

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

6-43	Marion	MRN.C	MRN.67
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Town/City: Marion

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Address: 125 Allen's Point Road

Historic Name: Shepard-Clark House / Fair Oaks

Uses: Present: Residential

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: Ca. 1903

Source: Deed research

Style/Form: Tudor Revival

Architect/Builder: Coolidge & Carlson

Exterior Material:

- Foundation: Concrete parged masonry
- Wall/Trim: Wood shingle & stucco / Wood
- Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

- Guest house
- Bath house

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

N/A

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

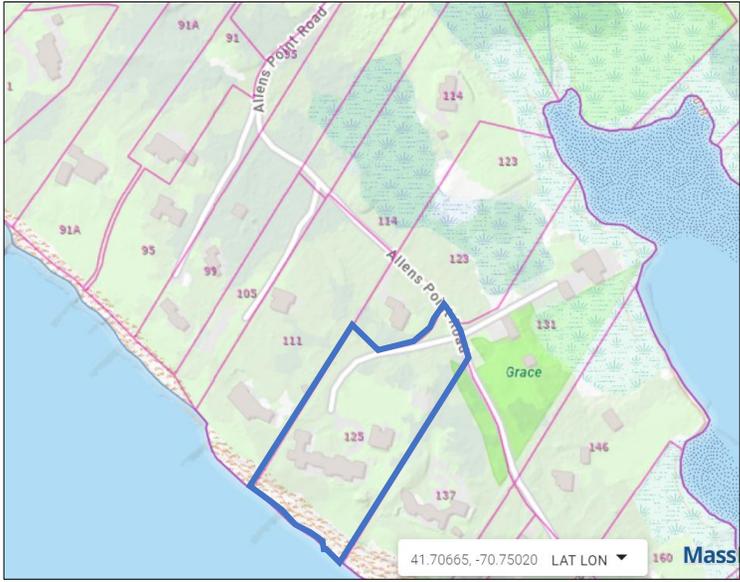
Acreage: 3.45

Setting: Sparsely settled neighborhood on Allen's Point, a small, wooded peninsula between Sippican Harbor to the west and Blankenship Cove to the east. The majority of properties are imposing seasonal dwellings on large waterfront lots and have boat docks. The area was substantially developed from the 1890s through the 1920s.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge
Organization: Marion Historical Commission
Date (*month/year*): November 2023

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

125 Allen's Point Road

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

MRN.C

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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.

125 Allen's Point Road occupies a large, polygonal waterfront parcel on the eastern shore of Sippican Harbor. The house is deeply set back from road near the shoreline and faces east. A dock extends into the water near the midpoint of the western property line. A paved driveway enters the property from Allen's Point Road and ends in a large, circular, crushed seashell driveway at the east elevation (façade) of the house. The gated driveway entrance is flanked by large rubblestone piers. The property was not accessible on the day of the site visit and the description that follows is excerpted from the 1998 Area Form MRN.C for the property.¹

125 Aliens Point Road (MHC# C67) is the finest example of Tudor Revival domestic architecture in Marion, while important landscape features survive from Marion's golden age of summer estates (1885-1915). Judging by its foot print on the 1903 Marion Map, this house may have been reduced in size although further research is needed to verify that this still-substantial house was originally more V-shaped as the 1903 Marion map suggests; it presently possesses a rectangular configuration. Its east elevation overlooks a circular driveway leading from Allens Point Road, while the house's west elevation overlooks a great lawn that slopes down to the shores of Sippican Harbor. A garden house is located to the southeast of the main house; its south facade overlooks a c.1910s, Arthur Shurtcliff-designed garden.

Designed c. 1903 by the Boston architectural firm of Coolidge and Carlson, this Tudor Revival house represents a marked departure from the Shingle Style design typical of their West Drive residences (see MHC Area M). Rising to a height of two-and-one-half stories, the house's walls are parged with stucco and enlivened by the half timbering and a complex roof configuration of intersecting, steeply pitched gables characteristic of Tudor Revival residences. In general, windows contain 6/1 and 8/1 wood sash. Four substantial, corbelled brick chimneys rise from the roof ridge. The main block is divided into three segments: a center pavilion flanked by T-shaped wings. The six-bay east elevation exhibits a gable roofed entrance porch blending Medieval Revival and Craftsmen style sensibilities, the pointed arch of its steeply pitched gable roof supported by vertical timbers. The porch's russett-hued terra cotta tiles echo those of the main block's roof. Steeply pitched gable roofs are located at either end of the main facade. Projecting from the narrow two-bay north elevation is a one-story stucco parged porch with arched openings while the three-bay south elevation exhibits a recessed open porch and a single window at either end of this wall.

The 15-bay west or harbor side elevation is noteworthy for the great expanse of its stucco, half-timbered wall. Flanking the center gable are square, projecting enclosed porches which are linked by a tile-covered roof slope. The northern gable shelters an oriel which extends the length of a double bay to the south. The southern oriel's overhang shelters a porch. Single, small dormers capped by segmental arched roofs are in evidence between center and end gables which are of unequal width.

