

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

17-25C

Marion

MRN.610

Town/City: Marion

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Address: 160 Converse Road

Historic Name: Job T. Jenney Farm

Uses: Present: Residential

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: Possibly ca. 1800

Source: Visual analysis

Style/Form: Federal Cape

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Fieldstone

Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Workshop (1880)

Guest house (1850)

Barn (19th c.)

Two farm outbuildings

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

South ell (late-20th c.)

Barn addition (1990)

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 57.49

Setting: Diverse residential neighborhood developed in the mid-19th – early 20th centuries. Housing stock represents a range of styles including Cape, Federal, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Craftsman and Colonial Revival. Settled mostly with moderately-sized, wood-frame, single-family houses on small- to large-sized lots.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (*month/year*): October 2023

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.

160 Converse Road occupies a nearly 60-acre, polygonal parcel on the west side of Converse Road. The large property contains a creek, two sizeable ponds, and areas of marshland. Twenty-nine acres at the northern portion of the property are protected by a conservation restriction that restricts their use to agricultural or recreational purposes. A cluster of buildings that includes the house occupies the southeastern quarter of the property and is surrounded by lawn dotted with shrubs, trees, planting beds, and landscape structures including a pergola and gazebo. Intersecting stone walls and horse paddocks cross the property, creating retaining walls and enclosures. The buildings are approached by a paved driveway bordered by tall trees and a drystone wall that enters the property from Converse Road and ends in a circle in front of the house. The dwelling faces west above a granite-curbed terrace and is surrounded by low foundation plantings. A drystone wall extending the length of the eastern lot line along Converse Road borders a cultivated field. An expansive cleared area northwest of the house is maintained in grazing land and cultivated fields.

The house comprises a one-and-one-half-story, five-bay-by-two-bay, side-gabled main block with three principal dependencies. The main block was constructed ca. 1800 in the full Cape form and with its dependencies, reflects a typical New England connected farm house. The main block retains most if not all of its original character-defining features. The house rests on a fieldstone foundation and is clad in wood shingles. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. A substantial brick chimney is centered on the roof ridge at the main block in alignment with the entry. A gable-wall chimney at the north elevation is enclosed by the north ell.

Trim elements at the main block include narrow corner boards and frieze boards. Three pedimented gable dormers occupy the east roof slope at the façade (east elevation). The windows at the first story are double-hung, twelve-over-twelve sash with flat surrounds which touch the frieze board at the façade. Second story and dormer openings contain six-over-six windows. A single four-light closet eave window is seen at the south elevation of the main block. The center entry contains a six-panel wood door with a molded surrounds and five-light transom. The door fronts a stone walkway that steps down from the curbed terrace and joins the driveway.

The one-story, side-gabled south ell rises from a rubblestone foundation and aligns with the façade of the main block. Two bays wide and two bays deep, it has a gullwing roof at the east elevation and contemporary fenestration including double, triple, and ribbon windows with six-over-six sash. Although it may have subsumed an earlier ell, this addition appears to be of 20th century construction and may represent one of two additions noted on the town assessor's card built in 1967 and 1974. A double gable dormer occupies the east roof slope. A glass-and-panel door at the north bay is flanked by a single, full-height, one-light sidelight. A cantilevered porch with a slat-work railing spans the ell and is accessed by three-step stairs at its northeast and southwest corners. Stone walkways from both stairs lead to the driveway.

A two-story, side-gabled barn structure is attached to the southwest corner of the ell. Three bays wide and two bays deep, it has nine-over-nine windows at the first story and six-over-six windows at the second story. A glass-and-panel door at the northernmost bay opens to a paved terrace that spans the barn and is enclosed by a low hedge. A four-part ribbon window is centered at the first story at the south elevation and a semi-circular opening with a molded surround occupies the gable peak. A long gabled addition at the rear elevation of the south ell cannot be seen from the driveway. The plan of the house and an aerial view show that it ends in a semi-circular sunroom.

A long, one-story, hip-roofed structure described as a workshop is sited directly north of the house. Built in 1880 according to the town assessor's card, it is wood-shingled with an entry and 24-light, industrial-type windows separated by wooden piers at the east elevation. East of the workshop at the driveway is a small, one-story, four-bay-by-three-bay building identified as a guest

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house. Built in 1850 of rubblestone with wood shingles at the gable peaks, it has segmentally arched windows containing double-hung, six-over-six sash. Arched openings containing glass-and-panel doors occupy the center bay at the west elevation and the easternmost bay at the south elevation. A shed-roofed, wood-shingled addition with a concrete foundation spans the north elevation.

