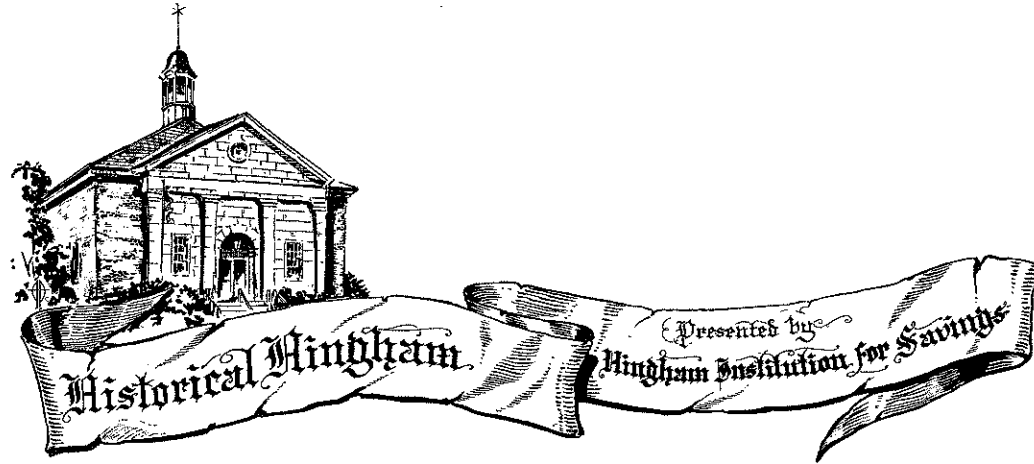




Historical Hingham

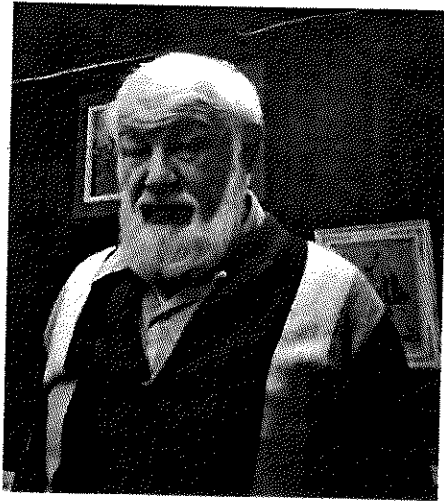
Presented by
Hingham Institution for Savings

*“When a man loses sight of the past
he loses the ability to look forward intelligently.”*



*A Description of the Pictures
of Hingham's Illustrious Past,
Painted on Four Murals*

Published by the Bank
Hingham, Massachusetts



*H*istory and Hingham just naturally go together. And Hingham's richness of tradition has been carefully depicted in these four murals which adorn the walls of the Hingham Institution for Savings. The murals are the work of Samuel Emrys Evans, who was born in India, of missionary parents. However, he does not consider himself a "Johnny-come-lately" for he was graduated from Quincy High School, attended Boston schools including the Museum of Fine Arts school. He has had several teaching assignments, also, in the art field including ceramics, lithography and silk-screen printing. He spent six years in service as a combat artist in World War II and his murals for the Coast Guard are a feature of several installations in the Washington area. His work may be found throughout the United States with a large percentage in eastern Massachusetts. He has his studio in Hanover, where these Hingham murals were painted.



THE OLD ORDINARY

Originally, a dwelling, later a tap room, the Old Ordinary on Lincoln Street, stands as a memento of Hingham's early days. Through the generosity of Dr. Wilmon Brewer, who presented it in 1922 as a memorial to his father, Francis W. Brewer, the Old Ordinary is the property of the Hingham Historical Society which maintains it as a museum. Most of Old Ordinary was built between 1680 and 1690 by Thomas Andrews Sr., as a residence. In 1702, the Selectmen of the Town gave Thomas Andrews Jr., who had inherited it, permission to sell "Strong waters on Broad Cove Lane (Lincoln Street) provided he sent his customers home at reasonable hours with ability to keep their legs."

