

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

16-98

Marion

MRN.L

MRN.491

Town/City: Marion

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

Address: 10 Lewis Street

Historic Name: James G. Gibbs House

Uses: Present: Residential

Original: Residential

Date of Construction: 1953

Source: Town records, published articles

Style/Form: Neo-Victorian Shingle

Architect/Builder: George W. W. Brewster

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Not visible

Wall/Trim: Wood shingle / Wood

Roof: Wood shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Tall brick enclosure wall

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Northwest block (2009)

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 1.63

Setting: Homogeneous residential neighborhood of predominately high-style Shingle Style and Queen Anne houses, principally developed in the late 19th – early 20th centuries. Surrounded mostly by large, wood-frame, single-family houses on generous lots. Borders a rocky beachfront along Sippican Harbor.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lynn Smiledge

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): January 2022

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

10 Lewis Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

MRN.L

MRN.491

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.

10 Lewis Street occupies a large, irregularly-shaped, waterfront property on the western shore of Sippican Harbor. The house faces north and is deeply set back on the parcel with its south elevation overlooking the harbor. The property is maintained primarily in open lawn at the harbor-facing elevations. The façade (north elevation) fronts a deep yard dotted with mature trees and a hedge that borders the western edge of the driveway. A swimming pool with a deck at the northwest corner of the property is enclosed by a latticework fence broken by arched trellis openings. Low plantings surround the house. The property is almost completely surrounded by a ten-foot brick wall which drops in height at the southern lot line to permit views of the harbor. The brick wall (MRN.492), the only remaining element of the original McCormick Cottage (see historical narrative section below), has a red tile-roofed "gate house" (MRN.493) with a Tudor-arched opening at its northwest corner. The wall is capped with tile and has decorative molded-tile elements on its inner face. A gravel driveway lined by granite pavers enters the property from Lewis Street near the northeast corner of the parcel. A public access pathway to Silvershell Beach runs along the brick wall at the western property boundary.

The building is a one-and-one-half-story, wood-frame house with a strong horizontal emphasis, complex massing, and a complex roof plan of cross gables, towers and dormers. It has a front-facing "U" plan with projecting blocks at the northwest and southwest corners. Constructed in 1953 in the Neo-Victorian Shingle Style, it skillfully incorporates a wealth of character-defining features of the late 19th century Shingle Style. The house is sheathed in weathered wood shingles and articulated at all elevations with contrasting wood trim. It has a wood shingle roof. Windows throughout are fixed or double-hung multi-light sash, most with multi-light upper sash and one-light lower sash. The A corbelled brick, triple-flue chimney with chimney pots rises from the roof ridge near the southwest corner of the "U." A double-flue chimney rises from the roof ridge near the southeast corner of the "U."

The south and east elevations facing Sippican Harbor and the west elevation are complex in design and exhibit the majority of Shingle Style features. The façade (north elevation) presents a more restrained aspect. The building was under renovation at the time of the site visit and this elevation could not be fully accessed visually. The base and west "arm" of the "U" at the façade are gabled blocks with flared eaves that intersect at an engaged semicircular tower with a conical roof. The tower shelters the recessed main entry, which is supported by paired Doric columns and contains a door with full-height sidelights. The tower wall above the entry is perforated with two rows of rectangular openings. A gravel walkway leads from the entry to a break in the hedge, where it joins the driveway. A semi-hexagonal oriel window at the north wall of the west arm of the "U" has a shingled hood that sweeps upward to the gable peak. The east arm of the "U" contains the garage.

The east arm of the "U" (the garage wing) has three hipped dormers linked by shed dormers on the east roof slope. It joins the base of the "U" at the southeast corner with an engaged semicircular tower with a conical roof. The tower component meets a cross-gabled block with a Palladian window that extends into to the tympanum, where it is embraced by curved rows of wood shingles. The corners of this gabled block are clipped and feature roundel windows with molded surrounds and heavy curved hoods with pendants.

