

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

## Photograph



## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Lynn Smiledge

**Organization:** Marion Historical Commission

**Date (month / year):** April 2022

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

15-61A

Marion

MRN.  
AH, N

MRN.179

**Town/City:** Marion

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

**Address:** 28 Briggs Lane

**Historic Name:** Samuel W. Luce House

**Uses: Present:** Residential

**Original:** Residential

**Date of Construction:** Ca. 1835

**Source:** Deed and map research

**Style/Form:** No Style

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

### Exterior Material:

**Foundation:** Stone and concrete

**Wall/Trim:** Wood shingle / Wood

**Roof:** Asphalt shingle

### Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Residence (1998)

Shed

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

East and south additions (20<sup>th</sup> century)

Replacement windows

**Condition:** Fair / Good

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

**Acreage:** 0.37

**Setting:** Diverse residential neighborhood developed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Housing stock represents a range of styles including Greek Revival, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival. Surrounded mostly by moderately-sized, wood-frame, single-family houses on small to medium-sized lots.

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

28 Briggs Lane

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

MRN.AH, N

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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.*

**28 Briggs Lane** occupies a large, irregularly-shaped lot on the south side of Briggs Lane and faces north. The house is set back from the street on a parcel maintained chiefly in lawn but bordered by taller vegetation at the perimeter. Planting beds of crushed seashells line the façade (north elevation) of the house. Gravel driveways enter the property from Briggs Lane at the easternmost block of the house and along the western property line. The latter driveway terminates at a small residence built near the southwest corner of the parcel in 1998. Segments of cast stone pavers border Briggs Lane along the façade of the house. The south yard immediately behind the house is enclosed by tall, plastic sheet fencing. A segment of low drystone wall is sited behind the house sits just outside the fencing.

This wood-frame dwelling originally comprised a simple, one-and one-half-story, side-gabled, main block with a one-story east ell. The house reflects no particular style. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century these original blocks acquired a cross-gabled addition at the east elevation, creating a U-shape, and several shed-roofed additions at the south (rear) elevation. Probably constructed around 1835, this house retains some of its original character-defining features, most importantly the form of the main west block and ell. The early components of the house have stone foundations and the additions rest on concrete foundations. The asphalt-shingled roof carries a brick chimney just below the roof ridge at the west block; a double-flue chimney rises from one of the rear shed-roofed additions. The house is clad in weathered wood shingles and is minimally trimmed with narrow corner and rake boards. The house has been modified for two-family use.

The west block is four-bays-by-two bays with an off-center entry containing a vertical plank door with cast iron strap hinges; the shed-roofed extension along its west elevation may have been an early lean-to kitchen. The east block is three-bays wide with a center entry containing a six-panel wooden door. The windows are double-hung, six-over-six replacement sash framed by flat surrounds with lipped lintels. The doors are set within narrow surrounds.

The one-story, three-bay-by-two-bay, side-gabled residence at the southwest corner of the property faces north. It is clad in weathered wood shingles and has an asphalt shingle roof.

**28 Briggs Street** appears to date to the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century based on the simple building forms of the two original blocks. No original window sash are visible but it is possible that the six-over-six replacement sash in place mimic the configuration of earlier windows. A recent photograph of the interior shows wide plank flooring, an indication of early 19<sup>th</sup> century construction.

## 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.*

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 but more commonly referred to today as The Village or Marion Village. Main Street runs east to west through Marion Village from Sippican Harbor to Mill Street (Route 6). The western portion of Main Street between Spring Street and Mill Street, along with Park Street to the north and Briggs Lane to the south, comprise the neighborhood know as Upper Main. The 1855 map shows this part of Main Street to be sparsely settled compared to the more densely built eastern end of the street. Later maps show that most of the resources in this section of Main Street were built in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first owners of the earlier houses in this area were typically mariners and farmers.

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This house is located on Briggs Lane, formerly called Back Street, which runs east to west parallel to and south of Main Street and connects Mill Street (Route 6) to the west with Pleasant Street to the east. Prior to the western extension of Main Street in 1829, Briggs Lane was the old road connecting Wharf Village with the coastal road (now known as Mill Street /Route 6). The back yards of the houses on the south side of Main Street border Briggs Lane to the north.

No houses are shown in this part of Marion on the 1830 map. This house appears on the 1855 map with S.W. Luce shown as owner and on the 1879 and 1903 maps with S. Briggs identified as owner. The first recorded conveyance found for the property was a deed for land and a dwelling house from Samuel W. and Mary D. Luce to Rebecca Briggs in 1874.

1855 map.

Samuel Wing Luce, Jr. (1807-1885) was the son of Samuel W. Luce (1784-1821) and his wife Hannah. The senior Luce was the son of Rowland Luce Jr. (1756-1835). An 1820 map of the Main Street area of Sippican Village shows several large parcels of land owned by Rowland Luce and it is likely that Samuel Luce, Jr. inherited the land from his father or grandfather. Captain Samuel Wing Luce, Jr. was a seaman as noted in the censuses of 1855 through 1870. The 1880 census listed him as a retired sea captain. He was first married in 1830 to Polly Handy (1803-1858) and later (in 1860) to Mary Delano Allen (1825-1914). It seems reasonable to assume that Luce may have built this modest house around the time of his first marriage. Neither couple appeared to have had children. In 1874 Luce sold this house and land to Rebecca and Seth Briggs.

