

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

13-29	Marion	MRN.I	MRN.128
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Town/City: Marion

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village/Old Landing

Address: 306 Front Street

Historic Name: Joseph & Eunity Blankinship House

Uses: Present: Residential

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: Ca. 1850

Source: Deed and map research

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite block

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard / Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Garage (1995)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Window replacement

Westernmost addition (21st century)

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.26

Setting: Linear development of residences and a boatyard primarily developed in the late 18th–mid 19th centuries. Mid- to large-size wood-frame, single-family houses in the Georgian, Federal, and Greek Revival styles predominate. Neighborhood borders the northwestern shore of Sippican Harbor.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2022

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

306 Front Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

MRN.I

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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.

306 Front Street occupies a rectangular lot on the west side of Front Street and faces east towards the Burr Brothers Boatyard and Sippican Harbor. The house is positioned close to the street and fronts a shallow planting bed with granite curbing and a gravel parking area that spans the façade and extends west along the west elevation of the house. A hedgerow behind a scalloped vertical board fence borders the sidewalk at Front Street. A gravel driveway enters the property from Front Street along the northern lot line and ends at a small garage behind the house. An expansive lawn with scattered mature trees occupies the western half of the parcel.

This wood-frame dwelling comprises a one-and-one-half-story, front-gabled, three-bay-by-three bay main block with two one-story rear dependencies and an added side porch. Constructed around 1850 in the Greek Revival style, this house retains the majority of its original character-defining features. The house rests on a high granite block foundation and is clad in wood clapboards at all elevations. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. Tall brick chimneys rise from the north and south roof slopes of the main block near the roof ridge; a third chimney rises from the roof ridge of the easternmost addition.

The main block is trimmed with a box cornice, deep one and two-part frieze boards, eave returns, and channeled corner pilasters. The side hall main entry at the southernmost bay is slightly recessed. It contains a wood panel door framed by full-height sidelights and channeled pilasters supporting a heavy entablature. The door fronts a three-step wooden stair that enters the gravel parking area at the facade. A flat-roofed porch, likely added in the late 19th century, spans the south elevation. The porch is enclosed at the two westernmost (rear) bays and open at the eastern bay, where its decorative porch posts have Craftsman-style character. An entry fronts the porch deck from the east wall of the enclosed bays. There is a hipped dormer on the south roof slope.

The windows at the main block are single, double-hung, six-over-six sash with false muntins, molded surrounds and capped lintels. Shallow three-light rectangular eyebrow windows are set at the frieze board at the north elevation. The easternmost window at the south elevation and the westernmost window at the north elevation are covered by permanent blinds.

A stockade fence stretches from the porch on the main block to the southern property line, limiting visual access to the rear additions. The easternmost addition is integral to the main block and aligns along its south elevation. Four bays in length, it contains an entry at the easternmost bay and windows that match those at the main block. A shed dormer occupies the north roof slope. The westernmost addition, which is set back from the south elevation of the easternmost addition, appears to be of recent construction. The one-car garage sited at the northern property has wood clapboard siding and a shallow arched roof.

306 Front Street was built in the Greek Revival style. Greek Revival was the predominant style of American architecture from about 1830 to 1850, but the form continued to be used well into the second half of the 19th century. Inspired by the architecture of ancient Greek temples and associated with democratic ideals, it was widely disseminated through the house plan books of Massachusetts architect Asher Benjamin. The identifying Greek Revival features of this house include the front-gabled orientation of the main block, box cornice, channeled corner pilasters, eave returns, one and two-part frieze boards, and entry surround with full-height sidelights, channeled pilasters, and heavy entablature.

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.



R.E. Walling 1855 map of Marion.

The town of Marion was established in 1852 when it broke off from the town of Rochester. The Village of Marion, the commercial and residential center of the town, is set on the western shore of Sippican Harbor which leads into Buzzards Bay. The northern portion of the Village running along Front Street, where this house is located, has been referred to historically as Old Landing. While there are several late 18th century buildings in the area, most of the houses along this northern section of Front Street were built in the first half of the 19th century. With a very few exceptions, the first owners of the houses were seamen. Maritime industries were dominant in Marion until the mid-19th century, when the advent of rail service began to facilitate tourism. At the same time, new cultural and educational institutions endowed by the founder of the nearby Tabor Academy, Elizabeth P. Taber, dramatically enriched the town. With this economic shift, some of the properties on Front Street became summer residences for city dwellers. Others were acquired by Tabor Academy for use as dormitories and several became commercial properties, including the boatyard complex on the harbor side of Front Street.

This house appears on the 1855 map with Joseph Blankinship shown as owner. The owner is identified as I. Blankinship on the 1879 map and C.D. Hall on the 1903 map. The first recorded conveyance found for the property registered the sale of a tract of land by David Hathaway to Emily Blankinship in 1855 for \$225. The early appearance of this Greek Revival house and the fact that it is shown on the 1855 map suggests that it may have been built at an earlier date by Eunity Blankinship and her husband on land leased from David Hathaway. This arrangement was not an uncommon practice in Marion.

Born in Freetown, David Hathaway (1788-1861) was the son of Gilbert Hathaway (1745-1829) and Mary Evans (1751-1826). He was married in Rochester in 1811 to Abigail Keen (1787-1878), daughter of John Keen (1744-1812) and Mary Clifton (1746-1822), with whom he had a very large family. Several sources suggest that David Hathaway was a shipbuilder and owner of one of the two wharves at the head of Sippican Harbor. The 1855 map labels the northernmost wharf on the harbor as Hathaway's Wharf, although the 1850 and 1855 censuses reported his occupation as farmer. In the 1860 census it was listed as merchant. Regardless of his vocation, Hathaway appears to have been quite prosperous. His 1861 will devised his considerable estate, which consisted of a number of properties and businesses, to his wife Abigail and the couple's children. David Hathaway owned the adjacent property at 304 Front Street (ca. 1856, David Hathaway House, MRN.127) just south of the subject property.