The expanse between the cross-gabled blocks at the southeast and southwest corners of the house contains a continuous band of six French doors separated by fluted pilasters. They are surmounted by two eyebrow windows on the south roof slope. The prominent cross-gabled block at the southwest corner of the house has a shallow gabled roof. Arched brackets support the second floor, which overhangs the first floor and contains a deeply-recessed, semicircular wood-shingled opening and balcony. The opening is framed with wide molded trim and contains a French door with glazed side panels. The central balcony railing posts extend downward below the pediment base and are capped with spheres at top and bottom. A two-leaf entry flanked by windows at the first story aligns with the door complex above. The south and west elevations of the house where the northwest

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

10 Lewis Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

MRN.L MRN.491

and southwest blocks meet exhibits a rich combination of projecting bays; a cupola; shed, gabled and hipped dormers; and window opening configurations.

10 Lewis Street is an impressive, high-style house in the Neo-Victorian Shingle Style. It represents a 20th century interpretation of this uniquely American form which was introduced in the northeastern United States in the last quarter of the 19th century and reached its zenith of expression in New England seaside resorts and country estates. The Shingle Style was a high-fashion style favored by architects and was primarily employed from 1880 to 1900. The focus of the style was on complex shapes and forms encased within a surface of continuous, naturally weathered shingles on the roof and walls. The defining features of the Shingle Style seen in this house include its use of shingles, horizontality, asymmetry, irregular projections and fenestration, and window sash muntin configurations.

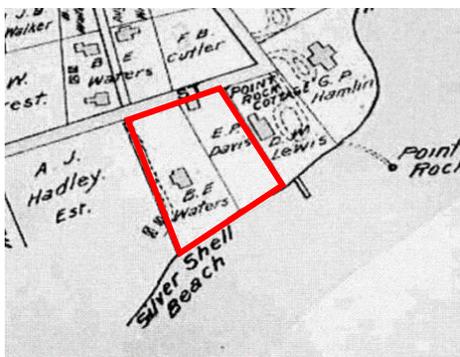
HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

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 Village of Marion, the commercial and residential center of the town, is set on the western shore of Sippican Harbor. The Village has historically consisted of a northern portion, the Upper Village (Old Landing), and a southern portion, the Lower Village (Sippican Village). This house is located in the southernmost section of the Lower Village near the waterfront, which before 1860 was largely uninhabited. Prior to that time Marion, like other coastal towns, was dependent on fishing, coastal shipping and related businesses such as the production of salt from sea water. Salt was a vital commodity for fisheries, and this section of the Lower Village was the site of several salt works. Maritime industries were dominant in Marion until the mid-19th century, when the advent of rail service began to facilitate tourism. At the same time, new cultural and educational institutions endowed by the founder of Tabor Academy, Elizabeth P. Taber, dramatically enriched the community.

Affluent urban dwellers from cities like Boston and New York were now able to travel in comfort to seaside destinations like Marion. The town began to attract many notable political, literary, and art world figures seeking a genteel seaside respite. Initially visitors stayed at hotels or rented private houses, but as the end of the century neared and Marion became nationally known as a desirable vacation destination, wealthy individuals began to build their own permanent summer residences. This desirable waterfront area, once home to salt works, became the site of grand summer cottages. These imposing houses include an outstanding collection of Shingle Style residences and fine examples of the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. Several of these residences were designed by prominent American architects including Charles A. Coolidge, James T. Kelley and William Gibbons Preston. Henry Hobson Richardson, the most celebrated American architect of the day, designed the first Shingle Style house in Marion. It was built in 1882 for the Reverend Percy Browne at 192 Front Street (1881, Rev. Percy Browne – Sidney Hosmer House, MRN.211) just north of this waterfront neighborhood.

This property consists of two abutting parcels shown on the 1903 map which were purchased in 1906 by Stanley Robert McCormick from Benjamin E. Waters and Edward P. Davis. Benjamin Waters was very active in the real estate market in Marion and the 1903 map shows him as the owner of several properties in this area which were built to serve as summer rentals.



1903 map.

