

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

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|------------------------------|---|
| Inventory No: | MRN.V |
| Historic Name: | Marion Golf Club 10 South Dr |
| City/Town: | Marion |
| Village/Neighborhood: | Allen's Point; |
| Local No: | |
| Year Constructed: | |
| Use(s): | Other Recreational; Residential District; |
| Significance: | Architecture; |
| Designation(s): | |
| Building Materials: | |
| Demolished | No |



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on: Thursday, March 27, 2025 at 2:16 PM

FORM A - AREA

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

| | | | |
|-----|--------|-------|----------------------|
| 006 | MARION | MRN.V | MRN.382, 383, 928 |
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Photograph



Town/City: Marion

Place (*neighborhood or village*): Allen's Point

Name of Area: Marion Golf Club

Present Use: recreational, golf course

Construction Dates or Period: 1904-1908

Overall Condition: Excellent

Major Intrusions and Alterations: none

Acreage: 61.6 acres

Recorded by: John D. Clemson

Organization: Sippican Historical Society

Date (*month/year*): July, 2019

Locus Map



See figure 1 for boundaries. Buildings circled.

see continuation sheet

INVENTORY FORM A CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

MARION GOLF CLUB

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area Letter Form Nos.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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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.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The grounds of the Marion Golf Club, enclosing 61.6 acres, are generally rectangular in shape with a long axis oriented southwest to northeast between its frontage on Point Road to the northeast and Sippican Harbor to the southwest. Carved out of its rectangle are numerous house lots located at either end. The course's water frontage is limited to about 170 feet, with lots under separate ownership fronting the remainder of the waterfront. The frontage with Point Road is also occupied by several lots under separate ownership which protrude into the rectangle. The precise current boundaries are marked in figure 1. The remaining property, however, has been in consistent ownership by the club's owners since the property was assembled between 1895 and 1907. The course is accessed by three roads: North, South and West drives. Although South Drive is not depicted on the GIS map provided as the locus, current assessor's maps depict it (see figure 1).

The **clubhouse** of the **Marion Golf Club**, with the address of **10 South Drive (1904-1908)**, serves the club membership. This is a simple type of residential building generally known as a 'cottage dwelling,' characterized by story-and-a-half massing, five bay width, and a main entry centered on the north-facing façade. The upper story, under a side gable, is enlarged by a broad façade gable centered on the front slope of the roof. Although this device is associated with the Gothic Revival of the 1840s, here it serves mainly as a practical expansion of the garret space; the otherwise unadorned building generally defies stylistic categorization. The dimensions of the main body are 34 feet wide by 26 feet deep. Behind the main body is a complex series of wings and ells. A small 13-foot-square wing extends to the left (south), and a 17-foot-wide gabled ell is centered on the rear elevation. The ell extends 18 feet toward the rear and steps down to a narrower footprint of 15 feet for another 18 feet. The upper story is expanded on the rear by a broad gabled dormer centered on the rear slope of the main body. Multiple stove chimneys in the center of the roof, on the rear elevation of the wing, and on the left elevation of the main body evidently heat the building. Finishes include weathered wood shingles stopped by plain corner and rake boards. Window openings with back-band moldings are uniform in scale and arranged in regular, symmetrical patterns across each elevation. Sash has been recently replaced but an original or early paneled front door with paired, arched lights survives. The building sits on a fieldstone foundation close to grade and a short, wood stoop gives access to the main entrance.

Directly behind the clubhouse is an early small barn, the **Marion Golf Club Barn**, also with an address of **10 South Drive (ca. 1904-1908)**, with a clipped gable roof. Although not well maintained, the barn appears to retain original elaborate finishes. The exterior is clad in weathered shingles woven at the corners. Elaborate molded trim decorates the rake and clipped gable; the side cornices have open soffits. The building is accessed by a carriage door with a molded door hood and is lit by domestically scaled windows with 6-over-6 sash. A paneled, lit cargo door, also with a molded hood, is centered on the gable. A newer, more utilitarian-appearing wing to the east was added later on. The appearance of both buildings suggest they were constructed early in the life of the Marion Golf Club early in the 20th century.