Capt. Francis Barker, master shipwright and military officer, who acquired the property in 1749, built the addition with the entrance on Lincoln Street (the Willard Room), the Lincoln Street hall, the tap room, and the upstairs bedrooms. He lived here for 55 years.

THOMAS THAXTER HOUSE

For 212 years, this Colonial dwelling occupied the corner of North Street and Fearing Road. It was the home of Thomas Thaxter, first of the name in Hingham, who bought the house and land in 1652. Thaxters lived in it for five generations, the last being Major Samuel Thaxter, who was an army officer in the French and Indian Wars. When he removed to Bridgewater in 1771, the property was acquired by Elisha Leavitt. The dwelling with tapestried walls, decorated door panels and broad, tiled fireplaces was taken down in 1864 preparatory to the erection of St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church on the site in 1871.

The building to the right was the residence of Col. Nathan Rice, a prominent Federalist, Town leader, representative in the General Court, and aide to Gen. Benjamin Lincoln. The structure, built by Dr. Bela Lincoln, brother of Gen. Lincoln, subsequently was altered into the Union Hotel which eventually became the Cushing House. This hostelry was razed in 1949. The Hingham Post Office now occupies this corner.

OLD SHIP MEETING HOUSE

The Old Ship Meeting House, built in 1681, is not only the oldest wooden church structure in America, it is also the oldest church building in continuous use in this country. Its cost of £430 was raised by assessing the 140 families of Hingham, each according to its ability to pay. Architecturally, the Meeting House reflects the Elizabethan Gothic, in wood, of the builders' homeland. It is the only example left in America of this style.

The great curved frames like the knees of a ship that support the roof, were cut from oak trees growing on neighboring hillsides. They were adz hewn, with no two alike in dimension. It is likely that the familiar name "Old Ship" came from this unusual roof structure, which if inverted, would show some resemblance to the hull of a ship. This view shows the meeting house after the addition of side galleries in 1730 and 1755, which necessitated a larger over-all exterior.

The Old Ship is located on Main Street near the site of the first meeting house of the First Parish in Hingham "gathered" by the Rev. Peter Hobart when the Town was incorporated in 1635.

ACTIVE HINGHAM HARBOR

This is Hingham Harbor looking toward Boston, from a corner of Barnes Wharf off Summer Street, which was one of many serving local shipping interests. At left, is a coastwise lugger, which carried Hingham goods up and down the Atlantic. At the pier is a two-masted schooner, characteristic of the type of vessel built and launched in Hingham shipyards. For 45 years, Hingham was so important in maritime activity, that it was a Port of Entry to the United States with a Custom House. In 1831, more than 55,000 barrels of mackerel were landed on Hingham wharves. In 1836, 22,000 barrels of salt were produced on its shores by evaporating seawater. The commercial importance of Hingham in the 19th century tied it closely to Boston and sailing vessels, such as these shown, made frequent trips with products of the sea and land as well as manufactured items from Hingham factories and mills.

THE FOLSOM HOUSE

The Folsom (Foulsham) house located at Hingham Centre, was taken down in 1875 "having become untenable from age." The house was built (1652) and for a time occupied by John Folsom who settled in Hingham in 1638. Later, it became the property of the Sprague family, passing in unbroken succession for several generations. John Folsom married Lydia Gilman, sister of Mrs. Daniel Cushing, whose husband was a son of the original Matthew Cushing. When Folsom moved with his family to New Hampshire, Daniel Cushing bought his estate. The Central Fire Station is now on this property.

DERBY ACADEMY

"For the Teaching of the Youth of the North Parish and others" Derby School was founded Oct. 25, 1784 as the first co-educational school in the nation. It became Derby Academy in 1797. Sarah Derby who inherited considerable wealth from her second husband, established the school to "promote Head and Heart" with age limits of 9 years for girls and 12 years for boys except that "any male who is intended for admission to Harvard College may enter under 12 years of age." The Derby Academy building, on Main Street, shown here, was erected in 1818 almost on the site of the first school building, at a cost of \$3,930.10. The exterior of it today remains virtually unchanged, but the interior has been altered many times. For many years, the Derby building was the only one of any size in Hingham, and it was used for lectures, meetings and social functions as well as Town Meetings. It is now owned by the Hingham Historical Society.