Stanley Robert McCormick (1874-1947) was the son of Cyrus McCormick, inventor and founder of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company which would later become International Harvester Corporation. The younger McCormick, who graduated from Princeton and received a law degree from Northwestern University, served as comptroller of the McCormick company. Stanley was married in 1904 to Katherine Moore Dexter (1875-1967), daughter of Chicago lawyer Wirt Dexter (1832-1890) and his wife, Josephine Moore Dexter (1846-1937) of Springfield, Massachusetts. Stanley McCormick constructed a large brick Queen Anne-style summer residence on the site that was completed in 1907.¹

Two years after their marriage, Stanley McCormick, like his sister Mary, was diagnosed with schizophrenia. In 1909 he was declared incompetent by the California Supreme Court and would live for the rest of his life

¹ "North Shore Summer Colony Gathering for the Season," *Boston Herald*, April 21, 1907, p. 26.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

10 Lewis Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

MRN.L MRN.491

at the McCormick estate, "Riven Rock," in Santa Barbara, California. In 1929 Katherine McCormick and Stanley's brother Harold were named conservators of his estate, which exceeded \$30 million.



McCormick Cottage at center (razed 1953).

The property appears on the 1921 Sanborn map with the owner shown as Mrs. Wirt (Josephine) Dexter, Katherine McCormick's mother, although deed research demonstrates that this property was never owned by her. It can be assumed that because it was part of the McCormick estate, Katherine McCormick allowed her mother to occupy the property. After the death of her husband in 1890, Josephine Dexter moved to Boston and lived on Commonwealth Avenue until her own death in 1937. The 1910 census reported her living in Boston with her daughter Katherine and two servants. After the death of Stanley McCormick in 1947 the property was sold by Katherine McCormick and eventually purchased by Gordon Gibbs of Marion. The house was razed and the current residence was built by Gibbs in 1953.

James Gordon Gibbs (1900-1986) was the president and son of the founder of Katherine Gibbs Schools. He was born in Providence, Rhode

Island and attended Columbia University. During World War I he served in the ambulance corps in France and Italy. After the war he served as vice-president of the Katherine Gibbs Schools and became president on his mother's retirement in 1934. Gordon Gibbs was married to Blanche Lorraine Gibbs (1910-1992), a vice-president of Katherine Gibbs Schools. Lorraine and Gordon Gibbs held amateur pilots licenses and did surveillance work for the US Navy during World War II. Gordon Gibbs was an avid yachtsman, owned a number of boats, and served as commodore of the Beverly Yacht Club of Marion. Prior to purchasing this property, Gibbs had co-owned Ram Island in Sippican Harbor, which comprised more than 17 acres of land.

The Gibbises commissioned George Washington Wales Brewster (1910-1992), a noted Boston architect, to design the house. A fellow of the American Institute of Architects, he was educated at Phillips Academy in Exeter, New Hampshire, Harvard College, and the Harvard School of Architecture. Before establishing his own practice, Brewster worked for several important architecture firms including Shepley Bulfinch, William Lescaze, and William T. Aldrich. After a successful 30-year career in architecture, Brewster retired from his practice to pursue painting and studied with the Boston artist Barbara Swan. Brewster's work centered around semi-abstract landscapes and his paintings are owned by the Farnsworth Museum, the Portland Museum, and the Harvard Museums.

In 1954 Brewster won the Boston Arts Festival Architectural Award for the Gibbs House and the associated guest house (no longer extant at the site) on the property. This was a prize given for the most outstanding architectural project built in New England in the previous five years. An article on the award in the *Boston Globe* described the house as "a home with an informal charm, yet incorporating the solid, established feeling of a permanent residence. It was designed to be easily maintained without servants."² The nomination for Brewster's fellowship in the American Institute of Architects noted that he had made "signal contributions to New England domestic architecture." Among Brewster's other residential commissions in Massachusetts are the Donald and Cynthia Guy House in Lincoln (1958, 34 Town Rd., LIN.345) and the Maynard Ford House in Fitchburg (1958, 340 Mt. Vernon Rd., FIT.1112).

The property was acquired by David and Victoria Croll in 1985 and remains in Croll family ownership. In 1989 the guest house was relocated to 68 Front Street in Marion.