The 9-hole course is arranged around the two buildings to the north, west and south (see figures 3-5). The topography is generally even with gently rolling fairways. At the third green a low stone dry-laid wall with an earthen embankment surrounds the green, evidently intended as a visual challenge (figure 4). GIS maps (see locus) indicate wetlands in the southwest corner of the property. The course is surrounded by a mix of residential development, including a ca. 1900 cottage colony designed by the firm of Coolidge and Carlson at the southwest coast with Sippican Harbor and elsewhere more-recent year-round residential areas. The separate lots fronting Point Road appear to have undergone more-recent residential development.

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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Like much of East Marion, including Allen's, Butler's and Great Hill points, the immediate vicinity of Marion Golf Club had been developed with large, elaborate resort cottages by 1903. Other sections of the interior of the neck also appear to be populated by smaller dwellings and service buildings, possibly for staff of the nearby estates (see figure 1, below). Beginning in 1895 Boston leather merchant and manufacturer William Maurice Bullivant (1858-1939) began buying large tracts of land on Great Neck between Point Road on the east and Sippican Harbor on the west. At about the same time he acquired a Shingle style cottage at 2 West Drive (the William M Bullivant House, MNR.174, 1892, see MRN.M, pp. 5-6).¹ Between 1895 and 1907, in a series of transactions, he acquired 61.6 acres from several grantors, including Ella S and William V Kellen, Edward P Washburn, Adeline S Hammond and Charles W Leonard.² This remains the current acreage of the Marion Golf Club. According to Gordon, grantor Charles Leonard was an abutter and cottager at 28 West Dr and was a proprietor of the woolen manufacturer Holden, Leonard & Co.³ Deeds demonstrate that the land was held in the name of Bullivant's wife, Libby P (Lodge) Bullivant (1859-1911). Several accounts indicate that the nine-hole golf course still present at the site was active by 1904.⁴

Circumstances suggest that the principal mover behind the establishment of the club was William R Bullivant. According to Gordon

Born in Newark, New Jersey, William M. Bullivant was a member of the firm of Field, Bullivant and Field in Boston, later Bullivant, Brown and Fiske. In 1900 he organized the Northwestern Leather Company of Boston, acting as its president until his retirement in 1921. Bullivant's company was located at 14 South Street in Boston's leather district. A noted collector of art and rare books, Bullivant 'possessed one of the finest collections of etchings in the country; his library, though small, contains many rare books.' For many years a vestryman of St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church in Marion, he was a member of numerous Boston clubs including the Algonquin and Exchange clubs as well as the Club of Odd Volumes and the Iconographic Society. For many years a resident of West Newton, Bullivant served as a trustee of the Newton Public Library.⁵

Other sources indicate that Northwestern Leather Company's works, consisting of a large tannery, were located in Sault Ste Marie, MI, where it was a major employer in the town.⁶ Bullivant was married to Libby P. Lodge, a daughter of John and Elizabeth Lodge, in 1881. In 1914 he married for a second time Susan G. (Ross) Thomas (born ca. 1858). According to another source he made numerous gifts of his collection of etchings to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.⁷ Although in private ownership, the Marion Golf Club has been a public course throughout its history, so it is difficult to ascertain the identities of other figures associated with the institution.

¹ The development of the property and this cottage are recounted in the *Boston Daily Globe*, Aug. 2, 1896, p. 16, "Marion:" "Broad verandas and galleries around three sides of the house make it very pleasant and comfortable appearing externally, while the structure proper is more than a bungalow and less than a mansion house, a delightful retreat for the midsummer...The living rooms in this shore house is something out of the ordinary, apexed at the center like an attic, with metallic sheeting ceilings, a large room and handsome, with an open fireplace and a heavy door leading to the side veranda. The dining room is of similar proportions, but more elegantly treated in finish in white enamel.

