

FORM B – BUILDING

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

16 150

Marion

L

MRN.575

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

Town/City: MARION

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

Photograph



Address: 88 Water Street

Historic Name: Daniel and Margaret Coakley House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1960

Source: Deed research, Assessor

Style/Form: Post-war traditional

Architect/Builder: Royal Barry Wills, FAIA

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Unknown

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Locus Map



Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Two-car garage/guesthouse (1995)

Major Alterations (*with dates*)*:

Three-season room to right of front door converted to dining room, attached garage converted to family room (ca. 1985)

Bedroom ell (ca. 2000)

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 1.08 acres

Setting: This house is located at the corner of Water and South Streets. The surrounding area is densely built with 19th and early-20th century houses along South Street, most set fairly close to the street on small parcels, and houses set back on larger parcels along Water Street. A low stone wall runs along Water Street. The property is landscaped with lawn, mature trees and foundation plantings. A gravel driveway leads off South Street to a detached garage/guesthouse.

Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant

Organization: Sippican Historical Society

Date (*month / year*): March 2023

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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.

This one-story house has a U-shaped footprint. The house, built in ca. 1960, originally consisted of the Water Street-facing side-gable blocks, and the rear ell at the northwest end which originally consisted of a one-bay garage. That garage was later converted and expanded into a family room and sunroom. A second rear ell at the southwest corner was built for a master bedroom. The building can be classified as Colonial Revival in style, and was designed by noted architect Royal Barry Wills (see Historical Narrative below).

The elevations are clad in wood shingles, and the roof is clad in asphalt shingles. Fenestration includes irregularly placed 6/6 double-hung sash whose lintels abut the roof entablature, with two bay windows on the south elevation. There are two large, multi-paned window systems on either side of the front door. The system to the right was a later alteration, added to turn a former three-season room into a dining room (see Figure 5 for original appearance). The Water Street-facing entrance has a paneled door set in a simple surround that also abuts the roof entablature. A large brick chimney, painted white, rises from the south end of the main roof ridge.

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.

This one-story house is located on the site of the former Sippican Hotel. The hotel began as a two-story farmhouse built in 1794. In 1864, the farmhouse was converted into the Bay View House, and the third floor was added (Figure 2). In 1882, an additional wing was built, and then another four-story addition was completed in 1907 (Figure 3). The hotel's Casino had also been built across the street in the late-19th century (Figure 4). At its peak, the hotel could accommodate up to 200 guests. The hotel and casino became the social epicenter during Marion's Gilded Age. Guests of the hotel included nationally-renowned writers, artists, actors, and politicians.

The hotel and casino closed and were sold by the Marion Hotel Company in 1929 to a trust spear-headed by Roger W. Converse (ca. 1900-1969) of Marion and Newton.¹ Converse was a prominent local realtor in Marion for 40 years, who established in 1923 what is now known as Converse Company Real Estate. The hotel and casino were torn down shortly after the 1929 sale. In 1931, the land on both sides of Water Street was sold to Noble Foss of Marion.²

Noble Foss (1889-1969) was the son of three-term Governor of Massachusetts Eugene N. Foss. Noble Foss was founder and president in 1910-1928 of the Sturtevant Aeroplane Co., a leading airplane manufacturer during WWI. He was later president of a large textile manufactory based in Boston and South Carolina. Foss appears to have bought the former Sippican Hotel site as an investment, as nothing was built here during his ownership, although there was a one-story cottage on the former casino parcel shown on the 1933 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

In 1959, he sold this parcel to Daniel H. and Margaret H. Coakley of Weston, MA.³ Daniel Coakley (d. 1964) was, according to his obituary in *The New York Times*, an attorney and leading salesman for New York Life Insurance Company. It was the Coakleys who built this house, which has an Assessor date of 1960.

¹ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 1582/ Page 467).

² PCR, Book 1608/ Page 527.

³ PCR, Book 2678/ Page 182.

