

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

6-24	Marion	M	MRN.176
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**Town/City:** Marion

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

**Address:** 14 West Drive

**Historic Name:** Albert W. & Jennie Bliss House / Stonycroft

**Uses: Present:** Residential

**Original:** Residential

**Date of Construction:** Ca.1901

**Source:** Map & title research.

**Style/Form:** Shingle Style / Colonial Revival

**Architect/Builder:** Coolidge & Carlson

**Exterior Material:**

- Foundation: Not visible
- Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood
- Roof: Asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

None

## Photograph



## Locus Map



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

None apparent

**Condition:** Good

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

**Acreage:** 1.38

**Setting:** Moderately settled area developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries on the eastern shore of Sippican Harbor. Small enclave of large summer residences on generous lots in the Shingle and Colonial Revival styles. Terrain distinguished by rolling lawns, elaborate gardens, and wooded areas.

**Recorded by:** Lynn Smiledge

**Organization:** Marion Historical Commission

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

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

14 West Drive

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

M	MRN.176
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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.*

**14 West Drive** occupies a polygonal lot that meets the eastern shore of Sippican Harbor. The dwelling is roughly centered on the parcel and faces east. Low foundation plantings line the façade. The property west of the house, which drops gently in grade to the waterfront, is maintained in an expansive lawn dotted with rock outcroppings. A dock extends into the harbor from the southwest corner of the parcel. The house fronts a long gravel path that traverses a large garden and joins West Drive. The balance of the eastern portion of the property is wooded. A U-shaped gravel driveway enters and exits the property from West Drive, passing the façade of the subject house and then circling back to the road.

This picturesque house, which blends Colonial Revival elements with the Shingle Style, was built around 1900 and retains a high degree of architectural integrity. Similar in form to the neighboring houses to the south at 2 West Drive and 8 West Drive, it is a two-story building comprising a side-gabled main block with a two-story wing extending from the south end at a 45-degree angle. It has a steep gambrel roof with deep overhangs and a polygonal tower-like oriel at the junction of the main and south blocks. A one-story sunroom with a shallow hipped roof runs full-length along the north elevation of the main block. Both the east (façade) and west elevations of the house have high visual interest. The walls and the roof are clad in wood shingles. Yellow brick chimneys rise from the roof ridge at the gable ends of the main block.

Trim is limited to narrow rake boards. A wide, off-center, gambrel cross gable surmounting the main entry dominates the façade at the main block. The dramatic entry comprises a wide glass-and-panel door framed by full-height, one-light sidelights under an arched architrave with molded scroll brackets. The entry is sheltered by a semi-hexagonal hipped roof supported by large scroll brackets. The door is flanked by two semi-hexagonal oriels — one a Palladian window with a keystone fanlight, and the other more Craftsman in sensibility. A five-apart Palladian window assembly centered at the cross gable is surmounted by three diminutive windows. Small shed dormers with flared walls are set at the lower roof slopes. The oriel at the junction of the main block and south wing has a window with a fanlight at the center plane; it is capped by a tall bell-shaped hexagonal roof with a spire. The windows at the house comprise a variety of rectangular, double-hung, multi-light sash and single-light picture windows.

Large gambrel dormers occupy the southernmost bay at both elevations of the south wing. An open passageway framed by a lattice-work surround passes through the wing from east to west. Shed dormers with curved walls are set at the lower roof slope at both elevations. Demilune keystone windows occupy the gambrel peaks.

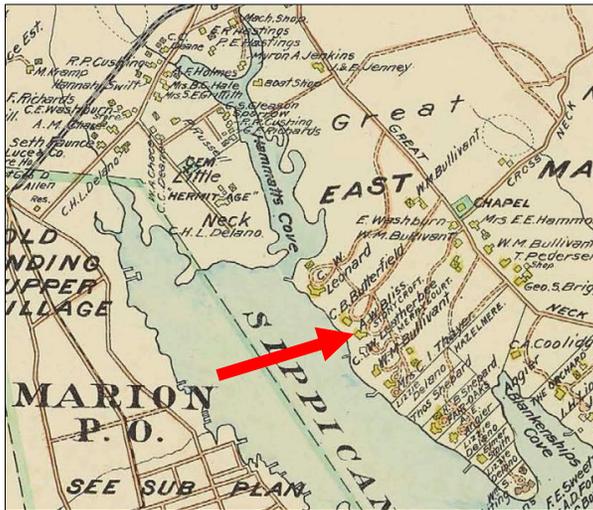
The west elevation of the main block is five bays in width and symmetrically organized. It is spanned by a deep open verandah that is screened at the northernmost two bays. The porch roof, a sweeping extension of the lower roof slope, extends beyond the side elevations of the main block. It has diamond-shaped lattice-work trellis posts and an X railing at the southwest corner. Fenestration at the first story facing the shoreline includes a combination of double-hung multi-light sash, picture windows, a semi-hexagonal bay window, and a centered entry. Polygonal dormers with bell-shaped roofs at the outer bays of the lower roof slope flank three shed dormers containing eight-over-two sash. A demilune dormer is centered at the upper roof slope.