² PCRD 697:519 (1895); 815:466 (1900); 876:213 (1903); 880:303 (1904); 930:284-285 (1906); 1027:498 (1907).

³ Both the Bullivants and Leonards wintered in Newton, the Bullivants at 230 Mt Vernon St with a household staff of five (1900, 1910 Federal Census).

⁴ These include Rosbe and the website of the Marion Golf Club, http://mariongolfclub.com/Home_Page.html (accessed 7/10/2019).

⁵ Gordon, West Drive, MRN.M, 1892-1900; see also Rosbe, *Marion* (Arcadia, 2000) p. 106. Although an obituary could not be located, some of this information can be generally verified through other sources cited below in notes 7 and 8.

⁶ Christian Holmes, *Company Towns of Michigan's Upper Peninsula* (The History Press, 2015) pp. 75-76 (this source includes an image of Northwest Leather Company's works).

⁷ *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Vols. 15-20* (MFA, 1917-18) p. 48 and 48.

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In 1919 the heirs of Libby P Bullivant (including her children Marjorie B Nichols, the wife of Carroll B Nichols of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania; Leslie B Estabrook, the wife of L Reed Estabrook of Newton; Stanley L Bullivant of Sault Ste Marie, MI; W Malcolm Bullivant and Stuart Lodge Bullivant, both of Marion, as well as her widower) conveyed the property to a trust administered by trustees Clifton H Dwinell, Ira Misher, and W Malcolm Bullivant. In 1959 the property was again conveyed to a successor trust called Marion Harbor-East, which is the current owner.⁸

George C. Thomas, Jr., architect

George Clifford Thomas, Jr. (1873-1932) was an accomplished landscape architect, horticulturalist, and sport fisherman. He was educated at the University of Pennsylvania (1894) and is credited with other important courses including the Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles and Whitemarsh Valley Country Club near Philadelphia. He was also the author of a volume on golf course design, *Golf Architecture in America: Its Strategy and Construction* (Sleeping Bear Press, 1927).⁹

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

1855 H.F. Walling, *Map of the Town of Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*

1879 Geo H Walker & Co, *Atlas of Plymouth County Massachusetts*.

1903 L. J. Richards & Co, *New Topographic Atlas of Surveys of Plymouth County ... Massachusetts*

Ancestry.com: see footnotes.

Christian Holmes, *Company Towns of Michigan's Upper Peninsula* (The History Press, 2015).

Anthony Pioppi, *To the Nines* (Taylor Trade Publishing, 2015, 2nd ed.).

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, in notes as PCRD book:page.

Forrest L. Richardson and Mark K. Fine, *Bunkers, Pits & Other Hazards, A Guide to the Design, Maintenance, and Preservation of Golf's Essential Elements* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2006).

Judith Westlund Rosbe, *Marion* (Arcadia, 2000).

DATA SHEET

| MHC # | Assess # | Address | Historic Name | Form | Style | Date |
|---------|----------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------------|-------|-----------|
| MRN.382 | 006 018 | 10 South Drive | Marion Golf Club clubhouse | Cottage dwelling | None | 1908-1908 |
| MRN.383 | 006 018 | 10 South Drive | Marion Golf Club barn | Barn | None | 1904-1908 |
| MRN.928 | 006 018 | 10 South Drive | Marion Golf Club golf course | Designed landscape | None | 1904-1908 |

⁸ PCRD 1346:116-119 (1919); 2686:79 (1959).

⁹ Anthony Pioppi, *To the Nines* (Taylor Trade Publishing, 2015, 2nd ed.) pp. 8-9; see also Forrest L. Richardson and Mark K. Fine, *Bunkers, Pits & Other Hazards, A Guide to the Design, Maintenance, and Preservation of Golf's Essential Elements* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2006) pp. 126-130.

