

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

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| 15 – 13 | Marion, MA | | |
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Town/City: Marion

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Gifford's Corner

Photograph



Address: 690 Mill Street

Historic Name: Manuel and Fanny Augustus House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1900-1903

Source: Deeds, maps

Style/Form: Classical / End House

Architect/Builder: Manuel Augustus (possibly)

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Fieldstone parged with concrete

Wall/Trim: Vinyl / vinyl

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Small yard shed

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Siding, windows replaced (date unknown)

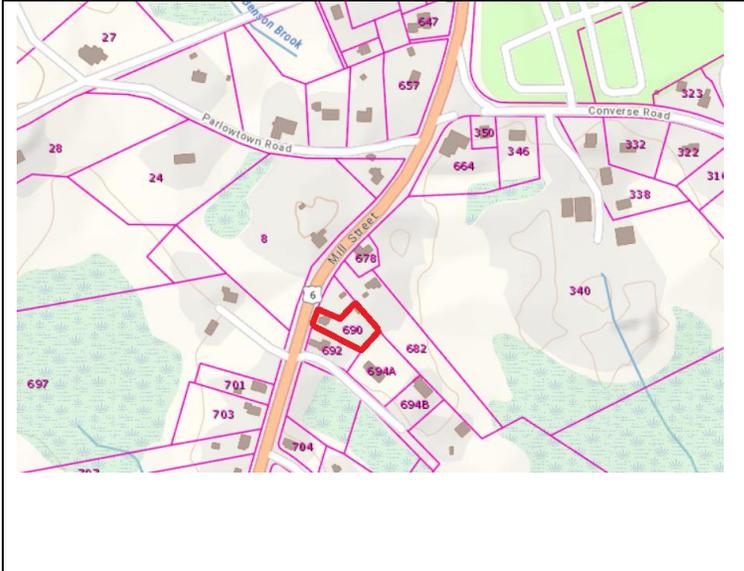
Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.36 acres

Setting: On Mill Street, a historic route between Sippican Wharf Village and Mattapoissett. Surrounding buildings are a mix of later 19th and early/mid-20th century single family houses.

Locus Map (*North is Up*)



Recorded by: Jennifer B. Doherty

Organization: Marion Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): March, 2021

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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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.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The Manuel and Fanny Augustus House is a small end house with an ell, constructed ca. 1900-1903. Sited on the east side of Mill Street, the Augustus House faces west across the street. The small main body of the one-and-a-half story, double-pile, two bay end house is extended to the north by a side-gable, one-and-a-half story wing two bays wide and covering the rear pile of the north elevation. The façade of the house features a one-story hipped-roof open porch with square balusters and posts.

Sitting on a fieldstone foundation parged with concrete, the Augustus House is covered in vinyl siding and has an asphalt shingle roof. Windows are vinyl 1/1 sash framed by inoperable shutters. The main entry door, in the south bay of the façade, is highlighted by fluted pilasters. The windows on the façade and side elevations are capped by a Classical entablature featuring dentils and are likely more recent additions. The house is set close to the sidewalk, with a short concrete path leading up to a set of rubble stone steps. An unpaved driveway runs along the south side of the house. A small modern shed stands northeast of the house.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Mill Street has served as a historic route of travel between Sippican Village and Mattapoisett and has been shown on maps as early as 1794. By the mid-19th century, a small neighborhood of farmers had developed south of Mill Street's intersection with Converse and Parlowtown roads; in 1855, three houses stood in the area. Later in the 19th century, the neighborhood acquired the name Gifford's Corner, named for Edward W. Gifford whose house was located south of Gifford's Corner Road. Around the turn of the century, Azorean and Cape Verdean immigrants moved into or built houses in the neighborhood, expanding the residential node. Many of the men worked as laborers, particularly gardeners on Marion's numerous private estates. Today, descendants of these families still live in the area. The area has never had a strong commercial or industrial component, evident in the landscape today, compose mainly of single family dwellings. For additional information on the development of Gifford's Corner, see MRN.XXX.

During the late 19th and early 20th century, John M. and Lizzie W. R. Allen owned a large parcel of land in the area that was frequently identified as a former woodlot belonging to the Blankinship family, although it is unclear how the Allens acquired it. In 1900, they conveyed a lot on the east side of Mill Street to Manuel Augustus.¹ The boundaries given in the deed do not match the current bounds of the parcel, but instead encompassed a rectangular lot that stretched southeast from Mill Street across present-day 690 and 692 Mill Street. In 1904, Augustus purchased a triangular piece of land from the Allens, much of present-day 692 Mill Street, to enlarge the lot.² The Manuel and Fanny Augustus House was likely constructed ca. 1900-1903, and the Augustus family seems to have been the second Azorean family to purchase land in this vicinity. See Gifford's Corner area form (MRN.XXX).

