

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

24-12	Marion		MRN.41
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**Town/City:** Marion

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

**Address:** 533 Mill Street

**Historic Name:** Barnabas Holmes House

**Uses:** Present: Commercial

Original: Residential

**Date of Construction:** Possibly ca. 1818

**Source:** Visual analysis

**Style/Form:** Federal Cape

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Granite block

Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Garage (1957)

Indoor tennis club (1972)

Three boat warehouses (2000)

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):

North ell (19<sup>th</sup> c.)

Screened porch (20<sup>th</sup> c.)

**Condition:** Poor - Fair

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

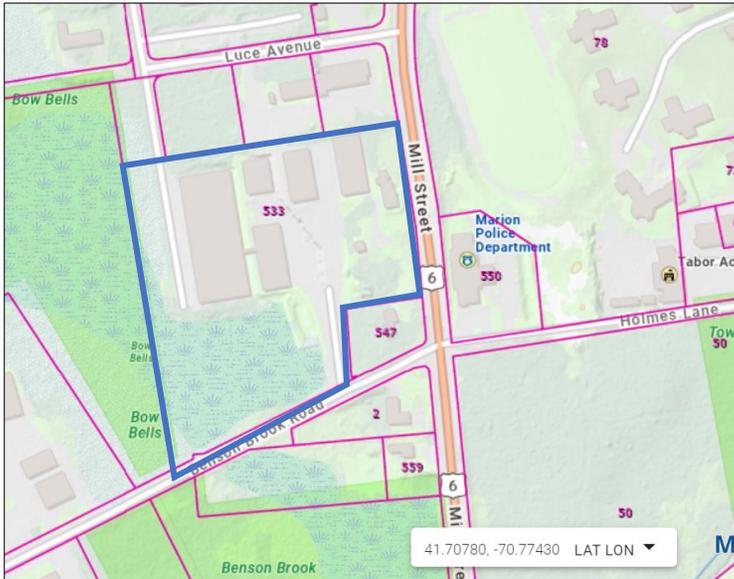
**Acreage:** 8.96

**Setting:** Sparsely settled area along Mill Street (Rte. 6) south of Marion Village near the southwest corner of Marion. Rural area of former farmland principally developed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century now features a mix of residential and commercial properties.

## Photograph



## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Lynn Smiledge

**Organization:** Marion Historical Commission

**Date** (*month/year*): January 2024

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

533 MILL 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.*

**533 Mill Street** occupies a nine-acre polygonal lot on the northwest corner of the intersection of Benson Brook Road and Mill Street. The house, which is now used as an office, is set back from the street in the northeast corner of the parcel and faces east. The property is maintained primarily in patchy lawn dotted with shrubs and mature trees. The lawn transitions in a southwesterly direction to marsh land, which occupies the southwestern third of the property. A manicured hedge borders the eastern lot line along Mill Street and ends near the southeast corner of the lot, where a low stone wall marks the entrance to the property. A gravel driveway enters there and turns north, passing a two-car garage sited off the southwest corner of the house and ending behind the rear (west) elevation of the dwelling. Four large commercial buildings located behind the house along the northern property line are accessed from a driveway off Luce Street to the north.

This house comprises a one-and-one-half-story, five-bay-by-two-bay, side-gabled main block with a long, one-story, six-bay-by-one-bay north ell. The house was constructed ca.1818 in the full Cape style and retains many of its original character-defining features. Local historians have suggested that elements of an 18<sup>th</sup> century dwelling may have been incorporated into the house, an idea that is supported by the presence of early window sash configurations (twelve-over-twelve and nine-over-six). The dwelling rises from a high granite block foundation. The walls are clad in wood shingles and 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 second brick chimney is centered on the roof ridge at the southernmost three-bay-wide portion of the early ell.

Trim elements at the main block comprise narrow corner and frieze boards. The windows at the first story contain double-hung, twelve-over-twelve sash with true divided lights, narrow flat surrounds, and splayed lintels. The openings at the façade (east elevation) have blinds. The second story windows contain six-over-nine sash. The centered entry at the façade contains a six-panel wood door framed by channeled pilasters and a transom which has been covered with a wood panel. The entablature has been removed and replaced with random trim boards. The door fronts a small concrete stoop and step that lands at the lawn. A gabled cellar entry with an arched two-leaf door occupies the rear (west) wall of the main block.

The north ell is set back from the façade of the main block and aligns along its west elevation. A 19<sup>th</sup>-century extension at the north wall of the ell added three bays to its length. A flat-roofed screened porch addition spanning the original three-bay portion of the ell obscures the openings at its facade. The porch bays are separated by rectangular posts carrying arched spandrels at the frieze. A screen door at the porch fronts a stone walkway and a three-rise stone banking step leading to a gravel walkway that leads to a break in the hedge at Mill Street. A small shed-roofed lean-to projects from the northern extension of the ell at the façade. A one-story, three-bay-by-three-bay, shed-roofed enclosed porch occupies the junction of the original ell and its northern extension at the rear (west) elevation of the house. The windows at the ell include a combination of twelve-over-twelve, six-over-six, two-over-two sash, and fixed single sash.

