

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

11-61A

Marion

MRN.H

MRN.557

Town/City: Marion

Place:(neighborhood or village): Old Depot

Address: 385 Front Street

Historic Name: Clara Allen Luce Rental House

Uses: Present: Residential

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: Ca. 1920

Source: Deed & map research, visual analysis

Style/Form: Craftsman

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete block

Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (with dates):

Wall dormer

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.42

Setting: Small, primarily residential neighborhood developed in the mid-19th – early 20th centuries. Housing stock represents a range of styles including Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Craftsman and Colonial Revival. Surrounded mostly by moderately-sized, wood-frame, single-family houses on small to medium-sized lots.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (month / year): July 2022

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

375 Front Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

MRN.H

MRN.557

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.

385 Front Street occupies a narrow rectangular parcel on the east side of Front Street. The house is positioned close to the street in the western half of the parcel and faces west. The property is maintained in lawn with a cluster of mature trees at the rear (eastern) lot line. Hedges line the north and south property boundaries and a low picket fence borders the street at the façade. A paved driveway enters the property from Front Street along the north elevation of the house and ends in a parking area just behind it.

The building is a one-and-one-half-story, four-bay-by-four-bay wood-frame house with a rectangular plan, an open porch spanning the façade (west elevation), and a small, square one-story addition at the southeast corner. It has a shallow gable roof and a full-length, shed-roofed wall dormer at the north roof slope. Constructed ca. 1920 in a simple iteration of the Craftsman style, it retains many of its original character-defining features. The house rests on a high cinder block foundation and is clad in weathered wood shingles. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. A narrow brick chimney rises from the approximate midpoint of the south roof slope.

Trim at the house is limited to narrow corner boards. Window openings comprise single and paired, double-hung six-over-one replacement sash with narrow molded surrounds. The openings at the façade are asymmetrically placed, with two windows to the right and one window to the left of the glass-and-panel centered door. The door fronts a three-step concrete stair across the porch deck and multi-colored slate walkway leading to the street. The open porch has a shingled knee wall, square posts, and a framed lattice-work skirt. A single entry at the easternmost bay at the north elevation fronts a small wooden stoop with a three-step stair running along the east wall. A matching entry, stoop and stair occupy the south wall of the one-story, hip-roofed addition at the southeast corner of the house.

385 Front Street is a modest, unelaborated example of the Craftsman style, one of several such examples built in the early 20th century on this part of Front Street. The American Craftsman architectural movement was inspired by the British Arts and Crafts movement and was a response to Europe's Industrial Revolution which promoted hand-worked goods and buildings over the mass-produced. The predominant style for smaller homes throughout the country from 1905 to 1930, it emphasized simplicity and modesty in architecture. The style was spread by pattern books and popular magazines and through the efforts of its best-known proponent, furniture designer Arthur Stickley. Craftsman-style homes are typically one or one-and-one-half stories tall and characterized by low-pitched roofs with overhanging eaves; exposed beams, brackets and rafters; wide open porches with thick columns; and large bay or picture windows. The Craftsman characteristics of this house include its size, simplicity, shallow gabled roof, and full-width porch.

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.

The town of Marion was established in 1852 when it broke off from the town of Rochester. The Old Depot area of Marion (MRN.H) is named for the building which housed Marion's first rail station. It was the location of the Marion stop on the Fairhaven Branch of the Cape Cod Railroad which brought rail service to the town in 1854. Located in the northern section of Marion, the area's residences are located in or around the triangle formed by the intersection of Wareham Road, Spring Street, and Front Street. The 1855 map shows this section of town with very few buildings — the train station, a school, and a lone house. The advent of rail service to Marion sparked the town's growth as a desirable vacation destination for well-to-do city dwellers from Boston and New York. A coach service carried passengers arriving at the station to various hotels or cottages located in Sippican Village.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

375 Front Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

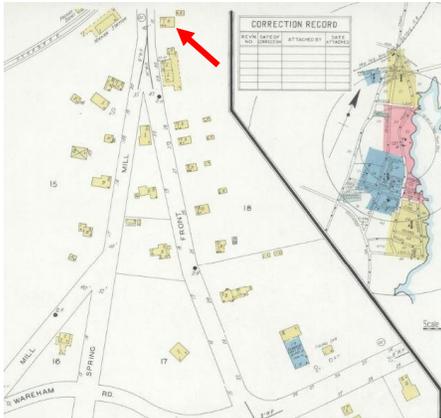
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As rail service expanded, the 1855 depot was replaced by a larger building. The depot was sold to the prominent Front Street resident, Captain George Delano Allen (1843-1916) who lived in the grand Greek Revival/Italianate “hybrid” style house at 357 Front Street (ca.1860, Capt. George D. Allen House, MRN.113). Allen moved the old depot building approximately 150 feet to a site on his large estate. This area came to be known as Allen’s Corners after the enterprising seaman who converted the old depot building into a combination store and pool hall. Near the turn of the 20th century Allen subdivided his property to create building sites for several smaller houses along Front Street, including this modest subject house. By 1903, there was a cluster of houses in this area supported by several stores. Today, a number of the historic resources in the area are used for commercial or mixed-use purposes.