A large, L-shaped barn with a gambrel roof is sited off the northwest corner of the guest house and faces south. The front-gabled, gambrel-roofed main block is three bays wide, four bays deep, two-and-one-half stories tall, and clad in wood clapboards. A square cupola vent with a weathervane caps the roof. Fenestration at the façade includes a centered vertical-plank, two-leaf barn door on an overhead track flanked by six-over-six windows with flat surrounds and semi-circular transoms; the transoms have been obscured with painted metal covers. Matching windows at the second story are surmounted by an oversized, two-leaf arched window containing multi-light sash separated by spandrels and topped by a hay hook. The "foot" of the L-shaped barn is a one-story, hip-roofed addition that extends from the west wall of the main block. It has a matching cupola vent and contemporary fenestration.

The Cape Cod house form, exemplified in the main block of this dwelling, is a one-story side-gabled house with a central chimney and steeply-pitched roof. The type emerged in southeastern New England ca. 1700 and saw continued use through the mid-19th century. The full Cape design was one of the later iterations of the house type. Defining characteristics of the Cape form illustrated in this house include the full Cape configuration (five bays with centered entry), side-gabled roof, center chimney, narrow corner and frieze boards, and entry in alignment with the chimney. Federal-era (1780-1820) features include the door transom and six-over-six windows. The twelve-over-twelve window sash configuration at the first story is characteristic of the earlier Georgian period (1725–1780).

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. The town has historically consisted of a northern portion, often referred to as the Old Landing, and a southern portion, known once as Wharf Village but more commonly referred to today as The Village or Marion Village.

This house is located in the southernmost portion of Converse Road which runs from Marion Village southward towards Converse Point (formerly called Charles Neck Point), the end of the peninsula which forms the western side of Sippican Harbor. Originally called Nye Street, Converse Road was also inconsistently known as Pleasant Street or Charles Neck Road. When the 1903 map was drawn, this section of Marion was largely open with only a few scattered buildings. Today, the area is settled with late-20th and early-21st century houses at the midpoint of Charles Neck, and much earlier dwellings on large parcels at the southern part of the Neck as it approaches Converse Point.

1855 map.

This property is seen on historic maps of Marion with the owner shown as Job Jenney (1855), J. Jenney (1879), and Job T. Jenney (1903). The earliest recorded conveyance found for the property was its sale in 1915 by Annie C. Jenney to Harry E. Converse.

Job Jenney [2] (1808-1873), a master farmer and the owner shown on the 1855 map, was the son of Job Jenney [1] (1778-1834) and Eunice Perry Jenney (1775-1848). His parents were married in 1800 and the apparent age of the house suggests that it was built by them around the time of their marriage. The owner shown on the 1879 and 1903 maps was Job Thomas Jenney [3] (1839-1915), the son of Job Jenney [2] and Priscilla Jenney (1805-1877). The 1860 census reported Job T. Jenney [3] as a mariner and his obituary stated that he served on whalers out of Fall River.¹ By 1880 Job T. Jenney [3] had left the sea and taken over operation of the family farm. Later in life he turned to engineering, and according to his obituary held a master

¹ Job T. Jenney obituary, uncited source. January 20, 1915.

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engineer's license and ran steamrollers.² Job T. Jenney [3] was married to Annie B. Cassidy (1857-1940), with whom he had an adopted daughter, Mollie Canfield Jenney Bush. The 1910 census listed him living on Pleasant Street and working as an engineer/stone crusher. His widow Annie sold the farm to Harry Converse in 1915.

Colonel Harry Elisha Converse (1863-1920) was the son of Malden shoe manufacturer Elisha S. Converse (1820-1904) and an executive at the Boston Rubber Shoe Company that his father had founded in 1853. In 1903 Harry Converse built "The Moorings" (demolished in 1924), a Shingle Style dwelling considered to be the largest wood frame house in New England. It was set on a large, gardened estate at Charles Neck overlooking the entrance to Sippican Harbor and Buzzards Bay. Shortly before his death in 1920, Converse conveyed the subject property to his son Parker Converse, who sold it a few years later to Maurice E. Caldwell.