The property was purchased in 1855 by Eunity H. (nee Wing) Blankinship, who was born in 1809 to Alden Wing (1775-1839) and Lucy Bates (1782-1827) of Rochester. She was married in 1837 to sea captain Joseph Blankinship (1809-1879). Captain Joseph Blankinship died in 1879 and the 1880 census recorded his widow Eunity living with the couple's unmarried daughter, Henrietta (1843-1920). After Eunity Blankinship died in 1886 the property was purchased by Henrietta. In 1877 she was married in Marion to Charles Daniel Hall, the owner noted on the 1903 map. Charles Daniel Hall (1830-1910) was the son of Daniel Hall (b. 1802) and Hannah King (1809-1882). A widower, his marriage to Henrietta Blankinship was his third. Their marriage registration notes his occupation as carpenter, but by 1900 he was listed as a deputy sheriff, a position once held by his father Daniel.

In 1920 the house was purchased by Eunice Watts (1895-1977). Born Eunice Myrtle Gurney in Marion, she was the daughter of Freeman Franklin Gurney (1857-1932) and Anna Fulton Parlow (1865-1945). Eunice was married in Marion in 1919 to Stephen Jones Watts (1880-1953), who was born in Maine, the third of twelve children of sea captain John Noyes Norton Watts (1858-1925) and Jessie Ann Schoppe (1857-1940). Stephen Watts' occupation from 1900 onward was boat builder, a trade which may have drawn him to Marion from his native Maine. After Eunice's death in 1977, the property was sold by her heirs. The house was purchased in 2016 by the late Lawrence and Wendy Bidstrup. An educator, Lawrence Bidstrup taught at Tabor Academy for more than 40 years. Wendy Bidstrup is the author of a biography of Marion artist Cecil Clark Davis published in 2013.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

306 Front Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

MRN.I

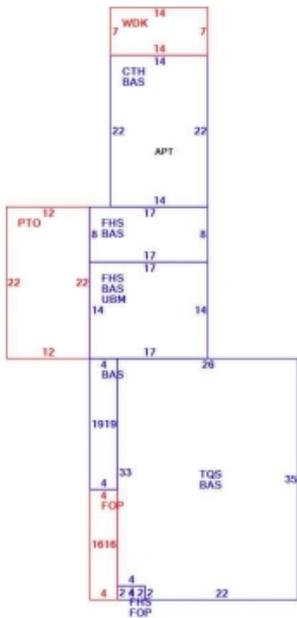
MRN.128

Deed Research

Date	Book-Page	Grantor	Grantee
12-29-2017	49384-326	Lawrence O. & Wendy Bidstrup	Lawrence O. & Wendy Bidstrup
11-29-2016	47804-210	Maureen T. Batchelder & June A. Smith	Lawrence O. & Wendy Bidstrup
06-30-2004	28603-346	Maureen T. Batchelder	Maureen T. Batchelder & June A. Smith
10-24-1996	14752-166	K. Morton & Elizabeth T.E. Hooper	Maureen T. Batchelder
07-27-1987	7887-33	Susanne B. Metcalf (a/k/a Susan B. Metcalf)	K. Morton & Elizabeth T.E. Hooper
02-11-1981	4955-47	David P. & Joan Sheridan	Susan B. Metcalf
09-13-1979	4721-163	Jean C. & Cameron P. Fordyce	David P. & Joan Sheridan
08-25-1978	4524-384	Darrough S. Gurney et al.	Jean C. & Cameron P. Fordyce
11-13-1920	1382-67	Thomas H. Armstrong	Eunice M. Watts
08-09-1912	1369-530	Henrietta E. Hall	Thomas H. Armstrong
06-01-1887	554-38	Heirs of Eunity Blankinship	Henrietta E. Blankinship
09-11-1855	268-263	David Hathaway	Eunity Blankinship

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.
- Sommer, Olive Hill. *Three Centuries of Marion Houses*. Marion, 1972.
- 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's card plan



East and north elevations.

MRN.I	MRN.128
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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 Landing Area of Marion Village. The Old Landing Area (MRN.I) 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 Landing is among the oldest neighborhoods in Marion, with development dating to the 18th century. Historically a maritime community with two wharves and a boat yard near the head of Sippican Harbor, the Old Landing area is a linear development of residences extending from Tabor Academy's campus on the south to Wareham Road (Rte. 6) on the north. The potential district's boundaries are those defined in the 1998 MHC survey for the Old Landing Area (MRN.I).

Under Criterion A, the area is recommended as eligible at the local level for its association with Marion's the maritime industry, upon which the economy of Marion depended from the 18th century to the mid-19th century. Home to two wharves and many mariners in the 19th century, the area today maintains its connection to the sea with the active operation of Burr Brothers Boatyard located on Sippican Harbor along the eastern boundary of the area.

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 late 18th through the early 20th centuries. The Old Landing Area contains mostly moderate- to large-scaled, one-and-one half to two-story wood-frame dwellings on generous lots in the Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival, and Queen Anne styles. Along with several high-style examples of these styles, the area also includes several earlier dwellings that pre-date the building boom that began in the second half of the 19th century.

The majority of the resources here retain substantial integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association. The district would likely meet criteria A and C at the local level, with areas of significance in social history and architecture.

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MRN.I	MRN.128
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