

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

6-26	Marion	M	MRN.174
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**Town/City:** Marion  
**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Sippican Neck

**Address:** 2 West Drive

**Historic Name:** William M. Bullivant House

**Uses:** Present: Residential  
Original: Residential

**Date of Construction:** Ca. 1900

**Source:** Title research, assessor's card

**Style/Form:** Shingle Style

**Architect/Builder:** Attr. Coolidge & Carlson

**Exterior Material:**  
Foundation: Concrete with rubble stone veneer  
Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood  
Roof: Asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
Garage/apartment (2020-2024)  
Pool house (2020-2024)

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):  
South block replaced (after 1998)  
Replacement windows (2020-2024)

**Condition:** Excellent

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

**Acreage:** 2.5

**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.

## Photograph



## Locus Map



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

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

2 West Drive

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

M

MRN.174

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.*

**2 West Drive** occupies a polygonal lot that meets the eastern shore of Sippican Harbor. The dwelling is positioned in the western half of the parcel and faces east. Low foundation plantings line the façade. Its west elevation is oriented towards the shoreline, where a dock reaches into the harbor. The property west of the house drops gently in grade to the waterfront, and is maintained primarily in lawn dotted sparsely with trees. A large oval garden enclosed by a drystone wall is sited just east of the house. It is encircled by a gravel driveway that enters the property off West Drive. The northeastern portion of the parcel is wooded. A pool house and swimming pool are located off the south elevation of the house, and garage/apartment is sited off the north elevation.

This distinguished Shingle Style house was built around 1900 and retains a high degree of architectural integrity. The two-story building comprises a side-gabled main block with one-and-one-half-story blocks at the north and south elevations, and a two-story wing extending at a 45-degree angle from the northwest corner. The steep gambrel roof flares upward at the eaves. The dwelling has a complex, asymmetrical form at the façade (east elevation) enlivened by multiple gables and shed and gabled dormers. A large open porch dominates the west, shore-facing elevation. The house rests on a concrete foundation with a rubble stone veneer; in 2020 the site was regraded, raised four feet in height, and the house reset on a new foundation. The dwelling is clad in wood shingles and has a wood shingle roof. Substantial rubble stone two-flue chimneys rise from just below the roof ridge at the east roof slope of the main block.

Trim comprises frieze boards, a water table, and a molded cornice at the side elevations. The recessed main entry centered at the façade of the main block is anchored by engaged square columns at the corners of the recess. It contains a glass-and-panel door flanked by eight-light partial sidelights and a single fixed diamond-pane window. The door fronts a paved walkway that joins the driveway and two stone piers framing the entrance to the garden beyond. The entry is surmounted at the second story by a recessed porch with a shingled knee wall, which is in turn surmounted by a gambrel dormer. The windows at the house generally comprise single and mulled, six-over-one and eight-over-one double-hung sash, all with flat surrounds and blinds. The first story at the south block is a sunroom with full-height, four-part windows. The angled north wing terminates in a hip-roofed open porch with wood-shingled knee walls and heavy shingled posts that flare at the frieze board. A small, one-story, flat-roofed addition at the north wall of the north wing has a railed roof deck.

Unlike the east elevation of the main block, the west elevation is symmetrically organized. A large center gable at the second story is flanked by shallow, two-bay shed dormers. Five bays wide, the full-width open porch has wood-shingled knee walls at the outside bays and heavy shingled posts that flare at the cornice. The center bays are marked by substantial Tuscan columns. Centered French doors front a three-sided stair that lands at the lawn.

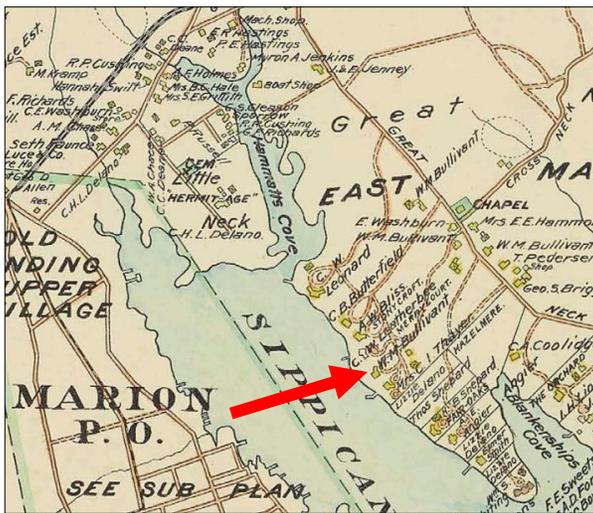
The side-gabled garage/apartment off the northeast corner of the house has a gambrel roof and mimics the Shingle Style features of the main house. The side-gabled pool house located south of the house has a simpler design. Both buildings were constructed between 2020 and 2024.

2 West Drive is a handsome example of a Shingle Style house. 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 features of the style including the gambrel roofs with flared eaves, shed and gable dormers, open porch with shingled posts, and recessed main entry.

