

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

17-46C	Marion		MRN.608
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Town/City: Marion

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Address: 125 Converse Road

Historic Name: Elizabeth H. Wisner House

Uses: Present: Residential

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: Ca. 1900

Source: Visual analysis

Style/Form: Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

- Foundation: Fieldstone
- Wall/Trim: Vinyl siding / Vinyl & wood
- Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Garage (1987)

Photograph



Locus Map



Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Vinyl siding

Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 3.97

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.

Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (*month/year*): October 2023

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

125 Converse Road

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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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 Converse Road occupies a long, narrow parcel on the east side of Converse Road that stretches to the western shore of Sippican Harbor and transitions to wetlands from west to east. The house is set back from the street near the northern property line in the western quarter of the parcel; the dwelling faces south with its west elevation fronting the street. The property surrounding the house is maintained in lawn; a row of granite fence posts marks the northern property line, and random granite posts are scattered around the house. Low foundation plantings surround the dwelling. A drystone wall lined by a row of tall trees borders the western lot line and turns east to partially frame the paved driveway that enters the property from Converse Road near the southwest corner of the parcel. Granite fence posts flank the driveway entrance. The driveway runs east, serving a garage sited off the southeast corner of the subject house, and ends at 129 Converse Road (ca.1913, John H. Wisner Cottage, MRN.609). The dwellings at 125 and 129 Converse Road occupy the same parcel and now form a condominium.

The house comprises a two-story, three-bay-by-two-bay, side-gabled main block with a one-story ell at the east elevation. It has a steep gambrel roof with overhanging eaves and a shed-roofed porch spanning the easternmost two bays at the façade (south elevation). Constructed ca. 1900 in the Colonial Revival style, it retains many of its original character-defining features. The house rests on a fieldstone foundation and is clad in vinyl clapboards. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles and carries a small brick chimney centered at the roof ridge.

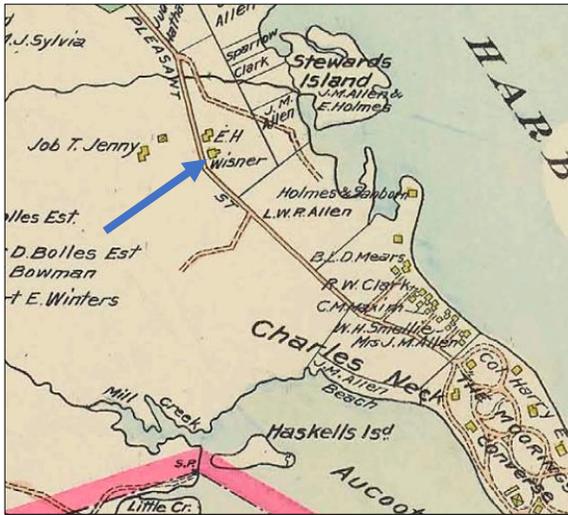
Openings at the first story at the façade are asymmetrically placed and comprise a mulled window with double-hung, six-over-six windows at the westernmost bay; a single double-hung, six-over-six window at the easternmost bay; and an off-center entry between them containing a glass-and-panel door. The windows have narrow flat surrounds and blinds. The entry and easternmost window are sheltered by a shed-roofed open porch with square posts and a vinyl-sided knee wall. The west end of the porch deck opens to a stone step and stone walkway leading to a small gravel parking area at the southwest corner of the house. A pair of shed dormers containing mulled six-over-six windows occupies the lower roof slope.

A tripartite shed-roofed oriel containing an eight-over-eight window flanked by six-over-six sash is centered at the first story at the west elevation. Openings at the second story and at the rear (north) elevation comprise six-over-six windows with blinds. Three shed dormers containing mulled six-over-six sash occupy the lower roof slope at the north elevation. The two-bay-by-one-bay ell is set back from the façade of the main block and aligns along its north elevation. Side gabled, it is one story in height with an added story adjacent to the main block that carries a shed dormer with two six-over-six windows. A door at the eastern bay fronts a stone stoop that joins a stone terrace at the southeast corner of the house. A paved walkway leads from the terrace to the two-car garage, which is front-gabled and clad in vinyl siding. It contains paneled overhead garage doors with integrated transoms.