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According to the current owner, this house was built to the designs of Royal Barry Wills. They have a drawing of the house signed with Royal Barry Wills initials for “Mr. and Mrs. Daniel H. Coakley, Jr.” (Figure 5). No additional plans or elevation drawings have been located. However, interestingly, there is a set of 1938 plans and elevation drawings prepared by Royal Barry Wills for Daniel Coakley for a one-story Cape Cod-inspired house to be built in Wareham (Figure 6).⁴ The 1938 plans are not dissimilar to the ca. 1960 house built by the same family. Perhaps Coakley had the plans drawn originally for a house in Wareham, or perhaps they had been waiting for the right parcel to build a house to those designs, and found the land here in Marion. The plans are not an exact match, and would likely have been modified when used in ca. 1960 (22 years later). The 1938 plans, for example, call for a garage wing to the left. However, there are basic similarities, including the one-story main block with large chimney, the front door set at the end of the main block, and telescoping wings that are slightly stepped down. In addition, both the 1938 design and the ca. 1960 Marion house are modest expressions of the Cape Cod style so favored by Royal Barry Wills.

Royal Barry Wills, FAIA (1895-1962) graduated from MIT with a degree in architectural engineering. In 1925, he founded his eponymous architectural firm in Boston. He became one of America’s most popular architects and master of the Cape Cod-style house. From the 1920s to the 1960s, Wills designed 2,500 single-family residences, authored eight books about architecture, hosted a radio program, lectured widely, received numerous awards, supplied “Home Building Plans” for a number of newspapers, and was the subject of feature articles in *Life*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, and *Good Housekeeping*.⁵

This house passed to the Coakleys’ son, Richard B. Coakley. He was living in West Pembroke, ME in 1984, when he sold it to the current owners, John A. and Nancy G. Mills of Marion.⁶

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds
Sippican Historical Society Collections.
www.nytimes.com/1964/03/28/archives/daniel-coakley-insurance-man-leading-salesman-for-new-york-life-in.html.

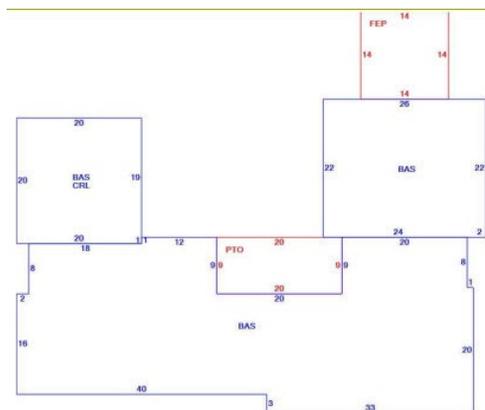


Figure 1. Marion Assessor Sketch (decks, porches in red).



Photo 2. View from Water Street, looking southwest.

⁴ To see the full set of plans and drawings go to: <https://www.historicnewengland.org/explore/collections-access/capobject/?refd=AR029.04.04.616>.

⁵ <https://www.historicnewengland.org/explore/library-archives/royal-barry-wills/>.

⁶ PCRD, Book 5596/ Page 299.

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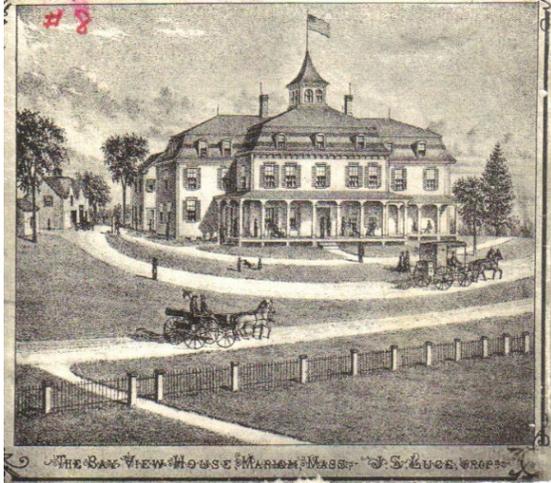


Figure 2. Mid-19th c. postcard view of Bay View House, looking west (Source: 2004.007.081).



Figure 3. Late-19th c. postcard view of Hotel Sippican from South Street, looking southwest (Source: SHS 2008.001.066).



Figure 4. Late-19th c. view of Sippican Hotel and Casino, looking southwest (Source: SHS 2008.007.078).