14 West Drive is a handsome Shingle Style house with Colonial Revival elements. The Shingle Style is a uniquely American form which was introduced in the northeastern United States in the last quarter of the 19th century and reached its zenith of expression in New England seaside resorts and country estates. A high-fashion style favored by architects, it was primarily employed from 1880 to 1900. The focus of the style was on complex shapes and forms encased within a surface of continuous, naturally weathered shingles on the roof and walls. In addition to the use of wood shingles, the subject house exhibits other elements of the style including the gambrel roof and dormers, flared shed dormers, and oriels with their bell-shaped roofs. The characteristic Colonial Revival features include the main entry door surround and the Palladian and demilune windows.

**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 19<sup>th</sup> 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. West Drive is linked to Point Road, which runs north from Butler’s Point (also called Ruggles Point) at the south end of the neck to County Road, where it terminates.



1903 map.

This house appears on the 1903 map with A. [Albert] W. Bliss shown as the owner. It is also labeled “Stonycroft.” It was built on land purchased in 1900 by Jennie Bliss from William and Libbie Bullivant. It seems likely that the house was built for Bliss shortly after the land purchase.

The parcel that Jennie Bliss purchased in 1900 was a portion of a parcel of land on Sippican Neck acquired by Libbie Bullivant in 1895 from Ella Kellen, the wife of Boston lawyer William Vail Kellen. Kellen had acquired this land through several purchases from local land owners including Edwy Hammond, Howard Briggs and Abby Delano. William Vail Kellen (1852-1942), who was born in Truro, graduated from Brown University in 1872 and later served on the board of trustees of that school. He received a law degree from Boston University in 1875 and practiced law in Boston until his death. He was married to Ella Sturtevant (1853-1946).

soon became active in the Marion real estate market.<sup>2</sup> According to the 1998 MHC Area Form MRN.M for the West Drive area, over time he acquired more than 450 acres of property in Great Neck. Bullivant was the owner of several other East Marion properties including 683 Point Road (early 19<sup>th</sup> c., Union Chapel – John M. & Ruth C. Berto House, MRN.654), 669 Point Road (ca. 1797, Ephraim Allen – Capt. Edwy E. Hammond/Clement M. Hammond House, MRN.57) and the adjacent house at 2 West Drive (ca. 1900, William M. Bullivant House, MRN. 174). William Bullivant was first married to Libbie Priscilla Lodge (1859-1911) of Boston and later to Susan Ross (1857-1937) of Portland, Maine.

William Maurice Bullivant (1858-1939) was born in New Jersey and moved with his family to Boston as a boy. He entered the leather business and eventually became the founder and president of the Northwestern Leather Company.<sup>1</sup> Bullivant began summering in Marion in the early 1890s, and

Along with the other houses in the West Drive enclave, which share similar design features, it is reasonable to attribute the design of this house to architects Coolidge & Carlson. The 1998 MHC Area Form (MRN.M) for the West Drive area, which includes the subject property, cites a 1919 article in *The American Architect* which credited the design of the houses at 14 West Drive (MRN.176) and 24 West Drive (MRN.177) to the firm of Coolidge & Carlson and extrapolates that attribution to all of the houses on West Drive. That firm was led by J. [Joseph] Randolph Coolidge, Jr. (1864-1928). A graduate of Harvard College, Coolidge studied architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris and the University of Berlin. Coolidge & Carlson has been credited with the design of ten residences in Marion, most of them in the Shingle Style, at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These dwellings are all located on Allen’s Point Road, West Drive, and Point Road. In addition to residential work, Coolidge & Carlson was 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. There appears to be no professional or family connection to Charles Allerton Coolidge of the Boston architectural firm of Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge, who also designed homes in Marion and was himself a summer resident.

<sup>1</sup> “William M. Bullivant,” *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA, May 29, 1939.  
<sup>2</sup> “Marion Man Dies Suddenly,” *The Standard-Times*, New Bedford, MA, May 28, 1939.