1933 Sanborn map.

This house first appears on the 1933 Sanborn map. The first recorded conveyance found for this property was the sale of a 1.3-acre parcel of land with buildings from Clara Allen Luce to William W. Hobbs in 1923. Clara Belle Allen (1873-1960) was the daughter of Captain George Allen. She was married in 1919 to George Hervey Luce (1852-1933), the son of Hervey F. Luce (1827-1906) and Sarah Reynolds Luce (1831-1918). Luce was a fisherman for most of his life and the couple lived in West Tisbury on Martha’s Vineyard. William Whitman Hobbs, who purchased the property from Clara Luce, was born in Brookline in 1894. The son of Franklin Warren Hobbs (1868-1892) and Jane Hallet Whitman (1872-1953), he graduated from St. George’s School in Newport, Rhode Island and attended Harvard College for two years before entering the family textile business.¹ The 1920 census records him as the superintendent of the Bolton Mill. He was married in 1916 to Helen Foss (1894-1983), the daughter of former Massachusetts Governor Eugene Noble Foss (1858-1939) and Lilla Rollins Sturdivant (1860-1925). It seems likely that the couple, who lived in New Bedford according to the 1920 census, purchased the house as a rental/ investment property. William and Helen Hobbs owned the property for only five years and sold it in 1928 to William and Gladys Cole of Plymouth.

William J. Cole, Jr. (1899-1976) was the son of William J. Cole (1865-1903), who was born in London, England and was married to Rose Henshaw (b.1866). As reported in the 1930-1950 censuses, the younger Cole’s wife, Gladys (b.1902), was a public-school teacher and William worked as a mechanic. The couple sold the house in 1965 to Charles J. and Carol A. Bradley in whose extended family the property remains.

Deed Research

Date	Book-Page	Grantor	Grantee
01-03-2018	49634-314	Carol A. Diata, Trustee	Tracy Anne Bradley & Tricia Jo Seymour, Trustees
07-21-2011	40210-182	Carol A. Bradley aka Carol A. Diata	Carol A. Diata & Gabriel J. Diata, Trustees
05-29-1980	4874-288	Charles J., Jr. & Carol A. Bradley	Carol A. Bradley
07-02-1965	3219-357	William J. & Gladys E. Cole	Charles J., Jr. & Carol A. Bradley
03-01-1928	1548-289	Frank H. & Hattie P. Spooner	William J. & Gladys Cole
01-02-1923	1429-531	William W. & Helen F. Hobbs	Frank H. & Hattie P. Spooner
07-17-1921	1393-429	Clara Allen Luce fna Clara Belle Allen	William W. Hobbs
		Estate of George D. Allen	Clara Belle Allen

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org: census records, vital records, city directories
Atlas of Plymouth County, Boston, MA: George H. Walker & Co., 1879
Atlas of Plymouth County, Boston, MA: L.J. Richards Co., 1903
Map of the Town of Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts 1855 H.F. Walling
 McMaster, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2019.
 Sommers, Olive Hill. *Three Centuries of Marion Houses*. Marion, 1972.

¹ *Boston Herald*, Boston, MA, August 30, 1914

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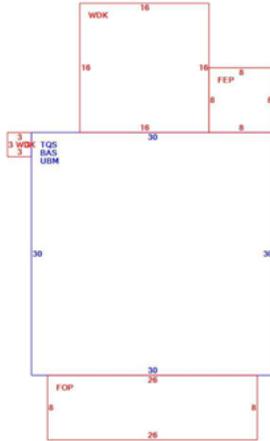
Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Rosbe, Judith. *Marion*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000.

Rosbe, Judith. *Marion in the Golden Age*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009.

Sippican Historical Society: online database

Smith, Pete. (ed.) *A Picture Postcard History of Marion, Massachusetts*. New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2008.



Assessor card plan

MRN.H	MRN.557
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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 Lynn Smiledge

The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

This house is recommended as a contributing element in a potential National Register Historic District for the Old Depot Area of Marion. The Old Depot Area (MRN.H) is recommended as eligible for listing as a National Register District at the local level under Criterion A for Social History and Criterion C for Architecture. Old Depot is an area of mid-19th to early 20th century residences on and around a triangle of land formed by Spring Street, Front Street, and Wareham Road (Route 6). It is named for the building at the apex of the triangle, Marion's first rail station. The area has significant historical associations with transportation improvements in Marion, including the introduction of the Fairhaven Branch of the Cape Cod Railroad and the New Bedford and Onset Street Railway lines during the mid-19th and early 20th centuries, respectively. The potential district's boundaries are those defined in the 1998 MHC survey for the Old Depot Area (MRN.H).

Under Criterion A, the area is recommended as eligible at the local level for its association with transportation advances in Marion, including the arrival of rail service in 1854 and the building of a rail station now at 381 Front Street (1855, Old Depot, MRN.120). The advent of rail service sparked the town's growth as a desirable vacation destination for well-to-do city dwellers from Boston and New York and had significant impact on the community's economy.

Under Criterion C, the area is recommended as eligible at the local level in the area of Architecture for its nearly intact collection of houses that provides a sense of the progression of architectural styles from the mid-19th through the early 20th centuries. The Old Depot Area contains a range of small- to large-scaled one-and-one-half to two-story wood-frame dwellings that represent the Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Craftsman and Colonial Revival styles. Several of these houses have been converted to commercial use.