

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

2-24	Marion		MRN.51
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Town/City: Marion
Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Sippican Neck
Address: 336 Point Road
Historic Name: Josiah Briggs – Caleb Macomber House
Uses: Present: Residential
Original: Residential
Date of Construction: Possibly ca. 1795
Source: Visual analysis
Style/Form: Colonial Cape
Architect/Builder: Unknown
Exterior Material:
Foundation: Fieldstone
Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood
Roof: Asphalt shingle
Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
Cottage (2006)

Photograph



Locus Map



Major Alterations (*with dates*):
South block & hyphen (after 1998)

Condition: Good
Moved: no yes **Date:**
Acreage: 1.36

Setting: Moderately settled area developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with summer residences. Housing stock comprises moderate- to large-sized houses on large lots. Terrain characterized by dense woods at the central portion of the peninsula bordered by marshland and beach along the shoreline perimeter.

Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge
Organization: Marion Historical Commission
Date (*month/year*): June 2024

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

336 Point Road

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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.

336 Point Road occupies a trapezoidal lot on the west side of Point Road. The southwest corner of the parcel abuts conservation land. The house is set back from the street near the northeast corner of the parcel and faces east. The property is maintained chiefly in lawn dotted with shrubs and clusters of mature trees. Large trees border the eastern property line along the street. Scattered foundation plantings line the façade (west elevation) and a tall trellis spans the south block. A gravel driveway enters the property from Point Road near the midpoint of the eastern lot line and ends in a parking area at the south block of the house. A small residence in the western half of the property was constructed in the 21st century.

This house was constructed ca. 1795 in the full Cape form and retains a high degree of architectural integrity. It comprises a one-and-one-half-story, five-bay-by-two-bay, side-gabled main block with a one-and-one-half-story, side-gabled south block connected to it by a one-story hyphen. The main block rests on a fieldstone foundation. The walls are clad in weathered wood shingles and the roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. A short brick replacement chimney is centered on the roof ridge at the main block in alignment with the entry. The asymmetrical window and door placement at the main block suggests that this may have originally been a half Cape form (three bays wide) that was later expanded by two additional bays.

Trim elements at the main block include corner and frieze boards. The windows at all locations contain double-hung six-over-six sash framed by flat surrounds; the windows at the façade touch the frieze board. The centered entry contains a batten door with strap hinges framed by a narrow flat surround and a four-light transom. The door fronts a shallow granite stoop. A continuous shed dormer occupies the west (rear) roof slope.

The two dependencies are trimmed with narrow corner boards. The east elevation of the south block, which was designed to resemble a barn, is pierced by three fixed, six-light sash set at the overhanging cornice. The block is capped by a square cupola with six-light sash at each plane; the cupola has a metal hipped roof topped by a weathervane.

The one-story, side-gabled hyphen connecting the main and south blocks is two bays wide. A recessed entry containing a contemporary multi-light door flanked by a multi-light sidelight occupies the north bay. It fronts a shallow deck and a stone walkway that curves to join the driveway. Mulled four-over-four sash occupy the south bay.

A 1972 photograph of the house (see image below) shows a substantial centered chimney and small gabled dormers at the façade, and north and south ells. None of these elements are extant. The photograph of the house on the 1998 MHC Building Form B for the property shows a hyphen and two-car garage at the south elevation, both since replaced by the current south block and hyphen.

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-19th century. The full Cape design was one of the later iterations of the house type. It is possible that the subject house was originally a half Cape later converted to a full Cape form. Defining characteristics of the Cape style illustrated in this house include the full Cape configuration (five bays with centered entry), side-gabled roof, center chimney, corner and frieze boards, and small window openings. The door surround with transom is identified with both the Georgian (1725-1780) and Federal (1780-1820) eras. The six-over-six window sash configuration is characteristic of the Federal (1780–1820) period. The batten door is a 20th century Colonial Revival feature.

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 peninsulas, called necks, surrounding Sippican Harbor remained largely undeveloped until the last quarter of the 19th century. The land was used for common pasturage, and salt marsh hay was a principal crop. Sippican Neck, which bounds the harbor on the east, is shown to be sparsely settled on the 1855 map. Early Marion families including the Blankinships, Briggses, and Ellises were among the few property owners in the area. The 1879 map shows the neck still largely undeveloped, but by 1903 growth of the area is seen along the northwestern shoreline with numerous residences on large parcels facing the harbor. Over the ensuing decades Sippican Neck became almost completely developed, with numerous seasonal properties on the waterfront. Point Road, where the subject house is located, runs north from Butler's Point (also called Ruggles Point) at the south end of the neck to County Road, where it terminates.



1855 map.

This house, the earliest extant structure on Sippican Neck, appears on the 1855 map with J.K. [Josiah Keene] Briggs shown as the owner. It is one of only two dwellings seen in the southern half of Sippican Neck. The labeled owner is C. [Caleb] Macomber on the 1879 map and C. [Caleb] E. Macomber on the 1903 map. The earliest recorded conveyance found for the property in a clear chain of ownership was its sale in 1868 by David L. Briggs et al. to Caleb W. Macomber.