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

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The property was purchased in 1900 by Jennie Bliss. An 1885 article in the *Boston Globe* reported on “A Brilliant Back Bay Wedding” between Jennie W. Thayer, the daughter of financier Charles E. Thayer, and Albert W. Bliss, a well-known Boston merchant.<sup>3</sup> Albert Whiting Bliss (b.1860) was listed in the 1920 census as a leather and hide merchant. The couple lived in Brookline and this house was their summer residence until 1927, when they sold it to Mary Barbour. The Marion section of the 1928 Wareham directory lists Albert Bliss as retired and a summer resident with a house on Front Street.

Mary August Graham Barbour (1879-1952) was married to shoe manufacturer and one-time mayor [1925-1926] of Quincy, Perley Edward Barbour (1879-1964). Born in Haverhill, he graduated from Yale in 1903 and was founder and president of the Barbour Welting Company of Brockton. In addition to his term as mayor, Barbour served as a member of the Quincy City Council.<sup>4</sup> Barbour built what was described as a mansion across the street from the John Adams House in Quincy. The house, which was once considered for purchase by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a governor’s residence, was destroyed by fire in 1959.<sup>5</sup> Mary Graham Barbour was an amateur playwright and producer.<sup>6</sup> The couple owned the property for twelve years before selling it to John and Edwina Miller in 1939.

John Walter Miller (1895-1982) was the founder of the Miller & Co. National Sales Organization of Chicago. Born in Cincinnati, he was a 1916 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and subsequently its Wharton School of Business. He lived for many years in Winnetka, Illinois.<sup>7</sup> The house was a summer residence for Miller and his wife Edwina Jill Malpass (1898-1985) of Philadelphia. John Miller was a trustee of the Kittansett Club and a member of the Beverly Yacht Club. The property remains in Miller family ownership.

Title Research

Date	Book-Page (Certificate)	Grantor	Grantee
08-08-2001	20327-175	Jill Miller Durkee, Trustee	G.M. Durkee & J.D. Creevy
05-01-1939	1765-425	Mary A. & Perley E. Barbour	John W. & Edwina Miller
03-26-1927	1520-583	Jennie W. & Albert W. Bliss	Mary A. Barbour
12-01-1900	815-479	William M. & Libbie P. Bullivant	Jennie W. Bliss
11-27-1900	815-466	Ella S. & William V. Kellen	Libbie P. Bullivant

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

- Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org: census records, vital records, city directories  
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*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.  
 Rosbe, Judith. *Marion in the Golden Age*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009.  
 Sippican Historical Society: online database  
 Smith, Pete. (ed.) *A Picture Postcard History of Marion, Massachusetts*. New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2008.  
 Somers, Olive Hill. *Three Centuries of Marion Houses*. Marion, 1972.  
 Withey, Henry F. & Elsie Rathburn. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*. Los Angeles: New Age Publishing, 1956.

<sup>3</sup> “A Brilliant Back Bay Wedding,” *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA October 16, 1885.

<sup>4</sup> “Perley E. Barbour, Quincy Civic Leader, 83,” *The Boston Globe*, Boston MA. August 23, 1964.

<sup>5</sup> “Quincy Mansion Burns, Once Eyed by State,” *The Berkshire Eagle*, Pittsfield, MA November 4, 1959.

<sup>6</sup> “Mrs. Mary G. Barbour,” *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA, August 22, 1952.

<sup>7</sup> “John Miller, 87,” *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA March 14, 1982.



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MARION

14 West Drive

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**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 / Lynn Smiledge

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

This house and the other dwellings in the West Drive Area (MRN.M) are recommended for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as contributing to the prospective Allen’s Point District (MRN.C). This small waterfront development on the eastern shore of Sippican Harbor includes five architecturally significant residences in the Shingle and Colonial Revival styles. Built between 1900 and 1905 for Boston-area businessmen, these seasonal dwellings represent the work of the firm Coolidge & Carlson. The nearby Allen’s Point area, home to a collection of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century high-style seasonal residences in the Shingle, Tudor Revival, and Colonial Revival styles, also includes the work of Coolidge & Carlson.

**Under Criterion C**, the West Drive Area is recommended as eligible at the local level in the area of Architecture for its intact collection of distinguished, high-style dwellings built during the peak of Marion’s development as a desirable summer destination. The Boston firm of Coolidge & Carlson has been credited with the design of ten residences in Marion, most of them in the Shingle Style, at the turn of the 20th century.

The resources here retain substantial integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association. The district would likely meet criteria C at the local level with significance in architecture.