

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

| | | | |
|-------|--------|-------|---------|
| 13-23 | Marion | MRN.I | MRN.136 |
|-------|--------|-------|---------|

Town/City: Marion

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

Address: 326 Front Street

Historic Name: John R. Preble House

Uses: Present: Residential

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: Ca. 1840

Source: Deed and map research

Style/Form: No style

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Not visible

Wall/Trim: Vinyl siding / Wood & vinyl

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Garage & two rear additions (late 20th century)

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.7

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

326 Front Street

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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.

326 Front Street occupies a large polygonal lot on the west side of Front Street and faces east toward Sippican Harbor. The house is positioned close to the street at the north-south center of the parcel and fronts a shallow strip of lawn behind a vinyl picket fence. The east (façade) and north elevations are surrounded by dense foundation plantings; the south elevation is bordered by a tall drystone wall lined by tall trees. The extensive side and rear yards are maintained in lawn dotted with mature trees. The areas of lawn facing the house and bordering Front Street are defined by low granite curbing. A wide gravel driveway enters the property from Front Street along the north elevation of the house and ends at the attached garage. The northern property line is bordered by a vinyl picket fence.

This wood-frame dwelling comprises a two-story, side-gabled, two-bay-by-two bay main block with an early rear wing and three 20th-century dependencies. Constructed around 1840, the house has been extensively remodeled and retains few original character-defining features. The house is clad in vinyl clapboards and has vinyl trim. A corbeled gable-wall brick chimney is centered at the north elevation of the main block. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles.

A wide, gabled, one-bay wall dormer is centered on the side-gabled main block, a configuration which would not have been seen in the first half of the 19th century. The main block and dependencies are trimmed with corner and frieze boards. The main entry at the south bay contains a six-panel wood door framed by partial-height sidelights (characteristic of the Federal style) and a molded surround with a shallow entablature. The door fronts a two-step brick stair and crushed shell walkway that leads to Front Street. The windows are single, double-hung, six-over-six wooden sash with flat surrounds and vinyl blinds. A triangular vent occupies the gable peak of the dormer.

The one-and-one-half story, cross-gabled rear wing appears on the footprint of the house seen on the 1855 map. It is set back from the south elevation of the main block and aligns along the north elevation. It contains a single window and an entry with a trellis door canopy at the north elevation.

A large two-car garage is connected to the north elevation of the rear wing by a one-story side-gabled hyphen containing a door. Facing east toward Front Street, the one-story side-gabled garage contains two gently arched openings with paneled garage doors. The north elevation of the garage has two six-over-six windows at the first story and a polygonal window opening at the gable. A tall vertical-board fence extends from the northwest corner of the garage to enclose an open area. The dependencies at the southwest corner of the house could not be accessed visually at the time of the site visit.

Although 326 Front Street has been significantly altered and reflects no particular architectural style, it maintains an appropriate presence on the streetscape in terms of massing and siting. The door surround at the main entry with its partial-height sidelights is characteristic of the Federal style (generally seen from 1780 to 1820) and the six-over-six wood window sash are characteristic of both the Federal and Greek Revival (1830 to 1850) periods.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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326 Front Street

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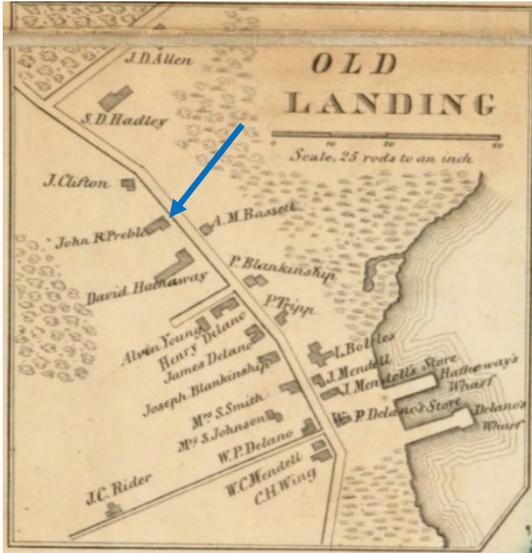
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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.