To the left at the base of the hill is the Hollis house, erected 1750 by Susanna Hersey. It is popularly known as the "Arcadian" house because it had sheltered Arcadians who had fled to escape persecution. In 1790, it was part of the Derby School legacy. The house was taken down in 1912 to make room for the Town Office Building which was completed the following year. It is now the Administration Building for the School Department of the Town.

At far right, behind the fence, is a corner of the Thomas Loring house, built in 1813.



TOWN SEAL

Hingham's official seal was adopted at March 1886 Town Meeting on the recommendation of a committee headed by John D. Long, former Governor of the Commonwealth, and a Hingham resident. Who drew the original illustration remains unknown in Town records. But William A. Dwiggin, noted typographic designer, also a Hingham resident, redrew the seal in 1942. In official language, the seal is that of a "view of the old meeting house, the ancient fort and the monument erected to the first settlers of Hingham,"

which make up the central motif. This is surrounded by two circles, one within the other. Between the circles are the words: "Church, School, Train-Band, Town-Meeting" Beneath the inner circle, in chief, "Bare Cove 1633" and above the circle, in base, "Hingham 1635," when the Town was incorporated. Its incorporation resolution of the General Court is said to be among the shortest acts on record: "The name of Bare Cove shall be changed and hereafter to be called Hingham."

"RAINBOW ROOF" HOUSE

One of the best known historic structures in Hingham is the Jabez Wilder, or "Rainbow Roof" house on Main Street just south of Tower Brook. Jabez Wilder was a son of the first Edward Wilder, ancestor of all who have that name in Hingham and environs. In his 1728 will, Jabez bequeathed to his son, Jabez, the "New Dwelling House on the side of the highway at South Hingham." Ships' carpenters built the house, with its unusual curved roof construction, in the latter part of the 17th century.

EDWARD WILDER HOUSE

The Wilder homestead, still standing on Main Street south of High Street, was a typical Cape Cod style cottage when the first part of it was constructed in 1650. But Edward Wilder's family of 16 girls and 5 boys necessitated its enlargement several times. Edward was a descendant of the first Edward Wilder who was among the earliest settlers in Hingham and who was granted 10 acres in "a place as convenient as discovered." This was also the birthplace of Joshua Wilder, the clockmaker.

The Wilder house was the scene of the romance in the novel "The Nameless Nobleman" by Jane Austen, who told of the confinement of a French nobleman, Francis Le Baron, during the colonial wars, and who was cared for by Molly Wilder whom he later married.

WILDER MEMORIAL

When Martin Wilder, a "carriage-smith" by profession, one of 21 brothers and sisters, died in 1854, his will provided for a number of legacies, among them, one giving to "the shareholders of the Third or Social Library, situated in the South Parish, my library and the bookcases in which said books are deposited." His will provided also for an evening school, for a charitable fund, and a fund for "purchasing coal and wood for the comfort of the poor and destitute." However, trustees of the estate finding it impractical to carry out all the provisions of the Wilder will, sought relief in the courts. The result was a decree in 1878 to permit the trustees to erect Wilder Memorial, the building pictured here. It was dedicated in 1879 to educational purposes, providing books and papers, and lectures on literary, scientific and historical subjects for the "instruction and improvement of the inhabitants of that part of Hingham designated as the South Parish."

