

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

13-28	Marion	MRN.I	MRN.130
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**Town/City:** Marion

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village

**Address:** 310 Front Street

**Historic Name:** James C. Delano House

**Uses:** Present: Residential

Original: Residential

**Date of Construction:** Ca. 1790

**Source:** Deed and map research

**Style/Form:** Federal

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Granite block

Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Garage  
Cottage

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

Replacement windows

**Condition:** Excellent

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

**Acreage:** 0.5

**Setting:** Linear development of residences and a boatyard primarily developed in the late 18<sup>th</sup>–mid 19<sup>th</sup> 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

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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.*

**310 Front Street** occupies a large polygonal parcel on the west side of Front Street. The house is set close to the street behind a shallow front lawn and faces east towards the Burr Brothers Boatyard and Sippican Harbor. A narrow strip of garden along the south elevation borders a gravel driveway with a granite paver apron that enters the property from Front Street and ends at a garage behind the house. A sizeable lawn surrounding the north and west (rear) elevations is separated from the adjacent property by a low hedge and a row of mature trees. Low foundation plantings span the façade (east elevation).

This L-shaped wood-frame building comprises an original two-story, five-bay-by-two-bay, side-gabled main block with a shallow hipped roof that was expanded with the early addition of a two-story, three-bay block at the west elevation and a sixth (northernmost) bay at the façade. A two-story addition to the west block was made in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Constructed ca.1790 in the Federal style, the house retains the majority of its original character-defining features. The house is clad in wood shingles and trimmed with narrow corner pilasters, a water table, a box cornice, and two-part frieze boards. The house rests on a granite block foundation and has an asphalt shingle roof. Substantial brick chimneys rise from the north and south roof slopes.

The openings at the house comprise double-hung, six-over-six windows with flat surrounds and blinds. The windows at the first story have splayed lintels and those at the second story touch the frieze board. Several windows at the side elevations have been shifted from their original locations and a side entry at the south elevation has been removed. A wooden deck enclosed by a slat work railing extends from the rear elevation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century west block addition. The main entry, once centered on the original five-bay façade, contains a six-panel wood door framed by a blind elliptical fanlight and partial-height sidelights with elegant tracery. The entry fronts a two-step stone stair and a short brick walkway leading to the sidewalk.

A steeply side-gabled, wood-shingled, one-and-one-half story, two-car garage is roughly centered on the property near the western property line. A glass-and-panel entry and stairway at the northernmost bay leads to the upper level, where two gabled dormers with eight-over-eight windows occupy the east roof slope. A small wood-shingled cottage with a square cupola is sited approximately 15 feet north of the garage.

310 Front Street was built in the Federal style (1780 –1820), the predominant architectural style in the United States during the early decades of the new republic. Like the preceding Georgian style, it was based on simple, rectangular building forms with strictly symmetrically-placed openings. It offered a refinement of the earlier style, however, with projecting wings, elegant ornamentation, and a general sense of lightness and restraint. Charles Bulfinch (1763-1844), considered America's first professional architect, is credited with introducing the style to the United States, where it was broadly disseminated through the pattern books of Asher Benjamin. Characteristic Federal-style features seen in this house include the side-gabled hipped roof, symmetrical facade, entry surround with fanlight and partial-height sidelights, and six-over-six window sash.

**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 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings in the area, most of the houses along this northern section of Front Street were built in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. With a very few exceptions, the first owners of the houses were seamen. Maritime industries were dominant in Marion until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> 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 building appears on the 1855 map with James Delano noted as owner. It is seen on the 1879 map with Bessie Luce shown as owner and on the 1903 map with Mrs. B.D. Luce as owner. The earliest conveyance found for the property was its sale by Mary Miller Hadley to Henry C. Luce in 1920.

Along with several Marion local histories, the 1998 MHC Area Form I for Marion suggests that this house was built between 1770 and 1790 and owned by a Captain James C. Luce and his wife Dolly. Based on its appearance, this Federal style house likely dates to that time period. It is further suggested that it was a stagecoach stop and operated as a tavern, called the Norton Tavern. The property was certainly owned by the Luce family later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but no connection between Captain James C. Luce and the subsequent owners of the property could be made, nor could any documentation be found connecting the property to a "Norton Tavern."<sup>1</sup>

The 1855 map clearly identifies the owner as James C. Delano. Title research points to Betsey Luce as the first Luce family member to own the house. Betsey Richmond (nee Delano) Luce (1833-1919) was the daughter of James C. Delano (1801-1837) and Dorothy Wing (1794-1865). She was the wife of Henry Clark Luce (1830-1873), the son of whaling captain Elisha Luce (1786-1850) and Lucretia Clark (1801-1861). Henry and Betsey's 1853 marriage registration noted his occupation as accountant and his residence in Cleveland, Ohio. The 1860 census reported him residing in Cleveland and occupied as secretary and treasurer of an unspecified railroad.

