

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

15-34 Marion MRN.F MRN.487

Photograph



Town/City: Marion
Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village

Address: 256 Converse Road
Historic Name: Jordan H. Bacon House

Uses: Present: Residential
Original: Residential

Date of Construction: Ca. 1930

Source: Deed and map research

Style/Form: Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone
Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood
Roof: Asphalt

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
Cottage (1989)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
None

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.49

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

Locus Map



Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): February 2022

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

256 Converse 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.

256 Converse Road occupies a rectangular parcel on the west side of Converse Road just south of its intersection with Crapo Street. The house is set back from the street in the eastern half of the parcel and faces east. The property is maintained primarily in lawn with clusters of mature trees around the house and at the western portion of the parcel. Low foundation plantings span the façade. A long, paved driveway enters the property from Converse Street at the southwest corner of the parcel and terminates at the western lot line.

The building is a two-story, three-bay-by-two-bay, side-gabled, wood-frame house with an L-shaped plan. The two-by-two-bay main block has a steep gabled roof that telescopes over the gabled roof of the one-and-one-half story south wing. Constructed ca. 1930 in the Colonial Revival style, it appears to retain all of its original character-defining features. The house rests on a stone foundation and is clad in painted wood shingles. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. A brick gable-wall chimney rises along the south wall of the main block, piercing the roof of the south wing just below the ridge; a second brick chimney rises from the west roof slope.

Openings at the first story at the façade include an entry at the north bay and a triple mullied window at the south bay of the main block. The glass-and-panel door is framed by partial eight-light sidelights within an enclosed, pedimented portico. Narrow, mullied eight-light fixed sash occupy the side walls of the portico. The door fronts a brick stoop and two-step stair and a concrete walkway leading to the street. A gravel walkway runs south from the entry across the façade to a gravel parking area off the driveway. The triple window contains double-hung, six-over-one sash; a smaller triple window at the south wing has four-over-one sash. A continuous shed dormer at the second story contains paired, mullied, double-hung six-over-one windows. The openings at the side elevations are single and paired double-hung, six-over-one windows. All of the windows at the house have molded wood surrounds. A vertical-plank wooden fence extends north from the northeast corner of the house to the property boundary.

A gabled, wood-shingled, structure off the northwest corner of the house was not clearly visible during the site visit. It was constructed in 1989 according to the town assessor's card.

256 Converse Road exemplifies a suburban Colonial Revival-style house. The Colonial Revival period in America (1880–1955) saw a resurgence of patriotism and a return to the architectural styles of the early years of the republic. Combining the classical architectural elements of the Georgian, Federal and Greek Revival periods, the Colonial Revival style was the most popular style in America for private and public buildings between the World Wars. The characteristic Colonial Revival features of this house include the prominent pedimented entrance portico with sidelights; paired windows; and multi-light window glazing.

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 town of Marion was established in 1852 when it broke off from the town of Rochester. The Village of Marion, 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. This house is located in the southwestern section of Marion Village centered on Converse Road (originally called Nye Street and later known as Pleasant Street or Charles Neck Road) which runs southward toward Charles Neck Point, the southernmost point of the peninsula defining the western side of Sippican Harbor. The area is named for Captain George Bonum Nye (1750-1831), the sea captain who was one of the pioneers in the salt making

Continuation sheet 1

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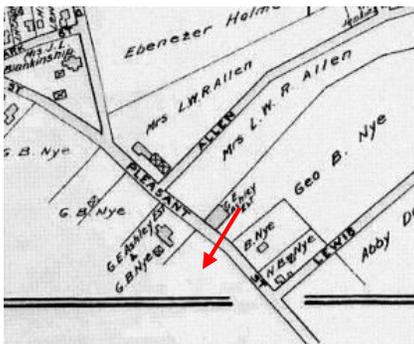
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industry in Marion and who owned a house and surrounding land at 266 Converse Road (ca.1780, George B. Nye House, MRN.82).

