

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	MRN.194
Historic Name:	Pitcher, John and Catherine Clark House
Common Name:	Marion First Congregational Church Parsonage, Old - Pangaro, Lawrence P. and Edith V. Goddard House
Address:	113 Front St
City/Town:	Marion
Village/Neighborhood:	Marion;
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	C 1813
Architectural Style(s):	No style;
Use(s):	Parsonage; Rectory; Single Family Dwelling House;
Significance:	Architecture; Religion;
Area(s):	MRN.N
Designation(s):	
Building Materials:	Roof: Asphalt Shingle; Wall: Wood; Wood Shingle; Foundation: Granite; Poured Concrete; Stone, Cut;
Demolished	No



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

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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 – 137	Marion	N	MRN.194
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Town/City: Marion

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Center, Marion Village, Wharf Village

Photograph



Address: 113 Front Street

Historic Name: John and Catharine Pitcher House

Uses: Present: Parish Hall

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1813

Source: Visual, deeds

Style/Form: Federal / Cape

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Cut granite

Wall/Trim: Wood / wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Playground

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Conversion from a house to a rectory (late 19th century); addition of a leanto (after 1933)

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.60 acres

Setting: Outside of the main commercial core of Sippican Wharf Village, in a primarily residential area. Surrounding buildings are a mix of late 19th and early/mid-20th century single family dwellings.

Locus Map (*North is Up*)



Recorded by: Jennifer B. Doherty with Claire Dempsey

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): February, 2022

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INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

113 FRONT STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

MRN.N

MRN.194

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 John and Catherine Pitcher House is a ca. 1813 Federal style Cape house that has been converted from a residence to a parish hall. Sited with its back to Front Street at the west, the façade of the house, facing to the east, is difficult to see from the public way. The house takes the Cape form, one-and-a-half stories tall, five bays wide, and two piles deep, with a center entry. Notably the house appears to now have internal end wall chimneys, as evidenced by the chimneys projecting from the ridgeline at each gable end. This would be a marked contrast to most examples of this type, which more commonly have a five-room center chimney plan rather than the center hall plan the chimneys suggest. The rear of the house has been raised to a full two stories, and due to its location on a hill, also features a walk-out basement. Extending from the rear pile of the south elevation of the house is a large wing, a full two stories in height. The wing sits back from the façade of the house but extends beyond the rear elevation. Finally, extending from the south elevation of the wing, and set perpendicular to the house and wing, is a large leanto, at least one-and-a-half stories tall. The leanto is not shown on maps as late as 1933, indicating it is a mid/late-20th century addition to the building.

The house and ell sit on a cut granite block foundation, while the leanto sits on a poured concrete foundation. The whole buildings is covered in wood shingles and has an asphalt shingle roof. Entrances are visible centered on the façade of the house, centered on the rear basement level of the house, and on the leanto at its angle of entry with the ell. The façade entrance features sidelights. At the rear, a porch is under construction in 2022. The entry on the leanto features no additional trim and is reached by a set of stairs composed of modern dimensional lumber. The house features a mix of windows, including some historic 6/6 wood sash, with other 1/1 replacement sash. All are protected by exterior storm windows.

The Pitcher House lot rises to the east so the house is elevated above Front Street, providing for a walk-out basement. The large, rectangular lot is mostly open, and included in 2021 a large children's play area to the north of the house. Fenced with modern split-rail fencing, the play area features modern playground equipment. A granite block retaining wall separates the playground from the building. The south property line is bordered by a short extension of Pitcher Street, off of which a driveway leads to the front of the building.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The John and Catherine Pitcher House has long been identified as likely constructed ca. 1813, and recent research confirms that attribution. That year, John Pitcher (1788-1867) purchased a large lot of land in Marion's Wharf Village from Joseph Allen.¹ There were no houses mentioned in the deed, but a barn was standing on the property. That same year, Pitcher married Catherine Clark (1791-1871); it does not appear that the couple had any children.² Pitcher is frequently identified in records as a mariner, and local histories state that he preserved a bell from a Swedish ship that he would ring in his yard every evening at 9 pm. The couple were recorded together in the 1850 census, and in 1855, were joined by three others, relationships to the Pitches unclear: Catherine C. Cardy (b. ca. 1817) and presumably her son, Edmond C. Cardy (b. ca. 1849), and George S. Atwood (b. ca. 1842). Their relationships to the Pitches were not given, nor were their occupations. Pitcher was marked at the house on the 1855 map of Marion. In 1860, the Pitches were joined by Ann Copland (b. ca. 1825), a Canadian immigrant, and Edmond C. Cardy again. See figure 1. Following John Pitcher's death in 1867, his estate was probated.³ His will, signed a year before, left his wife Catherine Clark Pitcher the use of all his property until her death. After that, the remainder of his estate was to go to the Congregational Society. This included his house and 10 acres of land, valued at \$3,900; the value of all of his real estate totaled \$5,900. Pitcher was the brother of Elizabeth Pitcher Taber, known in Marion for her philanthropy; because of her own wealth, he left her and their brother J. S. H. Pitcher the small sum of \$5 each.

