

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

| | | | |
|------|--------|-------|---------|
| 13-4 | Marion | MRN.I | MRN.553 |
|------|--------|-------|---------|

Town/City: Marion

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

Address: 329 Front Street

Historic Name: William R. Gifford House

Uses: Present: Residential

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: Ca. 1910

Source: Deed and map research

Style/Form: Craftsman

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Fieldstone & concrete

Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (with dates):

Shed dormer (20th century)

Rear porch and deck (21st century)

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.69

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

329 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.

329 Front Street occupies a polygonal lot on the east side of Front Street and backs up to marshland and Sippican Harbor. The house is set back from the street at the rough center of the parcel and fronts a lawn with tall shrubs and planting beds behind a low drystone wall. The west (façade) and south elevations are surrounded by foundation plantings; the north elevation is bordered by dense vegetation. A paved driveway enters the property from Front Street along the south elevation of the house and ends at a basement garage at the main block.

This L-shaped wood-frame dwelling comprises a one-and-one-half-story, front-gabled, three-bay-by-four bay main block with a full-width screened front porch and a one-story rear wing. Constructed around 1910 in a simple iteration of the Craftsman style, this simple house retains the majority of its original character-defining features. It is clad in wood shingles and has wood trim. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles.

The house is trimmed with narrow corner and frieze boards and a water table. The main entry at the northernmost bay contains a glass-and-panel wood door with a simple flat surround. The door fronts a four-step stone stair with a wrought iron railing and a stone walkway that crosses the façade (west elevation) to end at the driveway. The windows are single, double-hung, one-over-one wooden sash with flat surrounds at the façade; the windows at the side elevations are paired and mullied. The hip-roofed porch has wood-shingled knee walls, square pilastered posts, and a diamond lattice-work skirt. A two-bay shed dormer occupies the south roof slope of the main block.

The gabled, one-story rear wing aligns along the north elevation of the main block. A shed-roofed open porch along its south elevation has circular posts and a vertical slat railing. It joins an open deck that spans the west elevation; the assembly is supported by tall stilts.

329 Front Street is a simple, unelaborated example of the Craftsman style. The American Craftsman architectural movement was inspired by the British Arts and Crafts movement, a response to Europe's Industrial Revolution that 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, and full-width open 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 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

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MARION

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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 is first seen on the 1933 Sanborn map. The earliest conveyance found for this property was its sale in 1923 by Adele Gifford, the widow of William R. Gifford, to Clarence M. Kent. The 0.69 acre building lot on which this house is sited was set off from a larger parcel of land owned by William Gifford which included the adjacent house at 325 Front Street (1780-1800, Thomas Bassett Sr. House, MRN.135).

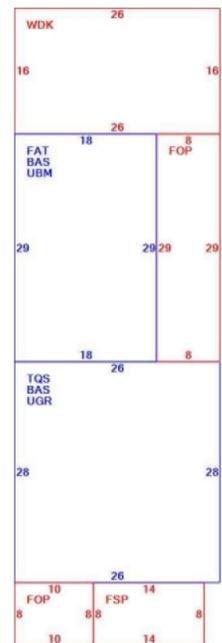
In 1886 William R. Gifford (1848-1914) was left a portion of the large (undivided) property by his sister-in-law Mary Ann Penniman, the sibling of his late first wife, Susan Bassett Ellis (1850-1877). In 1892 Gifford purchased the balance of the property from Susan Ellis's daughter, Sarah Ellis Hammond (1847-1898). It appears most likely that the subject house was built sometime between 1903 and 1914, the year of his death, by William Gifford at the northern end of his property. Gifford and his second wife, Adele D. Ray (1854-1941) of Freetown, lived next door at 325 Front Street and it is probable that the subject house was built as a rental property. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Gifford operated a livery stable and passenger transfer service between the Marion depot and lodgings in Marion Village.

1933 Sanborn map. Blue outlines the large Gifford parcel as it appeared on the 1903 map. Red outlines the subject parcel.

William R. Gifford's widow Adele sold the property to Clarence M. Kent (1856-1933) of Putnam, Connecticut in 1923. Clarence and his wife Ida M. Kent appeared to live in Connecticut during their period of ownership and probably used it as a seasonal residence. The current owners acquired the property in 1997.

Deed Research

| Date | Book-Page | Grantor | Grantee |
|-------------|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 06-03-2002 | 22191-348 | Robert W. & Diana M. Morley | Diana M. Morley |
| 12-18-1997 | 15723-13 | Benjamin B. & Deborah A. Baker | Robert W. & Diana M. Morley |
| 09-14-1987 | 8000-143 | Mary Lee Trautman | Benjamin B. & Deborah A. Baker |
| 120-20-1972 | 3829-380 | Nancy O. Winsor | George M. & Mary Lee Trautman |
| 01-13-1967 | 3346-455 | Joseph Lipsitt | Nancy O. Winsor |
| 08-04-1951 | 2161-74 | William H. Bourne | Joseph Lipsitt |
| 10-22-1946 | 1941-570 | Clifford & Laura Edge | William H. Bourne |
| 09-04-1946 | 1942-213 | Ruth L. Kerr | Clifford Edge |
| 06-25-1946 | 1931-60 | Estate of Clarence M. Kent | Ruth L. Kerr |
| 12-11-1923 | 1452-129 | Adele Gifford | Clarence M. Kent |



Assessor's card plan

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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Atlas of Plymouth County, Boston, MA: L.J. Richards Co., 1903
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 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.

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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.