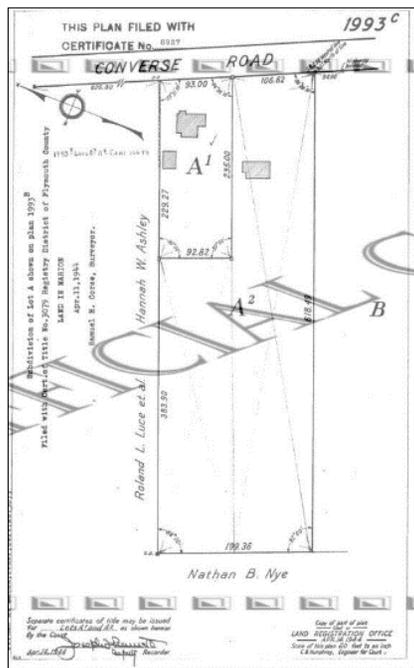
This part of Marion was sparsely settled with a few scattered farms until the mid-19th century, when the advent of regular rail service helped shift the town's economy from traditional maritime businesses to tourism. Wealthy individuals were attracted to Marion and began to build large summer residences along the waterfront. The construction and maintenance of these properties sparked demand for a variety of service industries and trades, particularly carpentry, along with the need for housing for this new class of workers. As landowners in this area saw a new use for their properties and former farms were subdivided into house lots, this part of Marion soon became a densely settled residential quarter. Comparison of the 1879 map with the 1903 map shows how quickly this transition occurred. In a little more than two decades, large tracts of open land had become filled with streets lined with new houses. The majority of residences are relatively modest one-and-one-half to two-story frame houses dating from the early 19th to the early 20th centuries and representing a range of styles including Cape, Federal, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Craftsman and Colonial Revival.



1903 map

The approximate location of this property is shown on the 1903 map to the left. The first recorded conveyance found for the parcel was the deed given by Hannah W. Nye Ashley to her son Nathan B. Nye in 1907 for an approximately two-acre plot of land on the west side of Converse Road. Nathan B. Nye (1864-1951), the son of Hannah West Bennett (1834-1914) and John Bates Blankinship Nye (1831-1871), was one of the many descendants of Captain George Bonum Nye. Nathan, who became a well-known figure in Marion, lived with his wife Emma Nye almost directly across the street from the subject property at 247 Converse Road (ca.1890, Nathan B. Nye House, MRN.485).

Nathan Nye sold the property within a few months to Abbie R. Dow. Abbie Rawson Dow (1865-1956) was the wife of Boston lawyer Richard Sylvester Dow (1863-1940). At the time of the purchase of this land, the Dows owned a large Shingle Style house at 5 Water Street (ca.1895, Richard S. Dow House, MRN.164) which was for many years their summer residence. The couple's primary home was on Marlborough Street in the Back Bay neighborhood of Boston. The subject property was sold eight years later to Harry E. Converse. No buildings are mentioned in that conveyance.



1940 census, Arne was a Converse Road neighbor of Jordan Bacon. A 1944 newspaper clipping reported Bacon's retirement

Colonel Harry Elisha Converse (1863-1920) was the son of Malden shoe manufacturer Elisha S. Converse (1820-1904). In 1853 the senior Converse established the Boston Rubber Shoe Company, which eventually employed 3,500 people. Harry Converse served as an executive of the shoe company and in 1898 was appointed a colonel in the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia during the short-lived Spanish American War. In 1903 Harry Converse built "The Moorings" (demolished in 1924), considered to be the largest wood frame house in New England. It was set on a large, garden estate at Charles Neck overlooking the entrance to Sippican Harbor and Buzzards Bay. (See 100 Moorings Road, 1924, Henry E. Converse House, MRN.47). Converse employed a huge service staff at The Moorings, many of whom lived in the neighboring area, including Nathan B. Nye, who worked there as a gardener. It is unclear what either Richard Dow or Harry Converse intended to do with the subject property. In 1925, after the death of Harry Converse, the property passed to his son Parker. Parker Converse immediately conveyed it back to Nathan and Emma Nye. Two years later the Nyes sold a portion of the property to Jordan M. Bacon.

The 1927 deed conveying the property to Jordan Bacon and his wife Lillian of Reading does not specify buildings, but the deed of Bacon to Carl Stearns in 1944 mentions buildings and refers to a registered plan (Plymouth Registry of Deeds filed with Certificate 3079, dated 1944) shown at left. The 1930 and 1940 censuses report Bacon living on Converse Road with his occupation listed as poultry farmer. A poultry farm, Merry Land Farm, was operated by Dr. James A. Arne on Converse Road at the time. According to the

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after 35 years in the poultry business. It is therefore probable that Jordan M. Bacon built this house after moving from Reading to Marion around 1930 and taking employment at the poultry farm.

After the sale of the property to Carl and Josephine Stearns in 1944 the property had several short-term owners. Several later, longer-term owners included Robert W. Haslam (1949-1959), Howland S. Dow (1964-1973, no known relation to the earlier owner Richard S. Dow), and Veronica M. Kennedy (1973-1989). The property was acquired by the current owners in 1999.