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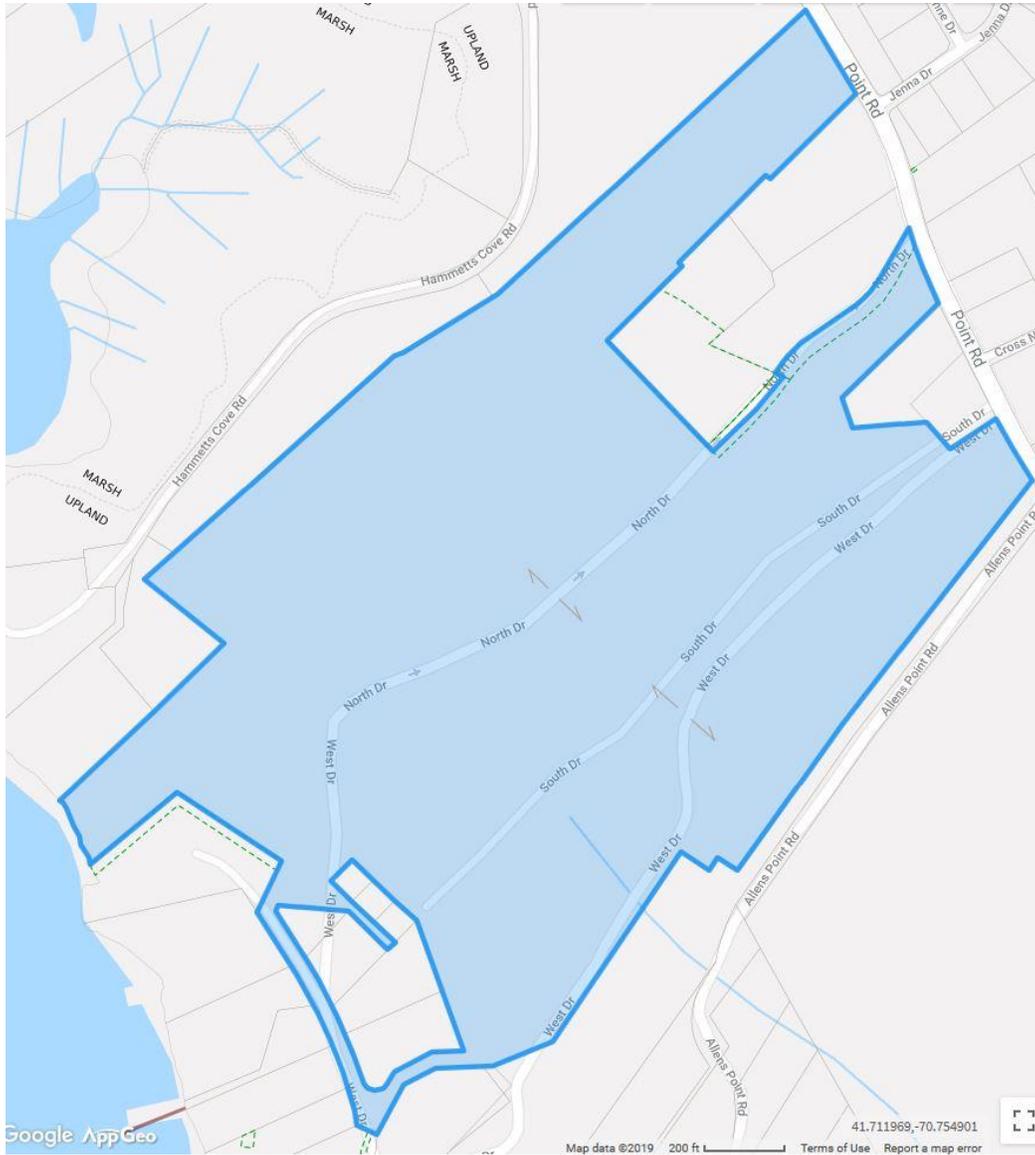


Figure 1. Current assessor's map showing property boundaries and South Drive.