Bordering the south elevation is a hedge enclosed garden. Designed with the intimate feeling of an outdoor room, its north and south entrances are axially aligned and are picturesquely marked by rustic wooden gable-roofed trellises. Although the flower beds, statuary and paths depicted in a 1919 photograph of this remarkable green space are no longer in evidence, the Arthur A. Shurcliff-designed garden retains its circular pond enlivened by a statue of a winged cherub.

¹ Gordon, Edward. MHC Area Form MRN.C, Allen's Point (1998)

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Area(s) Form No.

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The Fair Oaks mansion at 125 Allen's Point Road was built in the Tudor Revival style. This style in America was an Anglophile phenomenon that emerged in suburban communities in the early 20th century and saw peak popularity in the 1920s. Based loosely on post-Medieval English building traditions, the style inspired often-romantic "storybook" houses that frequently incorporated details from the contemporaneous Craftsman style. The Tudor Revival is characterized by asymmetry, steeply pitched roofs, half-timbering, masonry cladding, one or more prominent front-facing gables, nested gables, casement and double-hung windows with multi-light glazing, massive elaborated chimneys, and catslide roofs. Nearly all of these features are evident in the subject house.

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.

This house is located on Allen's Point, a spur of land on the eastern shore of Sippican Harbor almost directly across the harbor from Marion Village, the commercial and residential center of the town. Maritime industries drove Marion's economy until the mid-19th century, when the advent of rail service helped to shift the town's economic base to tourism. Affluent urban dwellers from cities like Boston and New York were now able to travel in comfort to seaside destinations like Marion, and the town began to attract many notable political, literary, and art world figures. Initially visitors stayed at hotels or rented private houses, but as the end of the century neared and Marion became nationally known as a desirable vacation destination, wealthy individuals began to build their own permanent summer residences. Set on the harbor, Allen's Point was one of the areas which saw this development. With its convenient access to Buzzard's Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, it was especially attractive to those interested in recreational boating.



1879 map.



1903 map. Subject property at blue arrow.

The 1879 map at left shows Allen's Point (blue arrow) as largely undeveloped farm land. However, by the turn of the 20th century the area had been subdivided and settled with a number of large summer residences as seen on the 1903 map. These imposing houses include an outstanding collection of Shingle Style, Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival residences.

George Delano (1821-1890) is shown as the owner of the roughly 70-acre tract of undeveloped farm land known as Allen's Point on the 1879 map. In

1902 Delano's two surviving sons, Stephen Clark Luce Delano and Charles Henry Leonard Delano, conveyed their interest in the property to Elizabeth (Lizzie) Reed Delano, the widow of their late brother James Delano. Lizzie Delano engaged John M. Allen, a local architect and real estate developer, to subdivide the property and in 1903 he drew up a land plan dividing the tract into eight parcels of between eight and ten acres. These parcels were quickly settled with summer residences and over time the parcels would be further subdivided. For details of the land transactions and subdivision of Allen's Point, please see the narrative description on the 2023 updated data sheet for Area Form MRN.C.

Otis Atherton Shepard (1859-1938) and his brothers Horace B. Shepard (1855-1944) and Thomas H. Shepard (1866-1963) purchased three parcels (#4, 6 and 7) from Lizzie Delano's 1903 subdivision plan. The Shepard family was in the wholesale lumber business in Boston. Horace and Thomas Shepard operated the Shepard & Morse Lumber Company which had been started by their father, Otis Shepard. They were also the founders of the Shepard Steamship Company. Otis Atherton Shepard was a principal of the lumber firm Blacker & Shepard.

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The subject building is the main house and centerpiece of the Shepard estate known as Fair Oaks, which was used as a summer residence. It stands on Lot # 4, which was purchased by Otis Atherton Shepard of Brookline from Lizzie Delano in 1902. It can be assumed that the house was constructed by Otis Shepard shortly after the land was acquired. (The property was erroneously labeled H.B. Shepard on the 1903 map.) This large house and several of its outbuildings were designed by Boston architects Coolidge & Carlson in the Tudor Revival Style. The firm was led by Joseph Randolph Coolidge, Jr. (1864-1928), a graduate of Harvard College who studied architecture at the Ecolé des Beaux-Arts in Paris and the University of Berlin. The firm has been credited with the design of ten residences in Marion at the turn of the 20th century, all of them located on Allen's Point Road, West Drive, and Point Road.² The garden was designed by landscape architect Arthur Asahel Shurcliff (1870–1957), the nationally-known designer of Colonial Williamsburg and the Charles River Esplanade in Boston (BOS.ZI).³ In addition to residential work, Coolidge & Carlson were responsible for a number of commercial, municipal and academic buildings including Claflin Hall at Wellesley College, (1917, WEL.436) and the West Hill Apartment House (1916, BOS.15879) and Brimmer Street Garage (1909, BOS.15711) in Boston.

