

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

16-26

Marion

MRN.F

MRN.86

Town/City: Marion

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

Address: 273 Converse Road

Historic Name: John B. Blankinship House

Uses: Present: Residential

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: Ca. 1820

Source: Visual analysis

Style/Form: Full Cape

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles / Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Shed dormers at the ell (after 1998)

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.80

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.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): January 2022

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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.

273 Converse Road occupies an irregular lot between Pleasant Street to the north and Allen Street to the south. The house is roughly centered on the parcel and faces Converse Road to the west. The front yard is maintained chiefly in grass. The house is surrounded by low foundation plantings at the main block and fronts dense shrubs at the ell and stable/garage addition. The property is bordered along Converse Road by a rubble stone wall with granite piers; the back of the wall is lined with mature trees.

This house and the house across the street at 266 Converse Road (MRN.85) are among the earliest structures in this section of Marion. The main block of the building is a one-and-one-half-story, five-bay-by-two-bay, side-gabled, wood-frame house. The house was constructed ca. 1820 in the full Cape style and with its dependencies, reflects a typical New England connected farm house. It retains the majority of its original character-defining features. A one-and-one-half-story, gabled ell is set back one bay from the façade (west elevation) at the south wall and a one-and-one-half-story, gabled stable/garage extends southward from the ell. The house rests on a stone foundation. The walls are clad in weathered wood shingles and the roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. A corbelled brick chimney is centered on the roof ridge at the main block in alignment with the entry; a second corbelled brick chimney rises from the west roof slope at the ell.

Trim elements at the main block include narrow corner boards and frieze boards. The windows at the first story are double-hung six-over-six sash with architraves and lipped lintels; the windows at the façade touch the cornice. Second story openings at the gable ends include twelve-over-twelve and six-over-six windows at the first story and paired nine-over-nine windows at the second story. The windows have blinds. The centered entry at the façade contains a four-panel wood door with cast iron strap hinges framed by a flat surround and a four-light transom. The door fronts a shallow granite step and walkway set in herringbone brick leading to Converse Road. There is a continuous shed dormer at the east (rear) roof slope.

The two dependencies are trimmed with narrow corner boards and frieze boards. Dense vegetation along the west elevation currently obscures the openings but early photographs show small six-over-nine windows at the ell. There are three shed dormers containing fixed eight-light sash at the ell. The former stable or barn, now used as a garage, has fixed twelve-light sash with tall architraves at the first story and fixed six-light sash at the upper level. A louvered cupola vent with a weathervane is centered at the roof ridge, which has been raised in height to accommodate a dormer at the rear (east) roof slope. The garage door opening fronts a gravel driveway bordered with granite pavers that enters the property from Allen Street.

The Cape Cod house form, a one-story side-gabled house with a central chimney and steeply-pitched roof, emerged in southeastern New England ca. 1700 and saw continued use through the mid-19th century. The full Cape design was one of the later iterations of the house type. Defining characteristics of the Cape style illustrated in this house include the full Cape configuration (five bays with centered entry), side-gabled roof, center chimney, corner boards, and small window openings. The windows at the side elevations and the ell appear to be older than the six-over-six sash at the façade. Twelve-over-twelve, nine-over-nine, and six-over-nine window sash configurations are characteristic of the Georgian (1700–1780) period; six-over-six windows were typically seen later and are identified with the Federal (1780–1820) and Greek Revival (1825–1860) periods.

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

Continuation sheet 1

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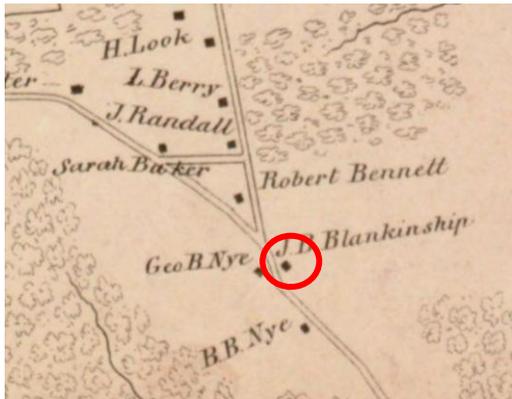
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northern portion, often referred to as the Old Landing, and a southern portion, known once as Wharf Village but more commonly referred to today as The Village or Marion Village. This house is located in the southwestern section of Marion Village centered 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 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.



1855 map.

The historic name for this property is the J.B. Blankinship (also spelled Blankenship) House and appears as such on the 1855 map shown at left. John Bates Blankinship (1795-1882) was the son of Barnabas and Sarah Nye Blankinship. Sarah Nye was the daughter of salt works owner Captain George Bonum Nye, whose house was located across the street at what is now 266 Converse Road (ca. 1800, George B. Nye House, MRN.85). John Blankinship, a farmer, married Polly Clark (1775-1851), daughter of Maltiah and Hannah Clark, in 1816. The couple had three children including Ichabod Nye Blankinship (1817-1910), who was raised in the house and later lived at 26 Pleasant Street. At some point John B. and his son Ichabod Blankinship became insolvent, and the property passed out of the family. It was purchased by Nathan H. Allen in 1870. The 1879 map shows the owners as Allen and Hadley. Nathan H. Allen (1848-1925) was the son of Captain Henry M. Allen, a mariner and another major figure in the salt making business.