**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.

The subject house appears on the 1903 map with Wm. [William] M. Bullivant shown as the owner. While no clear chain of ownership could be established, it is probable that the 22-acre parcel of land on Great Neck purchased by Libbie Bullivant in 1900 from Ella Kellen, the wife of Boston lawyer William Vail Kellen, provided the land on which the house was built. Libbie Bullivant was the wife of Boston leather merchant, William Bullivant. The dwelling was probably constructed soon after the land purchase.<sup>1</sup>

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 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. The firm was led by Joseph Randolph Coolidge, Jr. (1864-1928), a graduate of Harvard College who studied architecture at the Ecolé 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 20th 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.

Boston lawyer William Vail Kellen (1852-1942), who was born in Truro, received a law degree from Boston University in 1875 and practiced law in Boston until his death. Kellen and his wife Ella Sturtevant (1853-1946) accumulated a total of six parcels of land on Sippican Neck in 1893 from John D. Allen, Verona Deland, Harvey Everest and the estate of Albert Nickerson. They sold a portion of this consolidated property to Libbie Bullivant of Boston in 1900.

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>2</sup> Bullivant began summering in Marion in the early 1890s, and soon became active in the Marion real estate market.<sup>3</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. William

<sup>1</sup> 1893 is noted as the construction date for this house on the 1998 MHC Area Form MRN.M. No source is cited and this seems unlikely since William Bullivant acquired the land in 1900.

<sup>2</sup> “William M. Bullivant,” *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA, May 29, 1939.

<sup>3</sup> “Marion Man Dies Suddenly,” *The Standard-Times*, New Bedford, MA, May 28, 1939.

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

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220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

M MRN.174

Bullivant was first married to Libbie Priscilla Lodge (1859-1911) of Boston and later to Susan Ross (1857-1937) of Portland, Maine.

In 1926 Matthew P. Whittall purchased the property. Whittall was the son of Ellen Paget Whittall and Matthew J. Whittall (1843-1922), a British emigre who made his fortune in the carpet manufacturing business. He purchased a carpet company in Worcester which eventually became the city's largest employer. His son Matthew Percival Whittall (b. 1874-1959) took over his father's business. He and his wife Betsey Whitton maintained their primary residence in Worcester. The 1924 Wareham city directory records Mathew P. Whittall as a summer resident of Marion on Water Street. He was for many years a trustee and president of the board of Tabor Academy and left the school a substantial endowment following his death.

Roger W. and Rose Bullock Converse purchased the property in 1941. Roger W. Converse (1900-1969), a real estate developer in Marion and Brookline, was the son of Harry Elisha Converse (1863-1920) and the grandson of Malden shoe manufacturer Elisha Slade Converse (1820-1904). His father Harry Converse built a Shingle Style summer house called The Moorings on Converse Point [historically called Charles Neck Point], at the southernmost end of the peninsula on the western shore of Sippican Harbor. It was described in an article in the *New Bedford Evening Standard* as "the largest and finest residence of the whole shore of Buzzard's Bay."<sup>4</sup> Roger Converse attended Yale University and served in the United States Coast Guard during World War II. He served as president of Hahnemann Hospital in Brighton, director of the New England Baptist Hospital, and trustee and treasurer of Tabor Academy.<sup>5</sup> After owning the property for 26 years, Converse sold it to Charles G. and Lurline T. Paulsen in 1970.

Charles Garrett Paulsen (1937-2017), a Marion resident for most of his life, was the co-founder of the American Research and Management Company, an investment advisory firm. Paulsen served on the Marion town finance committee and on the board of the Sippican Land Trust. He was married to Faith Alden Paulsen.<sup>6</sup>

The property was purchased by the current owners in 2020.

Title Research

Date	Book-Page (Certificate)	Grantor	Grantee
06-16-2020	52918-87	Harbor Oaks LLC	2 West Drive LLC
02-13-2017	48111-167	Charles G. Paulsen	Harbor Oaks LLC
08-06-1992	11238-26	Charles G. & Faith Paulsen	Charles G. Paulsen, Trustee
03-26-1992	10859-139	Charles G. Paulsen, Trustee	Charles G. & Faith Paulsen
09-20-1990	9962-229	Charles G. Paulsen	Charles G. Paulsen, Trustee
07-26-1988	8612-261	Lurline T. Paulsen	Charles G. Paulsen
12-19-1979	4774-489	Charles G. Paulsen	Lurline T. Paulsen
12-21-1979	4774-487	Lurline T. Paulsen	Charles G. Paulsen
11-09-1970	3632-505	Roger W. Converse Revocable Trust	Charles G. & Lurline T. Paulsen
11-15-1967	3408-491	Rose Bullock Converse	Roger W. Converse
10-22-1941	1814-574	Matthew P. Whittall	Roger W. & Rose Bullock Converse
01-07-1926	1501-535	William M. Bullivant	Matthew P. Whittall

**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  
*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

<sup>4</sup> "Converse Residence," *New Bedford Evening Standard*, June 3, 1902.

<sup>5</sup> "Roger W. Converse," *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA, November 5, 1969.

<sup>6</sup> "Charles G. Paulsen," Saunders-Dwyer Funeral Homes, Mattapoisett, MA, October 14, 2017.



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2 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.