

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

16-68	Marion	N, AB	MRN.300
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**Town/City:** MARION

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 56 South Street

**Historic Name:** Frederick Ryder House

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

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

**Date of Construction:** [1892-1895]

**Source:** Deed research

**Style/Form:** Queen Anne

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Granite, fieldstone

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard, wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

None

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

None on record

\*Based on Property Card and/or observation

**Condition:** Good

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

**Acreage:** 0.14 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. An asphalt driveway leads to the west side of the house. 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

56 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 is one of a pair of modest, gable-front cottages built in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, the other being the William Ball House at 54 Main Street (MRN.299). As can be seen comparing the Assessor sketch to the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, this house has remained intact, including the open porch (Figures 1, 2). The form of this house consists of a 1½-story, gable-front block with a stepped-down side ell on the left (east) elevation.

This house, built in ca. 1892-1895, can be characterized a modest example of the Queen Anne in style. That style, popular from ca. 1880-1910, employed different roof shapes and surface materials to enliven a building's elevations and create a more "picturesque" effect. In this case, the complexity is found with the cross-gable ell on the left (east) side, and the different siding materials. The elevations are clad in a combination of painted wood clapboard on the front elevation and wood shingles on the side elevations. The house rests, like most 19<sup>th</sup> century houses in Marion Village, on a raised fieldstone/granite foundation. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (likely wood shingles originally), with a projecting box cornice.

The house appears to have original or early wood 2/2 windows, including very unusual, tall triple-track 2/2 windows on the first story. The front door, however, is a multi-paned replacement. An open porch spans the front elevation and the left side elevation up to the side ell. The porch roof is supported by chamfered posts with saw-cut, curvilinear brackets, and the porch is enclosed with a simple balustrade.

## 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 4). By the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, however, a substantial number of houses (and a fire station) had been built along this western block of South Street, including this house (Figure 5).

Much of the land on this side of South Street was owned by James T. Wittet in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century. James T. Wittet (1833-1908) was a sailmaker, and son of sailmaker James Wittet (1799-1872) who lived and worked at what is now 1 Main Street (MRN.218). James T. Wittet bought land on the north side of South Street and built the ca. 1899 house at 47 South Street (MRN.295), likely as a rental property. He was listed in the 1903 and 1907 Rochester Directories living on Front Street.

Wittet sold the land on which this house was built in 1892 to Frederick D. Ryder of Marion.<sup>2</sup> When Frederick Ryder sold the property three years later, the deed referenced buildings. Frederick Ryder (1859-1898) was listed as a jeweler apprentice in the 1880 Census. It is unclear whether he built this house as an investment, but he only owned it a short time.

<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 630/ Page 354.

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Ryder sold it in 1895 to George E. Healy of Rochester.<sup>3</sup> George Healy (1831-1917) married Sarah Gammons in 1851. He worked as a poultry farmer when living in Rochester. After his death, his wife had resumed her maiden name when she sold this house in 1919 to Ray M. Cheney of Marion.<sup>4</sup> Minnesota-born Cheney was listed as a foundry engineer for a bag company in the 1920 Census. By 1929, he was living in Springfield, VT when he sold this house to William and Elsie Cogswell of Cranford, NJ.<sup>5</sup>

By 1936, William Cogswell had divorced, remarried, and was living in Brooklyn, NY when he sold this house to James and Elsie Moon Ryder of Wilkes-Barre, PA and Lucy A. Ryder of Marion.<sup>6</sup> Lucy A. Ryder (1874-1963) was the sister-in-law of Frederick Ryder (he who built this house). As of 1930 (six years prior), Lucy Ryder was widowed, and living on South Street in a rented house (perhaps here) with her two teenage children and two boarders. By 1940, they were living in a house on South Street she owned, and her son was now married and had a child. The house remained in the Ryder family until 1991.

## 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.

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.



Photo 2. View from South Street, looking southeast.

<sup>3</sup> PCRD, Book 702/ Page 108.

<sup>4</sup> PCRD, Book 1341/ Page 134.

<sup>5</sup> PCRD, Book 1568/ Page 63.

<sup>6</sup> PCRD, Book 1711/ Page 540.