The Blankinship farm was sold by Nathan H. Allen in 1878 to his brother and sister-in-law, John M. Allen (1842-1912) and Lizzie Wood Ricketson Allen (1851-1934). Nathan Allen's deed describes the property as bounded by Blankenship's house to the west, the land of Ebenezer Holmes to the north, Sippican Harbor to the east, and the land of Barbabas Nye to the south. This is roughly equivalent today to the contiguous parcels on both sides of Allen Street between Converse and Water Streets. Lizzie Allen was the daughter of Charles and Polly H. Ricketson of Dartmouth. She was first married in 1871 to John Chaddock Allen (1846-1876) of New Bedford. Two years after his untimely death in 1876 she married John M. Allen, no relation to John C. Allen. Census records variously note John M. Allen's occupation as surveyor, architect, and buyer and seller of real estate. Lizzie and John M. Allen subsequently subdivided the property and sold building lots which had comprised the original Blankinship farm. The parcel discussed in this form was sold in 1922 to Jennie Enos, who with her daughter Janet owned the property for 15 years until it was sold to Egbert and Mary Driscoll of Cicero, Indiana.

Egbert Gotizan Driscoll (1897-1985) was the son of Arthur and Hellen Driscoll of St. Paul, Minnesota. A 1920 graduate of Yale College, in 1926 he married Mary Cartwright Ballantine Cumming on Ram Island in Sippican Harbor. Mary Driscoll was the daughter of Robert W. and Elizabeth Cumming of Newark, New Jersey. Elizabeth Cumming was the granddaughter of Peter Ballantine, founder of P. Ballantine & Sons, brewers. The Cummings had summered in Marion since 1911 and owned a grand house at 9 Allen Street. Egbert Driscoll was an executive with the Indianapolis Insurance Company. The couple used this property as a summer home from 1946 until 1968 when it was purchased by William G. and Katrina Saltonstall. William G. Saltonstall, Jr. (b. 1938) was the son of William G. Saltonstall (1905-1989), an educator and principal of Phillips Academy in Exeter, New Hampshire. The junior Saltonstall is an architect and the founding principal of Saltonstall Architects based in

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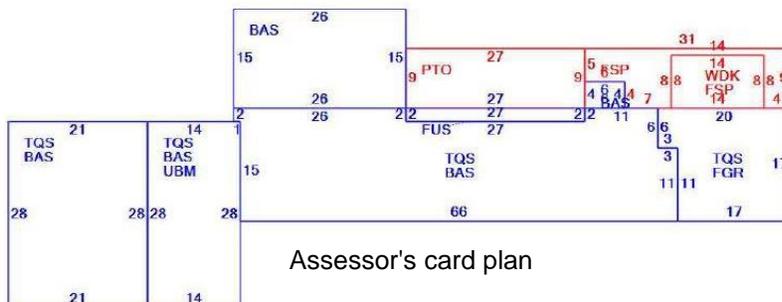
Marion. From 1973 until 1991 the property was owned by Janet S. and William S. Noonan. The current owners are Eric and Rosalind P. Welter.

Deed Research

Date	Book-Page	Grantor	Grantee
07-17-2008	LCC 101721	273 Converse Road Nominee Trust	Eric P. & Rosalind P. Welter
12-30-1991	LCC 82396	William S. & Janet S. Noonan	273 Converse Road Nominee Trust
08-31-1973	LCC 51886	William G. & Katrina J. Saltonstall	Janet S. Noonan
08-12-1968	LCC 42482	Egbert G. & Mary C. Driscoll	William G. & Katrina J. Saltonstall
01-25-1966	LCC 38836	Egbert G. Driscoll	Egbert G. & Mary C. Driscoll
10-09-1946	LCC 6020	Arnold Paine	Egbert G. Driscoll
05-04-1937	LCC 6020	Janet Enos	Arnold Paine
09-20-1922	1433-566	Estate of John M. Allen	Jennie Enos
12-06-1878	446-125	Nathan H. Allen	Lizzie M.R. Allen & John M. Allen
08-29-1870	369-72	Estates of John B. & Ichabod Blankinship	Nathan H. Allen

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.
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- Smith, Pete (ed.). *A Picture Postcard History of Marion, Massachusetts*. New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2008.
- Sippican Historical Society: online database
- "30 Years of Service," *The Indianapolis Times*, Indianapolis, IN, February 16, 1935.
- Mary C. Driscoll obituary, *The Indianapolis News*, Indianapolis, IN, April 29, 1985.



Assessor's card plan

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West and south elevations.



West and south elevations, date unknown. Photograph courtesy of Sippican Historical Society.

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.