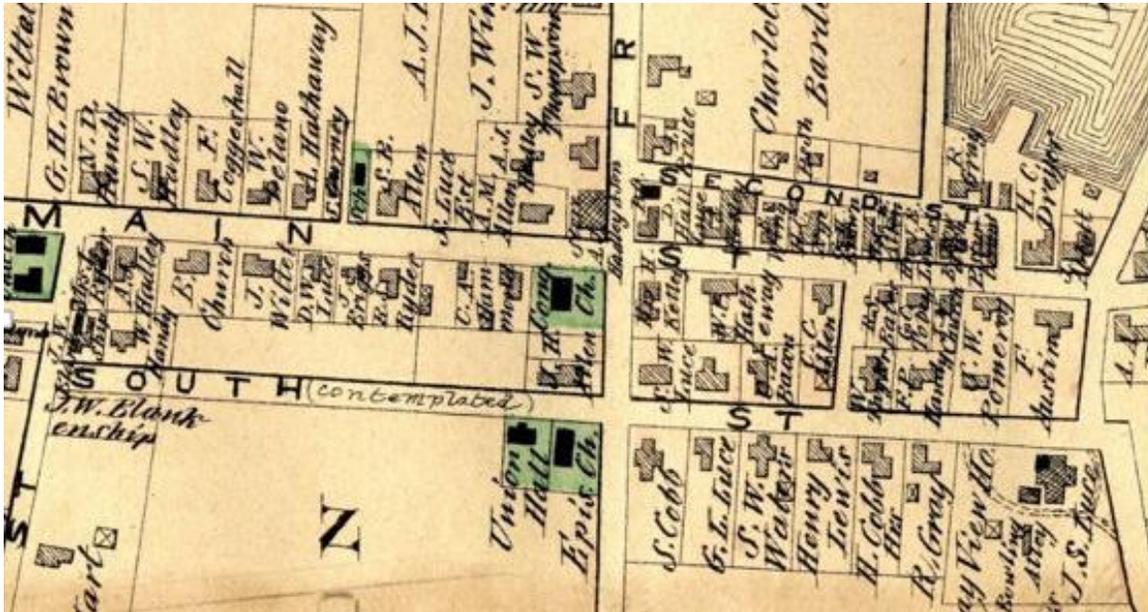


Figure 3. Detail of 1879 Plymouth County Atlas.

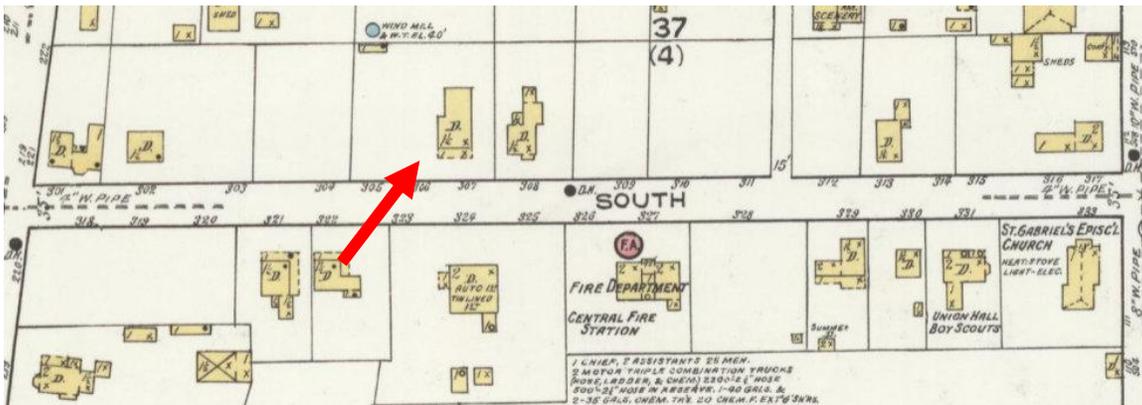


Figure 4. Detail of 1933 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (arrow added).

**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-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).