THE HOME MEADOWS

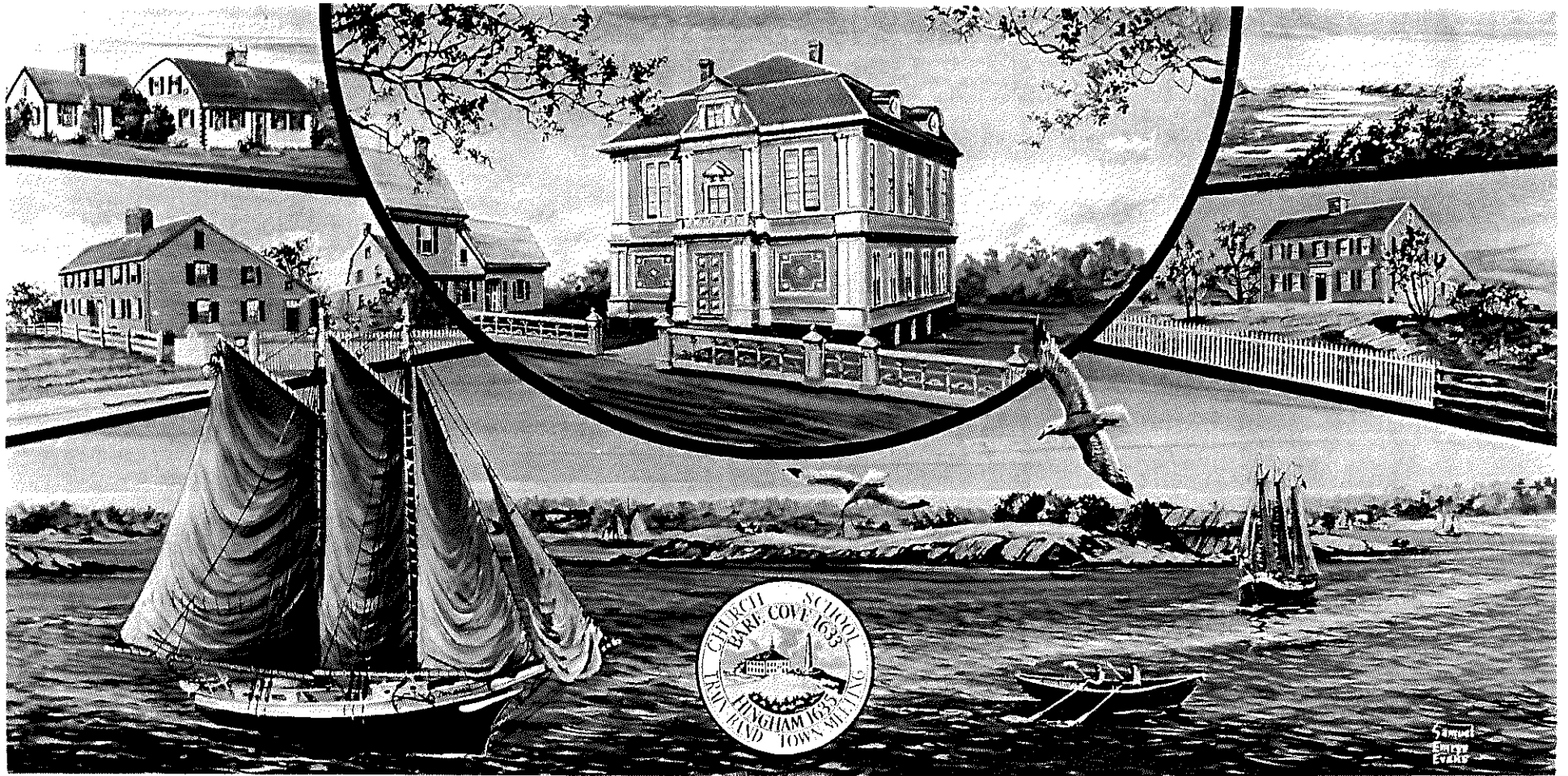
The Home Meadows is viewed here to the northeast of Winter Street. Shown is a meandering stream which in prehistoric times was the Weir River. The glacial era changed the course of the river by piling stones and gravel to form an esker along East Street. As a consequence, the river flows into the sea east of East Street. A trickle of water continues to seep into the Home Meadows which is flooded in part by salt water tides twice daily. The Home Meadows embraces an area of 22 acres of which five are water and the rest upland. Salt hay, grown on the Home Meadows, was a muchly desired animal food in an earlier Hingham.