David Lewis Briggs (1833-1893) and Roswell King Briggs (b. 1839) were the sons of Josiah Keene Briggs (1800-1867) and Almira Bolles (1814-1874). Josiah Briggs, the owner of the house shown on the 1855 map, had been given a life estate to the farmstead by his parents Cornelius Briggs (b.1764) and Elizabeth Keen (1774-1863). The appearance of the house suggests that it was likely built by Cornelius Briggs sometime around the date of his marriage in 1795. **OR his parents John and Keturn (Return??) Briggs.** The 1850 census listed Josiah Briggs as a farm laborer. Per his father's will, after his death ownership of the property was passed to his sons David and Roswell Briggs. Both, however, were seamen. The 1880 census recorded

David Briggs living in Rhode Island as captain of a coasting vessel, and Roswell Briggs as a sailor residing in New Bedford. In 1868 the brothers sold the family farm, which consisted of some 95 acres, to Caleb W. Macomber.

Caleb Wilbur Macomber (1809-1893), a farmer, conveyed the property to his son Caleb Edson Macomber (1841-1930) in 1889. A farmer like his father, Caleb E. Macomber was married to Ellen Maudina Brown (1854-1920), with whom he had one daughter, Abbie Esther (1879-1948). The property passed to Abbie and her husband George M. Robinson (1877-1936), and from them to their son Everett Mason Robinson (1900-1965) and his wife Bertha Maria Dexter (1896-1957). Bertha Robinson acquired the property in 1948 and ten years later sold it to Violet S. Sweetser.

Violet Shepley Sweetser (1891-1972) was the daughter of George Foster Shepley (1860-1903) and Julia Hayden Richardson (1867-1965). Julia Richardson was the daughter of noted American architect Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886). Her husband George Shepley, also an architect, was a principal in Richardson's successor firm, Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. She was married to John Anderson Sweetser (1890-1944) at Trinity Church in Boston in 1917.¹ John Sweetser was the president of the Boston rug firm, Bigelow & Sanford. In 1945 the couple's son, John Sweetser, Jr., married Eleanor Hoyt du Pont, an heiress to the estate of her grandfather, the late Boston financier Galen L. Stone and owner of the 300-acre Stone Estate on nearby Great Neck (1909, Great Hill-Stone Estate, MRN.G). She had been previously married to A. Felix du Pont. The marriage was held at the home of Eleanor's uncle Philip Shepley, who later owned a home in Marion at 406 Point Road (no longer extant).²

¹ "Sweetser-Shepley," Granddaughter and Daughter of Architects of Trinity Church is the bride," *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA, March 18, 1917.

² "Mrs. Eleanor du Pont to Wed Son of Boston Rug Firm Head," *The Evening Star*, Washington, D.C. September 26, 1942.

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Between 1968 and 1985 the house was owned by John M. Buckley (1939-2015) and Patricia Preston Buckley. Born in Worcester, John Buckley was a graduate of Worcester Polytechnic Institute and worked for several technology companies. An avid sailor, he served as Commodore of the Beverly Yacht Club.³

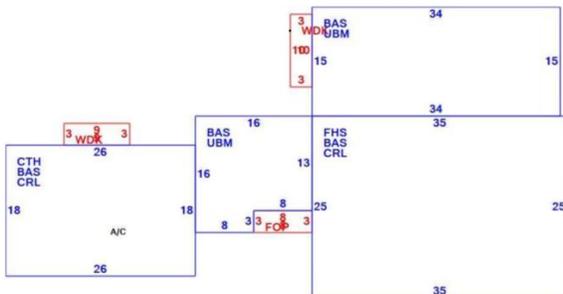
The property was purchased by the current owners in 1985.

Title Research

Richa	Book-Page (Certificate)	Grantor	Grantee
06-24-2004	28512-133	Frank T. & Jennifer Radden Keefe	Frank T. & Jennifer Radden Keefe
07-12-1985	6199-53	John M. & Patricia Preston Buckley	Frank T. & Jennifer Radden Keefe
05-02-1968	3438-785	Violet S. Sweetser	John M. & Patricia Preston Buckley
02-24-1958	2618-309	Bertha M. Drake (f/n/a Bertha Robinson)	Violet S. Sweetser
06-18-1948	2075-38	Bartlett E. Cushing	Bertha M. Robinson
06-18-1948	2075-37	Everett M. & Bertha Robinson	Bartlett E. Cushing
06-08-1939	1776-9	Abbie E. & George Robinson	Everett M. & Bertha Robinson
09-19-1934	1676-130	Abbie E. & George Robinson	Everett M. & Bertha Robinson
9-23-1922	1512-230	Caleb B. Macomber	Abbie E. Robinson
04-22-1889	586-22	Caleb W. Macomber	Caleb E. Macomber (70 acres)
02-04-1868	349-91	David L. Briggs & Roswell Briggs et ux. & Almira Briggs, widow of Josiah Briggs.	Caleb W. Macomber (95 acres)
Probate		Cornelius Briggs	David L. Briggs & Roswell Briggs et ux. and Almira Briggs, widow of Josiah Briggs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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- Atlas of Plymouth County*, Boston, MA: George H. Walker & Co., 1879
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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.
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- Rosbe, Judith. *Marion*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000.
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- 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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Assessor's card plan

³ "John M. Buckley," *The Boston Globe*, Boston MA, January 3, 2016.

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South and east (facade) elevations.



Photograph by Peter Knowlton, 1972. Image courtesy of the Sippican Historical Society.