¹ PCRD 126:265, 1813/1816

² Ancestry.com: Find-A-Grave; Massachusetts State Census of Population for 1855; US Federal Census of Population for 1850, 1860.

³ Ancestry.com: Plymouth County Probate Records volume 105, page 503.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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The Pitcher House was marked as the Congregational Parsonage on both the 1879 and 1903 maps; see figure 2. For much of the 19th century, Front Street did not extend down to the house. Instead, the property was reached by a lane running east from Pleasant Street. This was eventually formalized as a public way and given the name Pitcher Street. The Congregational Society likely inherited all of John Pitcher's lands on either side of Pitcher Street, and by the early 20th century had begun to subdivide the property for individual residences. The house was expanded in several ways over this period, with a two-story hip-roofed wing on the south elevation and a porch across the west/rear elevation, reached by a high stair to the main floor. This created a new "front" for the house, facing Front Street. See figures 3 and 4.

In 1966, Marion's First Congregational Church conveyed the property to private owners, Lawrence P. and Edith G. Pangaro.⁴ Although there are no distances given in the deed, describing how large the parcel was, it was presumably quite smaller than the original 10-plus acres the Congregational Society received from John Pitcher. Lawrence P. Pangaro (1925-2017) was a native of Ohio, a graduate of Columbia University, and an Army veteran of World War II, awarded the Purple Heart for his service.⁵ He worked for many years in the advertising and newspaper worlds in New York City and later Southeastern Massachusetts. In New Bedford, he served as the national advertising manager for the New Bedford *Standard-Times*, leaving that position to found the Southeastern Advertising Agency, Inc. He and his wife, Edith V. Goddard Pangaro (1924-2014) founded the Marion *Sentinel* and its parent, the Sippican Publishing Company. He was an active tennis player, serving as president and treasurer of the Sippican Tennis Club. Lawrence P. Pangaro's wife, Edith, was a native of Pennsylvania and New Jersey and a graduate of Wheelock College. Beginning her teaching career in Greenwich, Connecticut, she continued it in the Old Rochester Regional School District when the couple moved to Massachusetts. As noted earlier, she also co-founded the Marion *Sentinel* with her husband.

The Pangaros undertook a systematic remodeling after their purchase: removing the porch, raising the west slope of the roof of the main block and adding a hip-roofed dormer, changing the roofline of the wing to a gable, and perhaps adding the leanto to the south end of the wing. The entry was shifted to the ground floor of the east elevation, where a Federal-style surround featured half-height sidelights and a pediment over the entry. A new stair installed from that entry through to the garret story; plan changes were made as well. See figure 4.⁶

The Pangaros owned the property for 11 years before selling it to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Fall River in 1977.⁷ The building served as a parish hall for St. Rita's parish (121 Front Street, MRN.195), across Vine Street, its yard as a playground. It is likely that additional changes were made by the church. The Church sold the property in the summer of 2021 and it has recently been re-shingled and its foundation plantings removed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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- 1879 Geo H Walker & Co, *Atlas of Plymouth County Massachusetts*.
- 1903 L. J. Richards & Co, *New Topographic Atlas of Surveys of Plymouth County ... Massachusetts*
- 1908, 1921, 1933 Sanborn Insurance Atlases.

Ancestry.com: see footnotes

Digital collections of the Sippican Historical Society

Gordon, Edward W. "MRN.N – Wharf Village," MHC Area Inventory Form. For the Sippican Historical Society, March, 1998.

Leonard, Mary Hall. *Mattapoissett and Old Rochester, Massachusetts*. New York, NY: The Grafton Press, 1907.

