

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

|       |        |       |        |
|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| 15-27 | Marion | MRN.F | MRN.89 |
|-------|--------|-------|--------|

**Town/City:** Marion

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 300 Converse Road

**Historic Name:** Henry V. Blankinship House

**Uses:** Present: Residential

Original: Residential

**Date of Construction:** Ca. 1895

**Source:** Map & deed research, visual analysis

**Style/Form:** Queen Anne

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Rubble stone

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard & shingle / Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

Freestanding garage (2008)

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

Garage addition (late 20<sup>th</sup> century)

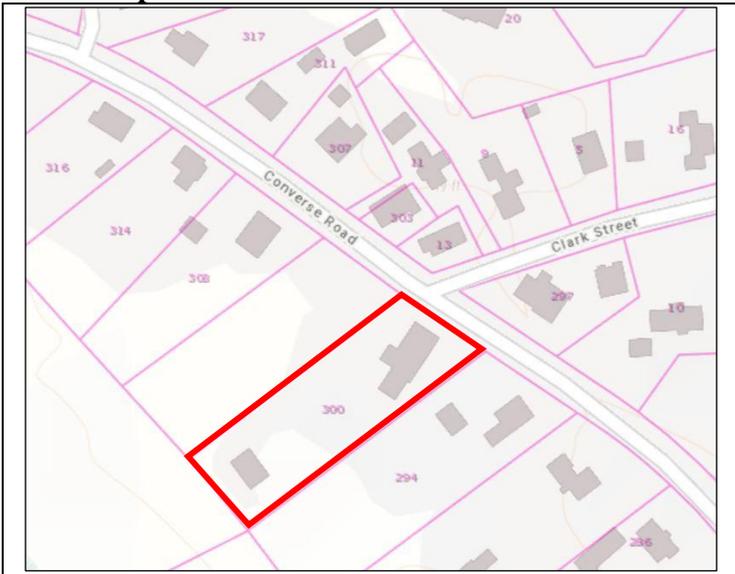
**Condition:** Good

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

**Acreage:** 0.81

**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 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

300 Converse Road

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Area(s) Form No.

|       |        |
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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.*

**300 Converse Road** occupies a long, narrow, trapezoidal parcel on the west side of Converse Road across from its intersection with Clark Street. The house is positioned near the street and faces east. The property is almost entirely maintained in lawn with a row of tall trees and shrubs bordering the southern boundary. Low foundation plantings line the façade (east elevation) of the house and taller shrubs border the north elevation. A paved driveway enters the property from Converse Road at the northeast corner of the parcel and terminates at the garage attached to the rear of the house.

The building comprises a one-and-one-half-story, three-bay-by-four-bay, front-gabled, wood-frame main block with a rectangular plan and three dependencies at the rear of the house. The dependencies include a shed-roofed southwest block, a shed-roofed northwest block, and a flat-roofed garage. Constructed around 1895 and retaining all of its original character-defining features, it is a handsome example of the Queen Anne style. A hip-roofed open porch spans the façade and the south elevation. The house rests on a rubble stone foundation and is clad in wood clapboards and shingles. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. A brick chimney rises from the rear of the south roof ridge at the main block.

The main block is trimmed with a boxed cornice, eave returns, two-part frieze boards, and narrow channeled corner boards. The open porch has a shallow hip roof and is ornamented with elaborate diamond trim at the frieze. The narrow, turned porch posts have carved brackets and anchor a spindle-work railing. The porch skirt comprises rectangular panels framing horizontal lattice work painted a contrasting color. The simple main entry at the northernmost bay contains a glass-and-panel door with a flat surround; it fronts a three-step wooden stair and concrete walkway leading to Converse Road. The porch is screened along the south elevation and has a screen door opening at the westernmost bay that fronts a three-step wooden stair and a paved walkway leading from Converse Road to the rear of the house. The windows at the first story are single, double-hung, two-over-one sash with flat surrounds and molded entablatures. A small, enframed, two-light window at the gable peak is set within a area of decorative diamond wood shingles. The openings at the second story are distinctive, shallow, two-over-one windows that touch the frieze boards. All of the windows have wooden blinds.

The one-story, three-bay-by-two-bay, shed-roofed block at the southwest corner of the house is seen in the footprint of the building on the 1903 map. It is set back from the north elevation of the main block and aligns with the porch at the south elevation. Openings at the south elevation include two double-hung, two-over-one windows that match those at the main block and an entry at the westernmost bay. The entry is sheltered by a flat hood supported by elaborate saw-cut, triangular brackets. The door fronts a wooden staircase that ascends from grade parallel to the house and accesses the rooftop deck over the garage. The openings at the north elevation include small, fixed windows set at the cornice. The one-story, shed-roofed block at the northwest corner of the house incorporates a semihexagonal bay window at the west elevation. The flat-roofed, attached, two-car garage extends west from the southwest block and faces east. It is topped with a railed roof deck.

A gabled, three-car garage constructed in 2008 is sited at the western property line. It faces south and is accessed by a long driveway that runs east-west between the property at 294 Converse Road (ca.1880, Charles W. Blankinship House, MRN.97) and the adjacent property to the south.

**300 Converse Road** is a fine example of Queen Anne, the dominant style for domestic architecture in the United States between 1880 and 1900. Devised by a group of English architects and based on the visual vocabulary of late Medieval models, Queen Anne encompasses a wide range of architectural features from several stylistic traditions. The style gained popularity after being seen at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876. It was disseminated by the country's leading architectural magazine and by pattern books and mail-order house plans. This house does not feature the towers, bays and dormers often seen in high-style

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300 Converse Road

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

|       |        |
|-------|--------|
| MRN.F | MRN.89 |
|-------|--------|

Queen Anne-style houses, but its wrapped open porch, delicate ornamentation, and the decorative shingle patterns are characteristic of the style.