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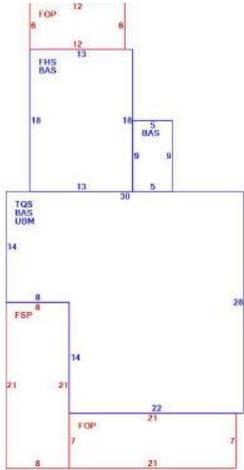


Figure 1. Marion Assessor Sketch (porches, decks in red).

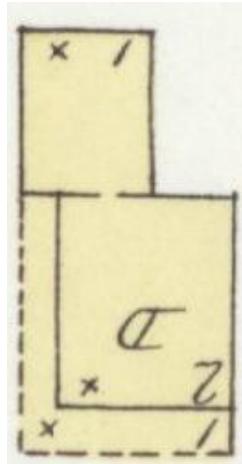


Figure 2. Detail of 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

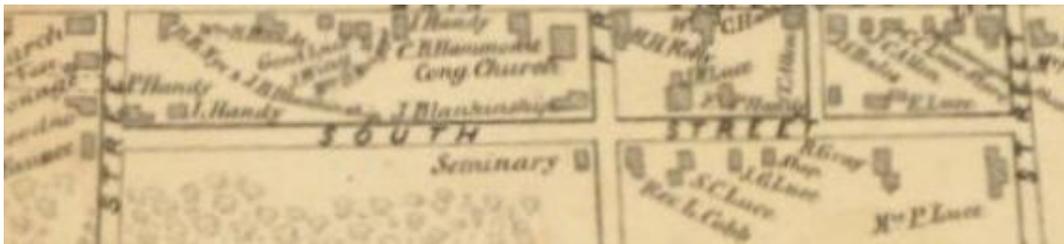


Figure 3. Detail of 1855 Walling Map of Marion.

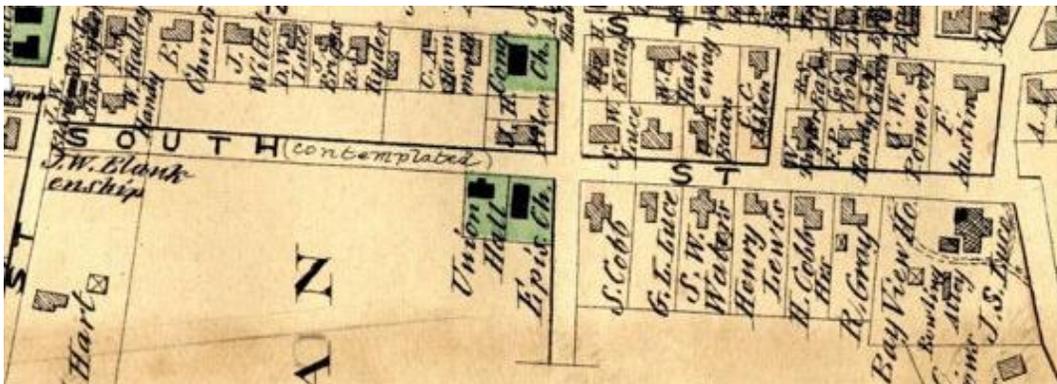


Figure 4. Detail of 1879 Plymouth County Atlas.

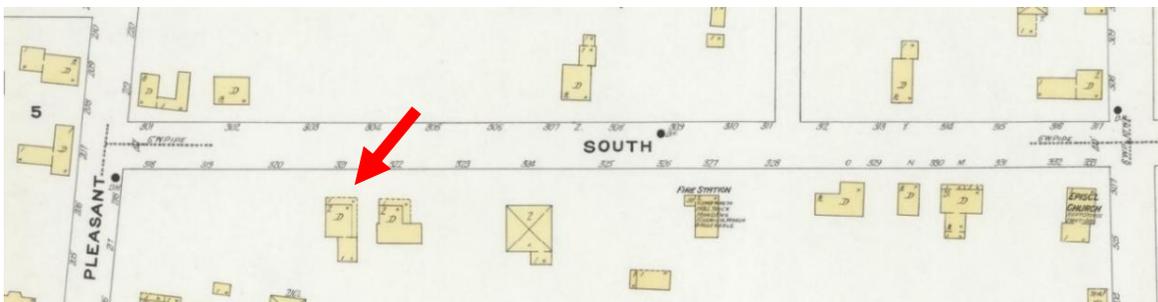


Figure 5. Detail, western block of South Street, 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (arrow added).

**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).