Deed Research

Date	Book-Page	Grantor	Grantee
07-07-1994	13003-200	David D. & Victoria Bates Croll	David D. Croll
03-14-1985	6007-281	Gordon & Blanche L. Gibbs	David D. & Victoria Bates Croll
04-18-1963	3011-283	Gordon Gibbs	Gordon & Blanche L. Gibbs
11-15-1950	2124-500	Trust (Brunelle, Converse, and Hill)	Gordon Gibbs

² "Brewster Wins Arts Festival Architect's Award," *Boston Globe*, 20 May 1954, pg. 15.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

10 Lewis Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

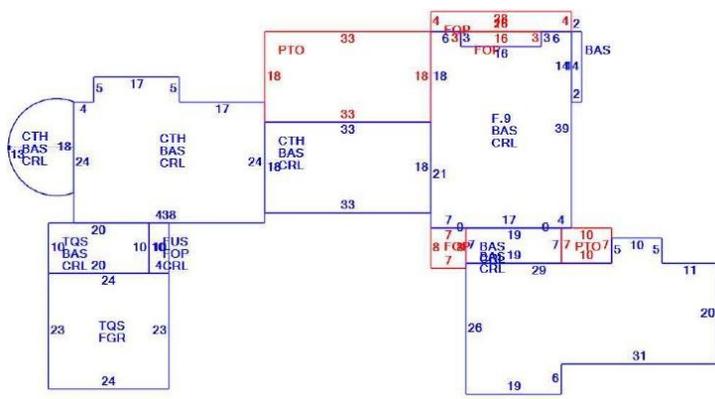
Area(s) Form No.

MRN.L	MRN.491
-------	---------

08-09-1950	2018-212	Wright Tisdale	Trust (Brunelle, Converse, and Hill)
01-12-1948	1990-284	David Angier	Wright Tisdale
06-18-1947	1966-126	Katherine Dexter McCormick	Donald Angier
		Estate of Stanley McCormick	Katherine Dexter McCormick
12-14-1906	956-465	Benjamin E. Water et al.	Stanley McCormick
07-16-1906	953-362	Edward P. Davis	Stanley McCormick

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, 2,000.
 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.
- Kleinman, Mariam. "Rich, Famous, and Questionably Sane," National Archives *Prologue Magazine*, Summer 2007, Vol. 30, No. 2.
 "Another cottage added to his collection," *The Boston Post*, Boston, MA, June 14, 1896.
The Boston Globe, Boston, MA, April 20, 1896.
 "G.W.W. Brewster, Jr. Secures Coveted Award," *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA, January 25, 1935.
 "A View Towards the Sea," *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA, August 8, 1954.
 "New Telephone Pioneer Recalls Bell, Edison" *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA September 19, 1961.
 "J. Gordon Gibbs, 86, ex-President Gibbs Schools," *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA, June 16, 1986.
 "Blanche Gibbs, 82," *The Boston Globe*, Boston, MA, March 12, 1992.



Assessor's card plan

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

10 Lewis Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

MRN.L	MRN.491
-------	---------



North elevation (facade).



South and east elevations.



South and west elevations.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

10 Lewis Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

MRN.L MRN.491



Boston Globe, May 20, 1954. Gibbs House is pictured in the book.



Boston Globe, August 8, 1954. Gibbs guest house is shown.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

10 Lewis Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

MRN.L	MRN.491
-------	---------

Additionally, the early 19th century residence at 60 Water Street (MRN.169) was originally owned by Captain Henry M. Allen, one of the pioneers of Marion's salt-making industry.

Under Criterion C, the area is recommended as eligible at the local, and possibly the state, level in the area of Architecture for its outstanding and exceptionally well-preserved collection of high-style houses on generous lots which date from the late 19th through the early 20th century. The area includes distinguished examples of the Queen Anne, Shingle Style, and Colonial Revival styles, several of which were designed by prominent American architects including Charles A. Coolidge, James T. Kelley and William Gibbons Preston. The only non-residential building in the area is the Craftsman-style, Charles A. Coolidge-designed Sippican Tennis Club at 20 Holmes Street (MRN.157).

The resources here retain substantial integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association. The district would likely meet Criteria A at the local level and Criterion C at the local, and possibly state level, with areas of significance in architecture and social history.