The Cape Cod house form, a one-story side-gabled house with a central chimney and steeply-pitched roof, emerged in southeastern New England ca. 1700 and saw continued use through the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The full Cape design was one of the later iterations of the house type. Defining characteristics of the Cape style illustrated in this house include the full Cape configuration (five bays with centered entry), side-gabled roof, and center chimney. The remaining trim elements suggest several architectural time periods. The twelve-over-twelve and nine-over-six window sash suggest the Georgian period (1725-1780). The splayed window lintels, door transom, and six-over-six windows are characteristic of the Federal style (1780-1820), and the entry surround and pilasters, although altered, appear to date to the Greek Revival period (1830-1850).

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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.



1855 map.

Marion Village, 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 or Sippican, but is more commonly referred to today as The Village or Marion Village. This house is located on Mill Street (MA Route 6) which runs north-to-south along the west side of Marion Village. The 1855 map shows this western border of the town center as sparsely settled with a few scattered farmsteads.

The subject house appears on the 1855 and 1879 maps with B. [Barnabas] Holmes shown as the owner. The 1903 map shows the house and a very large property directly across the street owned by the B. Holmes Estate. The earliest recorded conveyance found for this property was its sale by Roland and Timothy Luce to Edwin C. Luce in 1914. The Luce had acquired the property via probate from the estate of Barnabas Holmes.

Barnabas Holmes [II] (1798-1855) was the son of Barnabas Holmes [I] (1772-1799) and Bethiah Nye (1772-1848). A farmer, he was first married in 1818 to Priscilla Handy (1796-1827), and after her death to Sylvia Delano (1796-1861).

The apparent age of the house suggests that it was built by Barnabas Holmes [II] around the time of his first marriage in 1818. However, the 1998 Building Form B for the property states that the house may incorporate a portion of an earlier structure,<sup>1</sup> suggesting that the original house may have been constructed by his father Barnabas Holmes [I]. Forensic investigation of the structure and fabric of the house would be required to determine its age and evolution. The large Holmes family was among Marion's earliest settlers and was influential in the development of the town.

Barnabas and Priscilla had two daughters, Jane (1819-1862) and Mary (1822-1858). Barnabas and his second wife Sylvia had a son, Barnabas Holmes [III] (1833-1902), who is shown on the 1879 and 1903 maps as the owner of the house. Barnabas Holmes [III] married Sarah Almira Ellis (1836-1911) in 1856 and was listed in the 1860 census as a master farmer. The 1870 census reported him living in Mattapoisett and employed as a school teacher. His wife Sarah was reported as a mulatto in both censuses. By 1880 the couple has moved to Elizabeth, New Jersey, where Barnabas was teaching school. The 1900 census shows them living in Elizabeth with Barnabas now a school principal. The couple had returned to Marion by the time of his death in 1902. The 1998 MHC Building Form B for the property notes that Barnabas was a Quaker. He and his wife Sarah were benefactors of Marion, leaving a bequest to the Old Landing Cemetery Association, a 15-acre parcel of land called "Holmes Woods" to the town, and trusts to several Marion churches.<sup>2</sup>

Mary Holmes, the half-sister of Barnabas Holmes [III], was married in 1844 to ship carpenter Edwin Hiller Luce (1820-1856). The couple's three children, Roland L. Luce, Timothy H. Luce, and Edwin C. Luce, inherited the house from the estate of Barnabas Holmes [III]. In 1914 Edwin C. Luce purchased his brothers' interest in the subject property. He was married in Marion in 1885 to Mary Ellen Boyson, with whom he had two children, Edwin Clifford Luce, Jr. (1898-1948) and Jennie H. Luce. Jennie was married to Thomas F. Twomey, who was listed in the 1930 census as a rail road conductor living on Mill Street with his father-in-law Edwin C. Luce, his wife Jennie, and his six children. The property was devised to the couple's daughter Mary E. Twomey (1924-2002) and her siblings. Mary E. Twomey, a 1942 graduate of Tabor Academy, became a licensed practical nurse. She and her siblings sold the property in 1994 to Burr Brothers Boats, Inc., which repurposed the subject house for commercial use as an office. Three boat warehouses were built on the property along with an indoor tennis club.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Gordon, "Barnabas Holmes House," MHC B Form MRN.41 (1998).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

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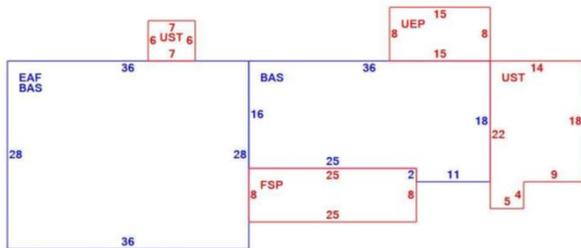
MRN.41

## Title Research

Date	Book-Page (Certificate)	Grantor	Grantee
11-17-1994	(87299)	Sippican, Inc.	Burr Brother Boats Inc.
.10-14-1994	(87298)	Mary E. Twomey et al.	Sippican, Inc.
04-08-1993	(84455)	New Certificate of Title	Mary E. Twomey et al.
Probate		Estate of Edwin C. Luce	Mary E. Twomey et al.
07-07-1914	1199-105	Roland L. Luce & Timothy H. Luce	Edwin C. Luce
Probate		Estate of Barnabas Holmes	Roland L. Luce, Timothy H. Luce, & Edwin C. Luce

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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Assessor's card plan



West and south elevations.