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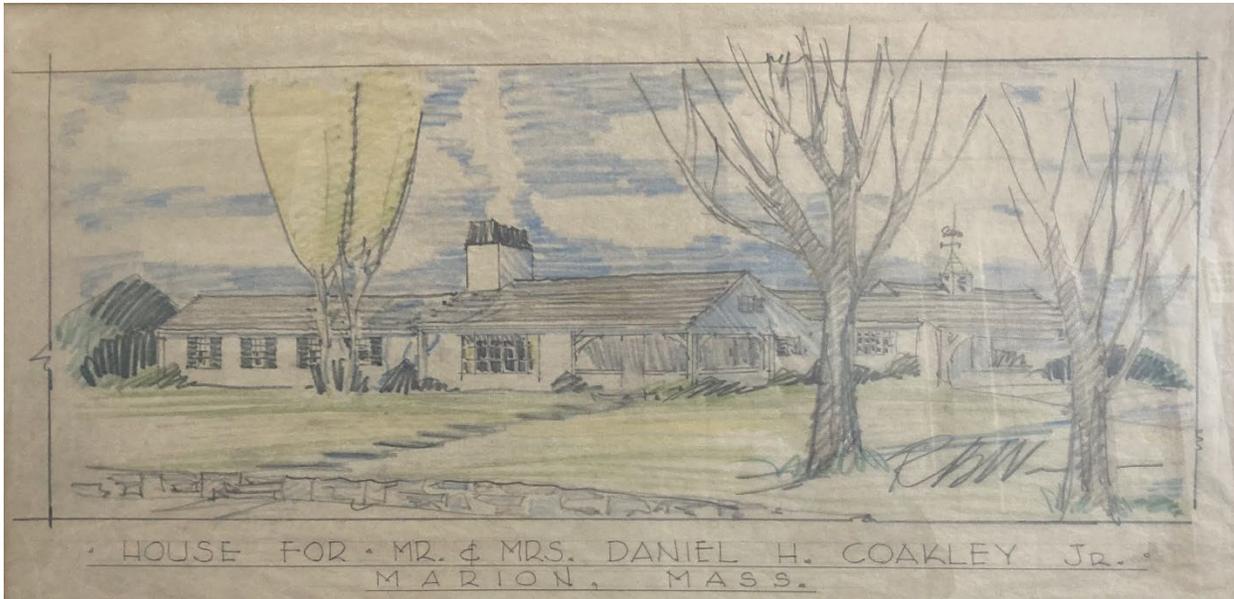


Figure 5. Drawing of "House for Mr. and Mrs. Daniel H. Coakley, Jr., Marion, Mass." Signed "RBW" (Source: current owner).