After less than a decade of ownership by the Shepard family, the property was sold in 1911 by Otis Atherton Shepard to a Philadelphia banker/stockbroker George C. Thomas (1839-1909) and his wife Ada Elizabeth Moorehead (1843-1924). They owned it for only three years before the death of George Thomas. The property was then purchased by Elizabeth F. Clark (b.1869) and her husband Edward A. Clark (1868-1922). Edward Andrews Clark, also a stock broker, lived in Boston with his wife and family and a staff of eight servants. An image of the house during Clark's ownership appeared in the Oct. 22, 1919 issue of *American Architect & Building News*. The Clarks' ownership ended with the death of Edward Clark and the property was sold in 1922 to Richard F. Hoyt whose family also owned a house on Allen's Point.

Richard Farnsworth Hoyt (1888-1935) was the son of Charles Chase Hoyt (1855-1941) and Emma Josephine Farnsworth (b.1861). His sister Katharyn [var. Katherine] Hoyt Watson (1889-1936) and her husband Lester Watson (1889-1949) owned the house next door at 111 Allen's Point Road (ca.1920, Charles C. Hoyt House, MRN. 601). Richard Hoyt and his wife Katherine Stone (1890-1936) lived in New York City. Richard Hoyt was a banker, aviation investor, pilot and sportsman. He served as chair of the Madison Square Garden Corporation, was a director of 76 corporations at the time he retired as a vice president of the Hayden Stone investment bank, and served as chairman of the board of the Wright Aeronautical Corporation.⁴ A benefactor of Tabor Academy, Hoyt served as chairman of the board of trustees and donated the athletic fields to the school.⁵ An article about the house in the *Wall Street Journal* in 2021 quoted a *New York Times* article stating that Hoyt commuted from Marion to New York City at 100 mph in his amphibian plane with a Wright Cyclone engine and luxurious cabin accommodations.⁶

When Richard and Katherine Hoyt were divorced in 1931, he conveyed the subject property to her. In 1946 the property was conveyed by her estate to her daughter, Virginia Hoyt Peirson (1915-1958). She was married in 1937 to Charles Lawrence Peirson, who was with the Boston investment firm Russell, Berg & Company. He was an officer of the United States Golf Association and a member of the Brookline Country Club and the Kittansett Club in Marion. Virginia and Charles Peirson had five daughters, including Patricia Peirson (b.1938) who was married to Dennis DeBruyn of Boston. In 1975 the property was acquired by Brant, DeBruyn, a Massachusetts limited partnership of which Patricia DeBruyn was a general partner. Hoyt family ownership ended in 1997 when the property was purchased by the current owner.

² 123 Allen's Point Road (ca.1903, Shepard-Clark Stable, MRN.68); 125 Allen's Point Road (ca.1903, Shepard-Clark House / Fair Oaks, MRN.67); 131 Allen's Point Road (ca.1915, Shepard-Clark Boathouse, MRN.71); 131 Allen's Point Road (ca.1915, Shepard-Clark Garage, MRN.70); 151 Allen's Point Road (ca.1903, Elmer F. Smith House, MRN.72); 456 Point Road (ca.1898, F.C. Bowditch House, MRN.54); 8 West Drive (ca.1900, Charles W. Leatherbee House, MRN.175); 14 West Drive (ca. 1900, A.W. Bliss House, MRN.176); 24 West Drive (ca. 1900 Charles W. Butterfield House, MRN.177); 28 West Drive (ca. 1900, Charles W. Leonard House, MRN.178).

³ 125 Allen's Point Road (ca.1910s, Edward M. Clark Garden Landscape, MRN.904)

⁴ "Richard F. Hoyt," *New York Daily News*, New York, NY. March 8, 1935.

⁵ "Tabor Academy Benefactor Dies," *Standard Times*, New Bedford, MA. March 8, 1935.

⁶ "Making a Blended Family Home by the Sea," *Wall Street Journal*, New York, NY. April 9, 2021.

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Edward C. Clark House as it appeared in *American Architect & Building News*, Oct. 22, 1919.

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 Edward Gordon (1998) / Lynn Smiledge (2023)

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

This house is recommended as a contributing element to a potential National Register Historic District which would include properties on Allen's Point, a small area situated on a peninsula between Blankenship's Cove on the east and Sippican Harbor on the west. This area is home to a collection of high-style seasonal residences in the Shingle Style, Tudor Revival, and Colonial Revival styles constructed in the early 20th century. The area includes the Coolidge & Carlson- designed 125 Allen's Point Road (ca.1903, MRN.67) with a garden designed by noted landscape architect Arthur Shurcliff, and its ancillary buildings now at 123 Allen's Point Road (ca.1902, MRN.68) and 131 Allen's Point Road (ca.1904, MRN.71). The house at 151 Allen's Point Road (ca.1903, MRN.72) has also been attributed to Coolidge & Carlson.

The Allen's Point Area is recommended as eligible for listing as a National Register District at the local, and possibly the state, level under Criterion C for Architecture for its nearly intact collection of distinctive dwellings. The majority of the resources here retain substantial integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association.