## 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 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-19<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and representing a range of styles including Cape, Federal, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Craftsman and Colonial Revival.

This house does not appear on the 1879 map but is seen on the 1903 map with H.V. Blankinship shown as owner. The first recorded conveyance found for this property recorded its sale by Howard S. Blankinship to Ruth W. Blankinship in 1908. This deed referenced an agreement between two heirs of Captain George Bonum Nye, Barnabas B. Nye and John B. Blankinship. The agreement (Plymouth County Registrar of Deeds, Book 230/ Page 14) concerns the division of the land that they had inherited from Captain Nye. It can be assumed that this parcel of land was the portion of the property falling to John B. Blankinship, but the chain of ownership from that point forward is not clear.

Henry V. Blankinship (1847-1906) was the son of Warren M. Blankinship (1816-1898) and Emily Maria Clark (1816-1853). Henry followed the sea as a young man and in 1868 was recorded serving on a whaler out of New Bedford. The 1870 census showed him living in Marion and working as a carpenter. By 1873 he had moved to Fall River, where he married his first wife, Sarah M. Stetson (1852-1894); the 1880 census reported Henry working as a lamp lighter. Henry and Sarah had two children, Edith, who died as a child, and Howard Stetson (b.1881). From 1885 through 1894, censuses and city directories listed Henry living with his family in Fall River and working as a policeman. Sarah Blankinship died in 1894. Henry returned to Marion sometime after 1894 and in 1898 married Ruth W. Dorr (1859-1931). The 1903 directory lists Henry living on Nye Street (now known as Converse Road) and occupied as a carpenter. The subject house was probably built between 1895 and 1900. Henry's brother, Franklin C. Blankinship, lived next door at 294 Converse Road (ca.1880, Charles W. Blankinship House, MRN.97). Another brother who was also a carpenter, Albert Blankinship, lived at 107 Main Street (1855-79, A.C. Blankinship House, MRN.267).

The 1910 census reported Howard Blankinship living with his stepmother Ruth in this house with his occupation noted as retail merchant/groceries. His 1917 World War I draft registration card stated that he was living on Converse Road and working as a merchant on Front Street. In 1908 Howard Blankinship sold his interest in the house to Ruth Blankinship, and in 1922 the house was purchased by Anna B. Benner.

Anna Bradstreet Benner and her husband Edward L. Benner were both born in Liberty, Maine in 1867. As noted in the censuses of 1900 and 1910, Edward L. Benner worked as an officer at the Bridgewater State Farm (a correctional facility) and Anna Benner was employed there as a matron. Anna Benner died in 1930 and Edward Benner died the following year. The property

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

300 Converse Road

## MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

|       |        |
|-------|--------|
| MRN.F | MRN.89 |
|-------|--------|

passed to the couple's niece and nephew, Ward and Thelma (Benner) Sequeira. Thelma Sequeira owned the house until 1979. It was purchased by the current owners in 2019.

### Deed Research

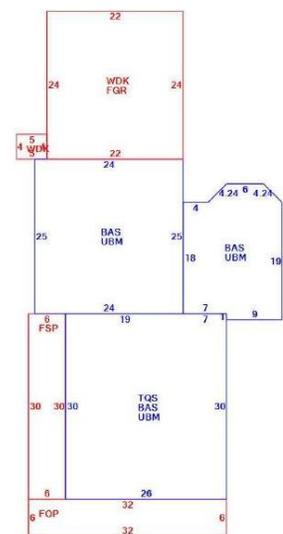
| Date       | Book-Page  | Grantor                              | Grantee                              |
|------------|------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 12-03-2019 | 52102-0068 | Three Hundred Converse Nominee Trust | David E. & Karen S. McGinnis         |
| 05-16-2016 | 47038-192  | Constance H. & David K. Pierce       | Three Hundred Converse Nominee Trust |
| 01-06-86   | 6517-238   | Richard T. & Ann B. Vernick          | Constance H. Allen & David K. Pierce |
| 11-16-1979 | 4756-147   | Thelma B. Sequeira                   | Richard T. & Ann B. Vernick          |
| 09-21-1940 | 1792-384   | Ward E. Benner                       | Thelma B. Sequeira                   |
| 03-24-1932 | 1625-575   | Geneva V. Deering                    | Ward E. & Thelma B. Benner           |
|            |            | Estate of Edward L. Benner           | Geneva V. Deering                    |
| 09-13-1928 | 1557-568   | Franklin A. Winter                   | Edward L. & Anna B. Benner           |
| 09-13-1928 | 1557-568   | Anna B. Benner                       | Franklin A. Winter                   |
| 04-14-1992 | 1409-485   | Ruth W. Blankinship et al.           | Anna B. Benner                       |
| 07-02-1908 | 996-66     | Howard S. Blankinship                | Ruth W. Blankinship                  |
|            |            | Estate of Henry Vose Blankinship     | Howard S. Blankinship                |

### 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.
- 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.
- Smith, Pete (ed.). *A Picture Postcard History of Marion, Massachusetts*. New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2008.
- Sippican Historical Society: online database



Façade (east elevation).



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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|       |        |
|-------|--------|
| MRN.F | MRN.89 |
|-------|--------|

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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.