Maurice Edward Caldwell (1889-1969), who was born in Nova Scotia, emigrated to the United States with his family in 1890. The 1900 census showed the Caldwells living in Lowell. Maurice Caldwell was married in Dover, New Hampshire in 1908 to Marion Ethel Simonds. The couple purchased the subject property in 1926 and the 1930 census noted Maurice's occupation as farmer. Their mortgage on the property was foreclosed in 1935, and the property was sold that year to James A. Arne.

Dr. James Arne (1896-1957), the son of Norwegian immigrant parents, was born in Goldfield, Iowa. He and his wife Frances Leverone came to Marion in 1936 after James Arne had practiced medicine in Medford for 25 years. He was an active member of the community and a founding member of the Marion Lions Club. Arne was also interested in poultry husbandry and developed a modern, large-scale poultry production facility called Merry Land Farm on the property.³ In 1967 the property was sold to George C. and Ormsby Matthiessen.

Oceanographer George Carey Matthiessen owned this property from 1967 until 1973. The son of Erard A. and Elizabeth Carey Matthiessen, he received a PhD in marine biology from Harvard University and served as a naval officer during the Korean War. Matthiessen was a conservationist and studied and wrote extensively on oysters. At the time the property was sold in 1973, Matthiessen granted a conservation restriction on a 29-acre portion of the parcel to the Town of Marion which limited its use to agriculture or recreation.⁴

The property was purchased by the current owners in 1984.

Title Research

Date	Book-Page (Certificate)	Grantor	Grantee
09-17-1984	5787-270	Joyce C. West, Trustee	Robert L. & Mary M. Merrow
07-17-1973	3924-131	George C. & Ormsby H. Matthiessen	Joyce C. West, Trustee
03-21-1972	3884-656	George C. & Ormsby H. Matthiessen	Town of Marion Conservation Com.
02-17-1967	3349-442	Frances Arne	George C. & Ormsby H. Matthiessen
10-22-1940	1801-417	Lawrence Appleman	James A. & Frances Arne
10-22-1940	1801-417	James A. Arne	Lawrence Appleman
05-08-1935	1693-117	Federal Land Bank of Springfield	James A. Arne
08-02-1932	1631-479	Maurice E. Caldwell	Federal Land Bank of Springfield
07-06-1926	1508-407	Parker Converse	Maurice Caldwell
01-06-1920	1369-551	Harry E. Converse	Parker Converse
11-22-1915	1236-59	Annie C. Jenney	Harry E. Converse

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

² Ibid.

³ "Poultry Farm Conducted on Modern Lines," uncited newspaper, Dec. 12, 1941.

⁴ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds Book 3884, Page 656.

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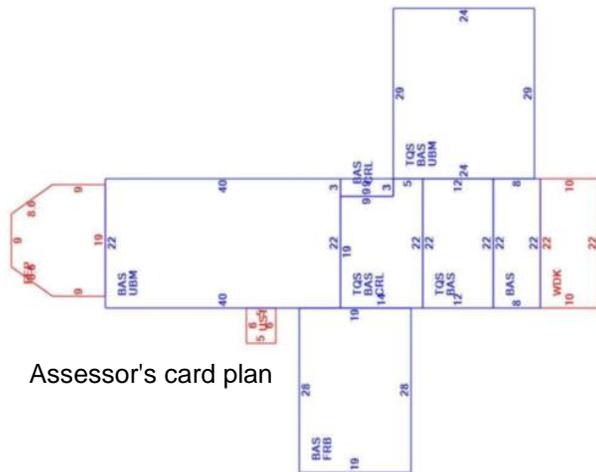
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Map of the Town of Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts 1855 H.F. Walling
McAlester, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2019.
Plymouth County Registry of Deeds
Rosbe, Judith. *Marion*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000.
Rosbe, Judith. *Marion in the Golden Age*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009.
Sippican Historical Society: online database
Sommers, Olive Hill. *Three Centuries of Marion Houses*. Marion, 1972.
Smith, Pete. (ed.) *A Picture Postcard History of Marion, Massachusetts*. New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2008.



South and east (façade) elevations.



Guest house (1850). West and south elevations.

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Barn (19th c.) South and east elevations.