Manuel Augustus (ca. 1873-1943) is marked on the 1903 map of Marion, indicating the Augustus House was built by that time. Augustus' obituary identifies him as a carpenter, so it is possible he built the house himself. Like other nearby residents, Augustus was Azorean, born in St. George.³ He married Fanny Silveira (1885-1975), also Azorean, in Marion in 1904. The couple had at least one son, Antone Augustus. The family was listed as white in the 1910 census.

¹ PCRD 808:412, 1900

² PCRD 952:450, 1904/1907

³ Ancestry.com: Find-A-Grave; Massachusetts, US, Marriage Records, 1840-1915. *The (New Bedford) Standard-Times*: "Antone Augustus," January 17, 1991; "Joseph S. Serpa," January 27, 1949; "Manuel Augustus," April 23, 1943. The wife of Manuel Augustus is identified by several names in different places. Most often, she is listed as Fanny Augustus; in deeds, she is identified as Felomena Augustus; and

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The Augustus family was at the house a short time before selling it in 1906 to Maria Lena Serpa and Antone Sylvia Serpa.⁴ Antone Sylvia Serpa (b. ca. 1882) may have been a brother of Fanny Augustus, given their shared name, closeness in age, and that Serpa was also Azorean.⁵ Serpa worked as a gardener and a laborer. The Serpas were also listed as white in census records.

In 1909, the Serpas conveyed the property to Manuel Gracia Rose (b. 1885) of Mattapoisett; the boundaries given in this deed correspond to the present boundaries of the property.⁶ Rose was also an Azorean, arriving in the United States in 1901.⁷ Rose was recorded on Mill Street in the 1910 census, near other known neighbors of the Augustus House. He was living with his cousin Dominga Silvia (b. ca. 1886) and his wife and two young sons; as well as two boarders, Rita Emily (b. ca. 1894) and Allen Souza (b. ca. 1891). All of the Augustus House residents, except for the young Silvia boys, were listed as born in "At. Is. Port.," and all were listed as white. Silvia, Rose, and Souza were working in a saw mill. By 1920 Manuel Gracia Rose had married, and his extended family and boarders had moved out. That year, he was living with wife Mary (b. ca. 1892, Azores) and their three children, Helen (b. ca. 1913), Joseph (b. ca. 1915), and Elizabeth (b. ca. 1916). Rose was working as a gardener on a private estate. The couple divorced before the 1930 census was taken, and Rose was listed at the house with two of his children and an Azorean housekeeper, Anna Veira (b. ca. 1897). Notably, this year the family were all listed as "negro," whereas the previous census they were listed as white. While Manuel Gracia Rose was not located in the 1940 census, his wife was listed on Spring Street, living with their son and his family. Again, the family were all listed as white.

In 1943, Manuel Gracia Rose conveyed the property to Joseph and Laura A. Pena of Dennisport.⁸ Joseph Pena (1909-1985) was a native of Cape Verde, while his wife Laura Pena was born in Massachusetts.⁹ They were recorded in Dennis when the 1940 census was taken living with two of their young children. Joseph Pena worked as a laborer on a private estate, while Laura Pena was a cook and servant on a private estate. The family's race was given as "negro" in the census. The Penas were listed as the house in the 1966 street directory, with Joseph Pena working in construction and Laura Pena a housewife.

Following the deaths of the Penas, the Augustus House and property passed to their children, who sold it to new owners in 1992.¹⁰ It was purchased by the present owners in 2007.¹¹

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- 1855 H.F. Walling, *Map of the Town of Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*
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 records of the Sippican Historical Society

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

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds (PCRD): see footnotes, book:page, date signed/date recorded if notably different, otherwise only date recorded

Vital Records of Rochester, MA to the end of the year 1849

variations such as Philomena, Philomina, and Philemina are used in obituaries and other records. Similarly, in their marriage record her last name is listed as Sylvia, her brother's name was Joseph Silveira Serpa, and in her son's obituary, her last name is listed as Silveira.

⁴ PCRD 952:451, 1906/1907

⁵ Ancestry.com: US Federal Census of Population for 1920.

⁶ PCRD 1035:359, 1909

⁷ Ancestry.com: Massachusetts, US, State and Federal Naturalization Records, 1798-1950; US Federal Census of Population for 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940.

⁸ PCRD 1842:315, 1943

⁹ Ancestry.com: US, Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014; US, World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947; US Federal Census of Population for 1940.

¹⁰ PCRD 8333:66, 1987/1988; PCRD 11520:267, 1992

¹¹ PCRD 34735:120, 2007

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Manuel Augustus is marked at the location of the Manuel and Fanny Augustus House on the 1903 map of Marion.

The façade and north (side) elevation of the Manuel and Fanny Augustus House.