"SIGN OF THE ANCHOR" TAVERN

The "Sign of the Anchor" tavern stood on a rise at the corner of South Street and Lafayette Avenue. The original tavern was a provincial structure erected prior to 1697 as a dwelling for Caleb Bates. It was replaced by the building pictured here in 1767 and continued in use as a tavern until 1798 when its business sign was removed. One of the Lincolns had acquired it and remodeled it into a residence. The building was taken down in 1947. Lafayette Avenue commemorates the visit to the tavern of the Marquis de Lafayette when he had occasion to spend the night there in 1778 during the American Revolution.

HINGHAM HARBOR

This painting was made from a location on Crow Point looking in the direction of the mainland, with Ragged Island and a tip of Sarah Island in the center.



HINGHAM'S FORTS

Although "great troupes of well proportioned people" which Capt. John Smith described on his visit to these parts in 1614 had been greatly decimated by a mysterious plague, Hingham was comparatively free of Indian ravages. Yet, vigilance was felt necessary. So, three forts were built against possible Indian outbreaks. One of these, the one pictured on the Town seal, still remains in a corner of Hingham Cemetery. Despite these

forts, Indian raids did occur in Hingham and a number of houses were burned and several residents were victims of savage attacks. In 1655, a deed was negotiated with Chief Wompatuck with property claims dating back to the beginning of the world. In the center of the old fort in the cemetery, an excavated hollow surrounded by a mound of earth, a granite shaft was erected in 1839 to commemorate the first settlers of Hingham.

FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY

On Nov. 1, 1823, a group of Universalists from Scituate met at the home of Capt. Charles Cushing and formally organized the First Universalist Society of Hingham. Their first meeting house was erected on North Street in 1829. Though the Church persisted for almost 100 years "the Universalist denomination did not find in Hingham a very productive field for its growth." It ceased its identity in 1925 when the church was disbanded and the building sold to a fraternal order which remodeled it into a meeting hall. Its steeple and bell removed, the structure still stands on North Street.

To the left are several buildings of the 1830s; an old Lincoln homestead, a shoe factory and dwellings.

HINGHAM METHODIST CHURCH

From 1807 to 1828, Hingham was in the Scituate or the Weymouth Circuits of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It became a separate entity when the Rev. Stephen Puffer gave funds for the erection of a meeting house which was dedicated July 3, 1828. Mr. Puffer built the edifice at his own expense, then sold the pews to cover costs of construction and furnishings. The amount was \$1,820. The church at that time stood on North Street facing west at Gould's Bridge. Extensive alterations were made in 1845 and in 1867 when the building was moved back 30 feet, raised, a vestry built and a new front and spire added at an outlay of \$4,000. In 1882, a lot at the corner of North and Thaxter Streets was purchased and the church building moved there. This location is the one shown in the painting.

In 1883, with the aid of a gift of money from Mrs. Puffer, widow of the clergyman who financed the original church building, the parsonage, seen in this painting, was built to the rear of the church.

The dwelling on the right was a Thaxter residence, probably built in the late 1700s, while the corner of the building to the left was that of the Gould family, whose real estate holdings hereabouts were commemorated in the name of Gould's Bridge which formerly crossed the Town Brook at this point. The Gould house still stands but the Thaxter House is gone.

HINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY

This Hingham Public Library building was first opened April 5, 1880. And from that date until 1967, when it was demolished, it served the community well. The building pictured here was erected on the same site of a "beautiful and commodious edifice conveniently furnished for the purposes of a Library" which had been built in 1869 through the generosity of Albert Fearing on the present Memorial Park at Hingham Center. Fire on Jan. 3, 1879 leveled the Fearing library building and its books and records went up in flames. In all, Mr. Fearing had given more than \$41,000 for the building and its contents. Hingham's "First Social Library" came into being in 1771, and its "Second Social Library" two years later. Both were merged into the Hingham Public Library, the former in 1869 and the latter in 1891.