Seth Hiller Briggs (1827-1904) was married in 1854 to Rebeca Berry (1827-1892). Briggs, like Samuel Luce, was a seaman as recorded in the censuses of 1860 through 1880. Seth and Rebecca Briggs had two surviving children, Rebecca L. Briggs (1866-1932) and Pricilla Hiller Briggs (1869-1912). Rebecca was married to Nathan P. Briggs (1866-1932), who was apparently a member of a separate branch of this very large New England family. Pricilla Hiller Briggs married William H. Forbes (1856-1903) in 1888. The 1880 census reported Forbes as a sailor and the 1900 census listed his occupation as caretaker at a summer house. In 1907, after the death of both her husband and her father, Pricilla Briggs Forbes conveyed her interest in the house to her sister Rebecca, who owned it until her death. The property remained in the Briggs family until 1947, when it was sold by Rebecca's estate to Harold B. and Florence Smith.

## Deed Research

Date	Book-Page	Grantor	Grantee
06-16-2021	55176-303	Donna J. VanBuren	Conan H. & Elizabeth Leary
03-14-2005	30158-161	Neil E. & Carol A. Bowen	Donna J. VanBuren
09-12-1978	4541-414	Virginia H. Brush	Neil E. & Carol A. Bowen
05-18-1976	4162-320	Arnold & Lorena M. Briggs	Virginia H. Brush
08-08-1973	3920-65	Elizabeth F. Minter	Arnold & Lorena M. Briggs
03-26-1958	2624-392	Florence M. Smith	John R. & Elizabeth F. Minter
04-10-1947	1957-298	Estate of Rebecca L. Briggs	Harold B. & Florence M. Smith
05-18-1907	1048-332	Pricilla Forbes (50% Interest)	Rebecca L. Briggs
12-22-1874	411-263	Samuel W. & Mary D. Luce	Rebecca Briggs

## 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  
 McMaster, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2019.  
 Sommers, Olive Hill. *Three Centuries of Marion Houses*. Marion, 1972.  
 Plymouth County Registry of Deeds  
 Rosbe, Judith. *Marion*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000.

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

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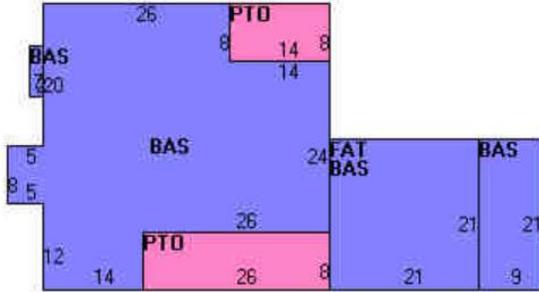
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Rosbe, Judith. *Marion in the Golden Age*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009.

Sippican Historical Society: online database

Smith, Pete. (ed.) *A Picture Postcard History of Marion, Massachusetts*. New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2008

Reconstruction of eastern Main Street in 1820, "copied from Ms of Mrs. Somers, 5/61." Sippican Historical Soc. 2006.010.001.



Assessor's card plan

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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 Claire W. Dempsey / edited by Lynn Smiledge

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

This house is recommended as a contributing element in a potential National Register Historic District which would include the Upper Main Street Area. The Upper Main Street Area (MRN.AH,N), a subsection of the larger Wharf Village Area (MRN.N), is a collection of houses constructed in the mid-19th through the early 20th centuries in which simple, small-to-mid-sized dwellings predominate. Along with the other surveyed areas listed below, it is recommended as a contributing element in a potential National Register Historic District for Marion Village. Known variously as Sippican, Wharf Village, and Lower Village, Marion's center is an exceptionally well-preserved harbor village including an important array of public buildings, stores and workplaces, and dwellings dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The village constitutes a small, dense grid along two early and principal streets, Main Street running east-west and Front Street running north-south. Other east-west (Briggs, Cottage, Hiller, and South) and north-south (Spring, Park, Pleasant, School) streets were added as the village grew. The proposed district includes typical public buildings, including churches and schools, as well as a group of exceptional gifts to the town from Elizabeth Taber. The concentration of early dwellings on Main Street is exceptional. Front Street is one of Marion's commercial zones, with shops and other businesses serving the community; some resources from the village's maritime history survive as well, there and on Hiller and off Main. Dwellings here present fine examples of regionally popular forms including Capes, ell houses, end houses, and picturesque cottages, with a handful of later dwellings interspersed. The comparatively small scale of the buildings and lots, as well as the uniform treatment of wood shingles and clapboards, combine to create an extraordinary historic landscape deserving of greater recognition and continued preservation.

The potential district's boundaries are those of the surveyed areas covered during 2020/22, for the Barden-Hiller (MRN.Y), Cottage Street (MRN.Z), Main Street (MRN.AA), South Street MRN.AB), Upper Pleasant Street (MRN.AC), and Upper Main Street (MRN.AH,N) areas. To these areas should be added the town's public buildings (Town Hall and Library and Natural History Museum (MRN.59 and 60) at 2 and 8 Spring Street as well as their neighbors and might extend further up and down Front Street.

Most of the resources here retain substantial integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association. The district would likely meet criteria A and C at the local and possibly at the state level, with areas of significance in architecture, maritime history, and social history.