R.E. Walling 1855 map of Marion.

The 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 John R. Preble shown as owner. It is seen on the 1879 map with S. Dexter as owner and on the 1903 map with Emily M. Dexter as owner. The earliest recorded conveyance found for this property was from the First Congregational Church of Marion to Arthur E. Parks in 1953.

Title research confirms that Sumner Dexter (1815-1899) and his wife Emily Preble (1825-1910) were early owners of the house. Sumner Dexter was the son of Ephraim Dexter (1779-1862) and Rachel Snow (1784-1871). His wife Emily Preble Dexter was the daughter of Captain John R. Preble (1793-1855) and Thankful Wing (1793-1886) and the only one of the couple's four children to live to adulthood. It is probable that Captain Preble devised this property to his daughter Emily. Sumner Dexter was a house painter according to the couple's 1856 marriage registration and several later censuses.

The notes attached to a ca. 1870 photograph of Charlotte Delano (b.1841) in the collection of the Sippican Historical Society state that she had lived in the subject house at one time. The 1903 city directory reported that she was a schoolteacher living on Front Street, and it seems likely that she boarded with Emily Dexter and her husband. Charlotte Delano married Rob Sampson Parris in 1906 and moved to Wareham.

Emily Dexter appears to have left the house to the First Congregational Church of Marion at her death in 1910. The house was owned by the church for more than 40 years before it was sold in 1953 to Arthur E. Parks. Arthur E. Parks (d. 2007) was a Tabor Academy graduate who lived in Marion with his wife Betsy for 40 years. He owned and operated the Scuttlebutt Restaurant on Cuttyhunk Island from 1957 to 1963 and then founded the Sleepy Hollow Builders construction company, which he ran until 1980. Arthur Parks sold the property in 1972 to Arnold and Lorena Briggs, who owned it until 1999. A businessman, Arnold Briggs had an illustrious career in the military and served as chief of staff for the 94th U.S. Army Reserve Command, the largest reserve unit in New England.

Deed Research

| Date | Book-Page | Grantor | Grantee |
|------------|-----------|---|---|
| 09-04-2019 | 51747-138 | Peter R. Douglas & Ulrika Ekman | Debra R. Mazewski |
| 08-28-2015 | 45982-43 | Richard K. & Linda S. Snow | Peter R. Douglas & Ulrika Ekman |
| 06-19-2002 | 22282-50 | Molly W. Butler | Richard K. & Linda S. Snow |
| 07-15-1999 | 17669-46 | Lorena M. Briggs | Molly W. Butler |
| 12-15-1995 | 14037-237 | Arnold Briggs | Lorena M. Briggs |
| 07-10-1972 | 3794-782 | Arthur E. Parks | Arnold B. & Lorena M. Briggs |
| 01-29-1953 | 2256-367 | 1 st Congregational Church of Marion | Arthur E. Parks |
| Probate | | Emily P. Dexter | 1 st Congregational Church of Marion |

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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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.

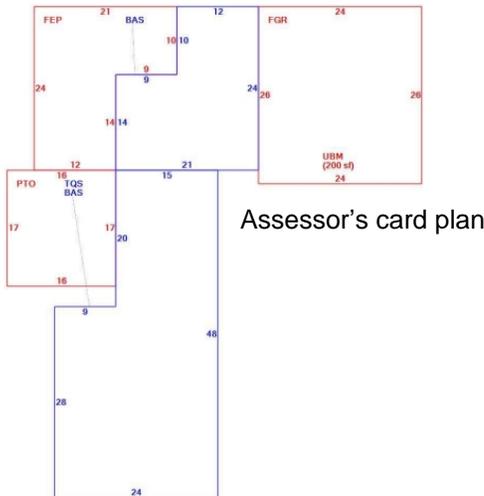
Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

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.



East and north elevations.

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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.