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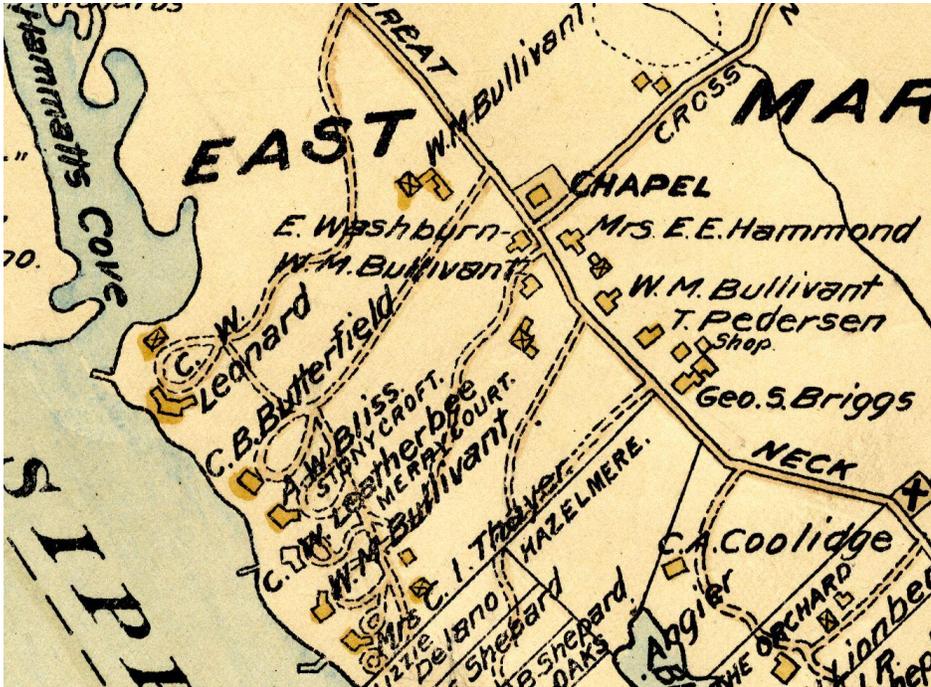


Figure 2. 1903 LJ Richards county atlas showing the development and ownership pattern in the vicinity.



Figure 3. A plan of the Marion Golf Club course captured from the club's website http://mariongolfclub.com/Home_Page.html (accessed 7/10/2019).

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Figure 4. http://mariongolfclub.com/Home_Page.html (accessed 7/10/2019) showing a hole with distinctive stone wall embankment.



Figure 5. http://mariongolfclub.com/Home_Page.html (accessed 7/10/2019) showing a vista of the course facing southwest toward Sippican Harbor.

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Club house, rear elevation, from SW.



Barn from NW.

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Original main entry door detail.

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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

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

The Marion Golf Club is a well-preserved area associated with Marion's rise in popularity as a summer resort at the turn of the 20th century. Marion was one of many quiescent New England port towns that were transformed after their atmosphere, cool, quiet, and quaint, was discovered by vacationing Americans. Railroads eased the journey and hotels provided lodging, and by the 1870s, outsiders were renting and buying property, often building ample cottages, and planning longer stays. Of particular interest for Marion, prosperous businessmen and their families were joined by literary figures, artists, and actors, and President and Mrs. Grover Cleveland. The largely undeveloped sections of the town on Great Neck became one of the most impressive summer-house neighborhoods, with large Shingle and Classical Revival dwellings at the end of long driveways and overlooking the sea. Also built here were yacht, tennis, and golf clubs and other meeting places for this community like this one. 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 level, with areas of significance in architecture, entertainment/recreation, and social history.