Deed Research

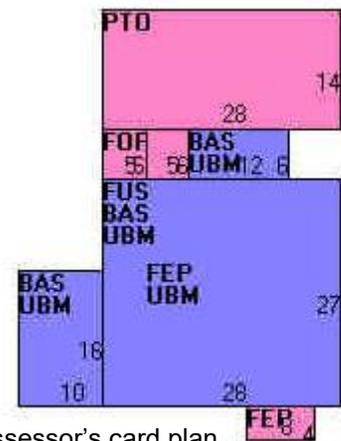
Date	Book-Page (Certificate)	Grantor	Grantee
08-30-1999	(96094)	Herman A. & Germaine A. Krobath	Christopher A. & Michelle A. Sampson
07-08-1992	(83277)	Carl J. & Caroline W. Lovejoy	Herman A. & Germaine A. Krobath
08-01-1989	(78916)	Veronica M. Kennedy	Carl J. & Caroline w. Lovejoy
08-31-1973	(52012)	Howland S. Dow	Veronica M. Kennedy
05-15-1964	(35354)	Ethel L. Bristol	Howland S. & Mary M. Dow
01-30-1959	(27385)	Robert W. & Evelyn B. Haslam	Gilbert D., Jr. & Ethel L. Bristol
07-07-1949	(13583)	Herbert L. & Grace J. Bowman	Robert W. & Evelyn B. Haslam
05-26-1947	1956-297	Carl C. & Josephine P. Stearns	Herbert L. & Grace J. Bowman
04-17-1944	(8927)	Jordan M. Bacon	Carl C. & Josephine P. Stearns
08-19-1927	(3079)	Emma P. Nye	Jordan M. Bacon
08-18-1925	(1179)	Parker & June Butler Converse	Emma P. Nye
08-11-1925	(1178)	Harold S. Davis	Parker Converse
10-13-1921	(518)	Estate of Harry E. Converse	Harold S. Davis
09-19-1916	(97)	Richard S. & Abbie R. Dow	Harry E. Converse
04-23-1908	(92)	Nathan B. Nye	Abbie R. Dow
09-19-1907	974-518	Hannah W. Ashley	Nathan B. Nye

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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- 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.
- Olive Hill Sommers, *Three Centuries of Marion Houses*. Marion, 1972.
- 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.

"Poultry farm conducted on modern lines: Marion farm produces many eggs," *The Standard-Times*, New Bedford, MA, December 21, 1941.

"Out of business," [unknown newspaper] June 8, 1944, Sippican Historical Society, #V057.105.



Assessor's card plan

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 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 for the Nye Area of Marion Village. The George Bonum Nye Area (MRN.F) is recommended as eligible for listing as a National Register District at the local level under Criterion A for Social History and Criterion C for Architecture. The area is named for Captain George Bonum Nye (1750-1831), a sea captain who was one of the pioneers in the salt making industry in Marion and who owned a farm house and a large tract of land on the west side of Converse Road (formerly Nye Street). The Nye and Blankenship families, the two largest landowners in the area in the 19th century, are well represented among the property owners here for more than a century.

The area is built up around George Bonum Nye’s homestead at 266 Converse Road (ca. 1780, George Bonum Nye House, MRN.85) in the southwestern part of Marion Village. It runs north-south along Converse Road between Evergreen Cemetery and Lewis Street and includes the large triangle containing Clark Street and bordered by the cemetery to the north, Pleasant Street to the east, and Converse Road to the west. The potential district’s boundaries are those defined in the 1998 survey for the George Bonum Nye Area (MRN.F), to which several properties on Clark Street, Converse Road, and Pleasant Street have been added.

Under Criterion A, the area is recommended as eligible at the local level for its association with the rapid residential development of the southwestern part of Marion Village in response to the need for housing for a new class of workers. In the late 19th through the early 20th centuries the town became a popular seaside resort for affluent city dwellers who began building large summer residences along the waterfront. The construction and maintenance of these grand properties sparked demand for a variety of skilled trades and service industries along with the need for housing for this new class of workers. This area became the home for many of these tradespeople seeking modest, comfortable single-family residences.

Under Criterion C, the area is recommended as eligible at the local level in the area of Architecture for its nearly intact collection of houses that provides a sense of the evolution of architectural styles from the mid-19th through the early 20th centuries. A densely-settled quarter, the Nye Area contains mostly modestly-scaled, one-and-one half to two-story wood-frame dwellings on small to moderate-sized lots in the Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Craftsman, and Colonial Revival styles. Along

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with several high-style examples of these styles, the area also includes a handful of earlier dwellings in the Cape and Federal styles that pre-date the building boom that began in the second half of the 19th century.

The majority 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 social history and architecture.