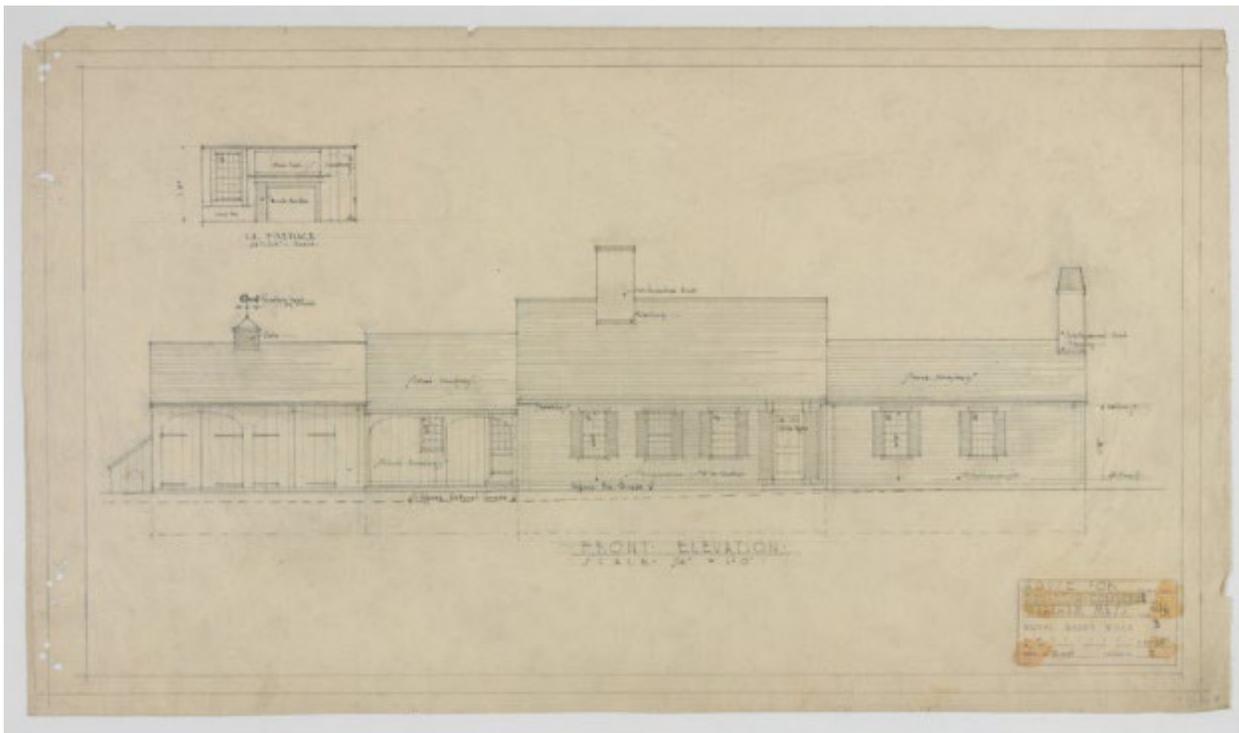


Figure 6. 1938 Elevation Drawing, Royal Barry Wills, for Daniel Coakley, Wareham (Source: <https://www.historicnewengland.org/explore/collections-access/capobject/?refd=AR029.04.04.616>).

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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 Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant for Sippican Historical Society
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

This property is a contributing resource in the combined Areas of Wharf Village-Sippican Village (MRN.N) and Water Street (MRN.L), hereinafter referred to as Marion Village.*

Marion Village is recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Maritime History. Marion Village contains the great majority of buildings connected to Marion's historical maritime development beginning in the late-18th century. With the rise of saltmaking, shipyards, and whaling, maritime activity increased dramatically into the mid-19th century, as did residential development in Marion Village. In addition to the houses built by those in the maritime industry, Marion Village contains numerous buildings and structures associated with maritime industrial activity, including a chandlery, sail loft, cooperage, and wharves. As Marion Village's prosperity became linked to Sippican Harbor, Marion Village also became the commercial, political and institutional center of the town.

Marion Village is also recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/ Recreation. Starting in the mid-19th century, maritime activity declined significantly. The decline in maritime activity was eventually replaced by the rise in the 1870s of a summer colony as Marion Village emerged as an elite summer resort. This was facilitated by the arrival of train service in the 1854. Summer visitors, including artists and writers, were drawn Sippican Harbor's beauty and tranquility. A large hotel, the Sippican Hotel, was located at the corner of South and Water Streets, and a few houses were converted to inns. While the hotel was town down in 1929, a large livery complex built by the Hiller Brothers at 147 Front Street (MRN.216) is extant. They provided horse-drawn vehicles to summer visitors registered at the Sippican Hotel, and ferried guests back and forth between the hotel and the train depot. In Marion Village, ownership (or occupancy through rental) of many houses began to shift from local maritime families to seasonal residents, including nationally-noteworthy politicians, businessmen, artists and writers. During this period, Marion Village also saw the addition of high style, architect-designed summer cottages and recreation resources.

Marion Village is recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Marion Village is a remarkably intact historic town center, including a compact collection of historic dwellings, along with a few churches, schools, commercial buildings and recreation buildings. Marion Village contains a great concentration of Federal and Greek Revival houses; and examples of later Victorian-era styles, including high-style examples of summer house architecture along Sippican Harbor and large institutional buildings not found elsewhere in Marion.

The great majority of resources in Marion Village retain substantial integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association.

*The potential Marion Village district boundaries include surveyed areas within the boundary of MRN.N completed in 2020-2022 for Barden-Hiller (MRN.Y), Cottage Street (MRN.Z), Main Street (MRN.AA), South Street (MRN.AB), Upper Pleasant Street (MRN.AC), and Upper Main Street (MRN.AH).