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds (PCRD): see footnotes, book:page.

Rosbe, Judith. "From Pitcher to Parsonage," *The Sentinel*, August 26, 1999.

_____, *Marion* (2000), p. 20.

Somers, Olive Hiller, *Three Centuries of Marion Houses* (1972), p 22-23.

⁴ PCRD 3328:521 (1966).

⁵ "Edith V. Pangaro," *The Sentinel*, October 12, 2014; "Lawrence P. Pangaro," *The Standard-Times*, May 7, 2017.

⁶ "An Old House Restored," *Sippican Sentinel* (27 April 1967), courtesy of Meg Steinberg.

⁷ PCRD 4300:490 (1977).

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The north (side) and west (rear) elevations of the John and Catherine Pitcher House.

2022 photos courtesy of Meg Steinberg.



The west (rear) and south (side) elevations of the John and Catherine Pitcher House.

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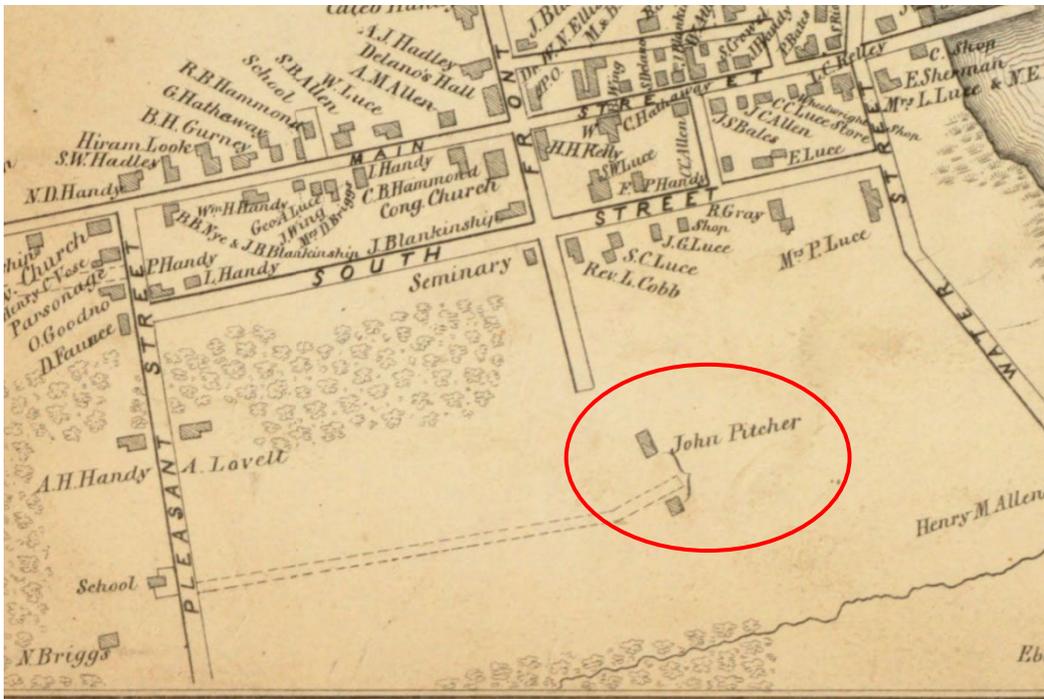


Figure 1: For much of its history, the John and Catherine Pitcher House was not accessed by Front Street, but rather by a long private lane running from Pleasant Street east to the house. This would later become a public street named Pitcher Street, which still has a small, public tail that continues east of Front Street to the south side of the Pitcher House, as shown on this 1855 map by Walling.



Figure 2: By 1903, Front Street had been extended down behind what was labeled as the "Cong. Parsonage," and the former lane to the Pitcher House was now known as Pitcher Street.