In 1864 Henry Luce purchased from his siblings their interest in the "homestead house and lot...being part of the estate of the late Elisha Luce" for \$1,000.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the deed does not provide a description of the property. This was the only property purchased by Luce in Marion which could have been the subject house. Henry Luce died in 1873, and it appears that his widow continued to own the house and land until her death in 1919. She left the house to her daughter, Mary Miller Luce Hadley (1859-1942), who sold it in 1920 to her younger brother Henry ("Harry") C. Luce, Jr. (1865-1938). After graduating from Tabor Academy in 1884, Henry C. Luce worked for the Long Island Railroad as a freight agent. He returned to Marion in 1901 and was employed as bookkeeper for his cousins John and William Luce in their general store. The 1910 census reported him living as a boarder with his sister Amanda Delano (1856-1912) with his occupation listed as poultry man. The following year he married his

<sup>1</sup> Captain James C. Luce (1806-1879) was born in Rochester, died in New Rochelle, New York, and was buried in Wareham. He was married twice, first to Mary Briggs Leonard and later to Elizabeth Fearing. He had two children who preceded him in death, Robert F. (1836-1858) and Willie F. (1843-1854). Captain Luce was commander of the steamship S.S. Artic that collided with another ship off the coast of Newfoundland in 1854 and sank. Although over 300 souls were lost in the accident, Luce survived.

<sup>2</sup> Plymouth County Registry of Deeds Book 323, Page 129.

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next-door neighbor, Alice Hathaway (1862-1913). Alice died after two years of marriage and Henry was remarried to Beatrice Dunakin (b.1884). Henry was elected town clerk in 1915 and for the next 20 years served in a variety of town offices. The house left the Luce family when the mortgage of Henry C. Luce was foreclosed in 1925.

The house had a number of short-term owners over the next several decades until 1971, when it was purchased by Tabor Academy, presumably for use as a student residence. It was sold by the academy in 1977. The current owners purchased the house in 2018.

Deed Research

Date	Book-Page	Grantor	Grantee
04-23-2018	49745-322	Estate of Shaun W. Carney, Jr.	John H., IV & Janet K. Egger
03-28-2000	18385-112	Robert B. & Ruby G. Jones	Shaun W. & Ann J. Carney
12-17-1977	4386-483	Tabor Academy	Robert B. & Ruby G. Jones
07-01-1971	3685-785	Katherine G. Brooks	Tabor Academy
01-15-1964	3083-21	Frederick B. & Louise Z. Tuttle	Katherine G. Brooks
04-12-1958	2625-392	Mathew J. & Shirley A. Curran	Frederick B. & Louise Z. Tuttle
05-28-1952	2211-84	Gorham L. & Margaret W. Cross	Mathew J. & Shirley A. Curran
01-16-1951	2131-135	Bert B. & Frances D. McNerney	Gorham L. & Margaret W. Cross
03-18-1949	2051-13	Eleanor M. Collins	Bert B. & Frances D. McNerney
08-27-1948	2021-452	Galen W. & Marguerite C. Crosby	Francis D. & Eleanor M. Collins
10-01-1945	1896-107	H. Lewis Banks	Galen W. & Marguerite C. Crosby
07-06-1925	1488-94	H. Lewis Banks (mortgage foreclosure)	H. Lewis Banks
06-30-1920	1361-269	Mary M. Hadley	Henry C. Luce
Probate		Betsey D. Luce	Mary M. (Luce) Hadley

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

- Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org: census records, vital records, city directories  
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*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.  
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 Plymouth County Registry of Deeds  
 Rosbe, Judith. *Marion*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000.  
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 Smith, Pete (ed.). *A Picture Postcard History of Marion, Massachusetts*. New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2008.  
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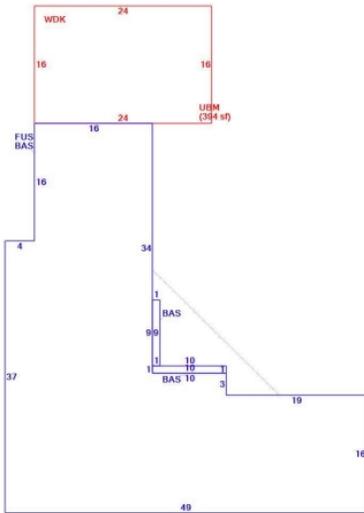
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Assessor's card plan



South and east elevations.



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mariners in the 19<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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.