BARE COVE

This is Hingham Harbor at low tide with its ubiquitous seagulls, its seaweed and its mudflats which inspired the first settlers to name their new homeland Bare Cove. Twice in 24 hours these mudflats may be seen. This is a view from the bandstand at the bathing beach looking toward Massachusetts Bay with Sarah and Ragged Islands looming large. In the far right background is Hull at the mouth of the Weir River and to the right of the beached catboat in the foreground, is World's End.

SECOND PARISH CHURCH

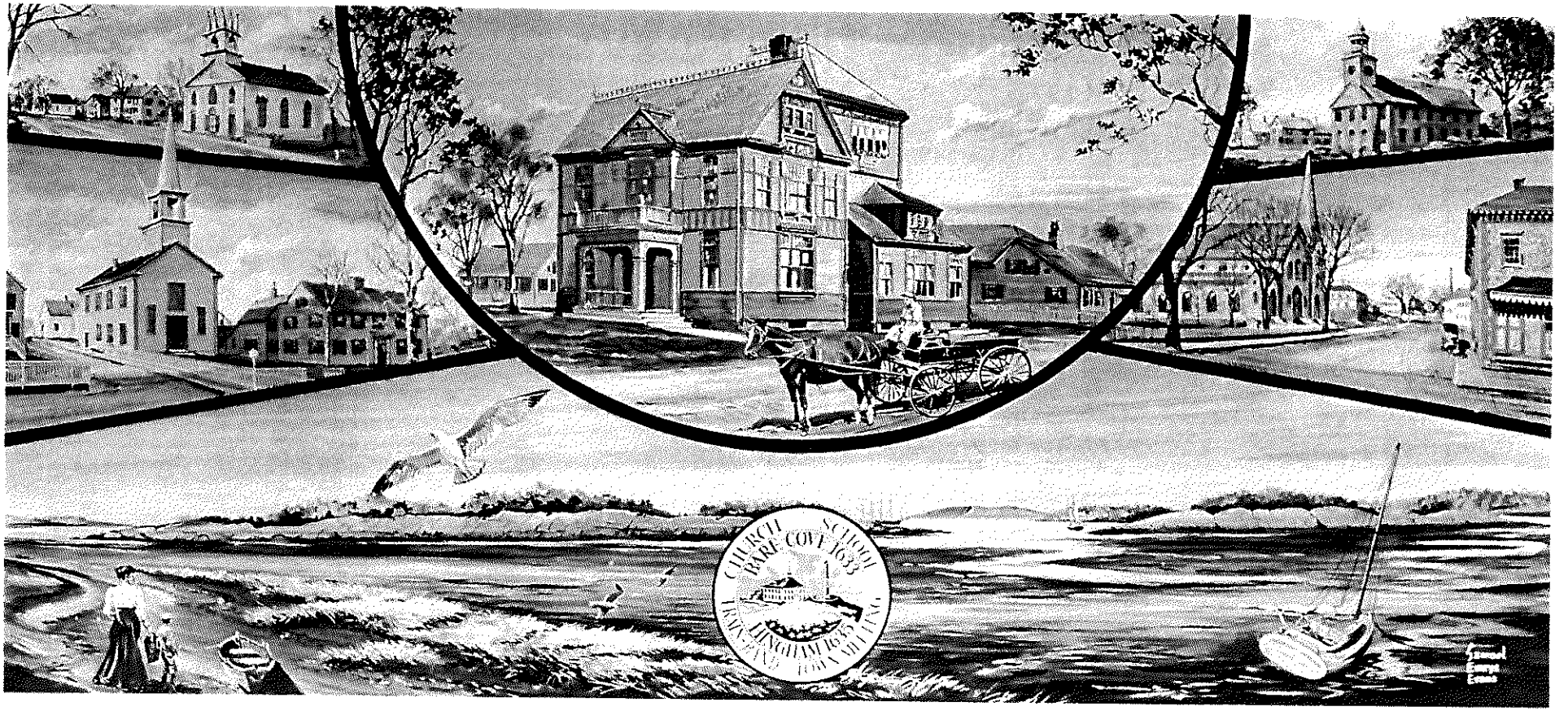
On March 24, 1746, after seemingly unending four years of frustration, antagonism and delays, 65 residents of South Hingham had their prayers answered for a church of their own, when by order of the General Court of Massachusetts a separate parish was set off from the First Parish. Officially, the new group became the Third Parish in Hingham, for the Second Parish had been organized in Cohasset, then a part of Hingham. When Cohasset became a separate town in 1770, the Third Parish became the Second Parish in Hingham.