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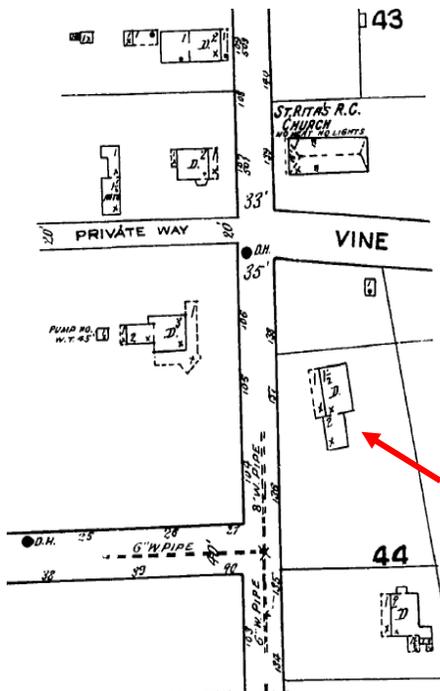
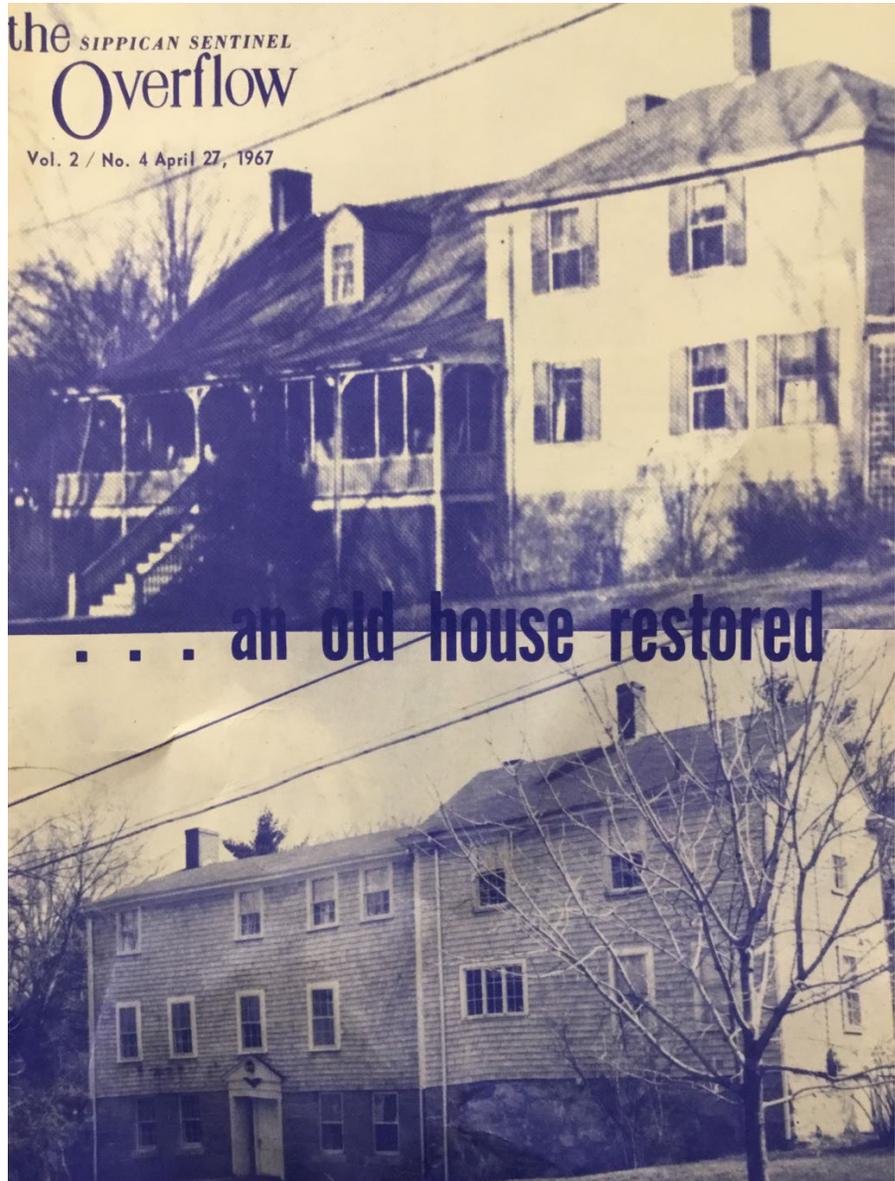


Figure 3: Left: Sanborn Fire Insurance Atlas of 1921 shown the house and wing before the more recent additions and changes. Figure 4: Right: *Sippican Sentinel* cover (1967), showing before and after views of the work on the house by the Pangaros.

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 John and Catherine Pitcher House at 113 Front Street 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 18th through the 20th 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 (Cottage, Hiller, and South) and north-south (Spring, 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), and Upper Pleasant Street (MRN.AC) 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 to include this property.

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, community planning and development, maritime history, and social history.