125 Converse Road is an example of the Colonial Revival style. The Colonial Revival period in America (1880–1955) saw a resurgence of patriotism and a return to the architectural styles of the early years of the republic. Combining the classical architectural elements of the Georgian, Federal and Greek Revival periods, the Colonial Revival style was the most popular style in America for private and public buildings between the World Wars. The characteristic Colonial Revival features of this house include the gambrel roof, shed dormers, and six-over-six window glazing.

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.



1903 map.

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.

This house appears on the 1903 map as the southernmost of two buildings with E.H. [Elizabeth Horner] Wisner shown as the owner. The northernmost building is the property at 135 Converse Road (ca.1819, Weston Allen-E.H. Wisner House, MRN.10). The subject building is a gambrel-roofed Colonial Revival style house built around the turn of the 20th century, probably for Elizabeth H. and/or Josephine Wisner.

Elizabeth Horner [var. Hornor] Wisner (1842-1930) was the daughter of William Henry Wisner and Eleanor Bowne Hornor of New York City. In a series of transactions beginning in the late 19th century, Elizabeth Wisner and her sister Josephine Wisner (1848-1914), both unmarried, purchased land on the eastern side of Converse Road including the subject property. In 1913, Elizabeth and Josephine Wisner conveyed all of their real estate holdings to their nephew, John H. Wisner, Jr.



Approximate boundaries of John H. Wisner properties in 1919.

John Hornor Wisner Jr. (1879-1973) was born in Shanghai, China. Wisner was an engineer and a principal at Wesshoeff & Wisner, a highly successful international firm specializing in railroad construction founded by his father, John Horner Wisner, Sr. The senior Wisner built a Colonial Revival country estate in Summit, New Jersey now known as "The Clearing," the Reeves-Reed Arboretum.¹ He was married to Sybil Holmes Buck (193-2004) in 1930. Summit, New Jersey was the couple's primary residence for 45 years and the adjacent property at 135 Converse Road (ca. 1819, Weston-Allen E.H. Wisner House, MRN.10) in Marion was their summer home. In 1919 Wisner acquired an additional group of properties from George C. Thomas, bringing the total area under his ownership to 45 plus acres (shown at left). The subject property was conveyed to his wife Sybil shortly before his death, and she owned it until it was sold by her estate in 2008. At that point the property included several dwelling houses and outbuildings (see the land plan below). The large property was purchased by a development company, Copper Medal LLC, which converted the property to condominiums.

This subject building was purchased by the current owner in 2021.

¹ <https://www.reeves-reedarboretum.org/discover/history/?The-Reeves-the-Reeds-The-Clearing-3>

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MARION

125 Converse Road

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220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

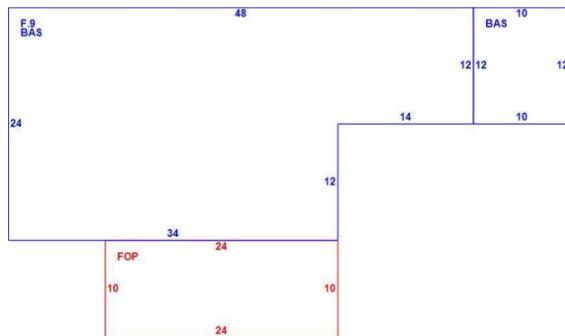
	MRN.608
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Title Research

Date	Book-Page (Certificate)	Grantor	Grantee	Plan Reference
01-27-2021	54280-335	Copper Medal, LLC	Mourad Choach	
09-30-2008	36405-338	Estate of Sybil H. Wisner	Copper Medal LLC	Book 94 Page 771
12-02-1972	3844-293	John H. Wisner, Jr.	John H., Jr. & Sybil H. Wisner	
12-30-1919	1359-576	George C. Thomas	John H. Wisner, Jr.	
07-11-1913	1162-99	Elizabeth H. Wisner & Josephine Wisner	John H. Wisner, Jr.	

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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- 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
- 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.
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- 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.



Assessor's card plan