Their church building was ready for them, for it had been raised by a group of residents in June 1742 on land owned by Theophilus Cushing. Apparently it was believed that the presence of a church building, ready for use, might induce the townspeople and the Court to sanction the creation of a separate parish. Since they were paying taxes to support one church, many Hinghamites at the time were opposed to paying more taxes to maintain another one, for the support of churches in those days was by taxes on real property.

NORTH STREET

This view of North Street shows a corner, right, of the South Shore Railroad station which was opened Jan. 1, 1849 when operations were started from Braintree, where connections were with the Old Colony Railroad, to Cohasset where connections were with the Duxbury and Cohasset Railroad (1871). In 1852, the South Shore line was leased to the Old Colony Railroad and in 1876 was consolidated with it. Prior to the advent of the railroad, a stage passed from Boston to Hingham three times a week.

To the left in this painting is St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church which was erected at the corner of Fearing Road and opened for worship in 1872. Catholics in Hingham made little progress for 20 years in getting a church of their own and it was not until the Rev. Hugh P. Smyth, of Weymouth, took the initiative and bought a site for one in 1871, that the need for a local edifice was filled.



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

The First Baptist Church came into being March 9, 1828 when a congregation of 20 Hinghamites was publicly recognized as a branch of the Second Baptist Church of Boston. However, meetings for those of Baptist persuasion had been held in Hingham homes since 1818, and a Sunday School, the first in Town, had been held in the old school house on the hill in front of Derby Academy. In 1829, the corner of Main and Elm Streets was purchased for \$500 and a meeting house erected on this site was dedicated Dec. 3, 1829. It cost \$3,300. Because of local opposition to the Baptists, title to the property was taken in the names of individuals, who were not Baptists, and not until 1855 did the church get ownership. Alterations to the building were made in 1851 and 1886. This view shows the church after the changes.

To the rear is the largest of four "male" schools built 1829-30. Originally a one-story building the second floor was added in 1848.

CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

Erected in 1883 on a lot on Main Street opposite Water Street at a cost of \$3,000 this edifice served the parish until the summer of 1906 when it was moved across the street to the location of the present church building. There, in remodeled form, it continued as a church edifice until 1919 when it was taken down to make way for the present granite structure, erected in 1920, as a memorial to Ezra Ripley Thayer.

MAIN STREET

This is Main Street of a past era. At left is Loring Hall which was built in 1851 to answer the need for a "commodious and suitable building for lectures, picnics and social gatherings of all kinds." Ladies of Hingham raised \$500 to buy the property and sufficient extra money to build a foundation. It was then that Col. Benjamin Loring of Boston, but a native of Hingham, offered to supply the funds necessary for the erection of a suitable "Lyceum Hall." Its cost of \$4,435.57 was borne entirely by Col. Loring. The building was dedicated Oct. 14, 1852.

In the center is the building erected jointly in 1860 and occupied by the Hingham Mutual Fire Insurance Company on the second floor and the Hingham Institution for Savings on the first. It is still the home of the insurance company but the Hingham Institution for Savings moved its quarters to the brick and stone building which was erected in 1950 in the area between Loring Hall and the insurance building.

At the extreme right is the home of David Harding, a business leader of the community, who was secretary of the Hingham Mutual Fire Insurance Company and treasurer of the Hingham Institution for Savings and a founder of both enterprises.

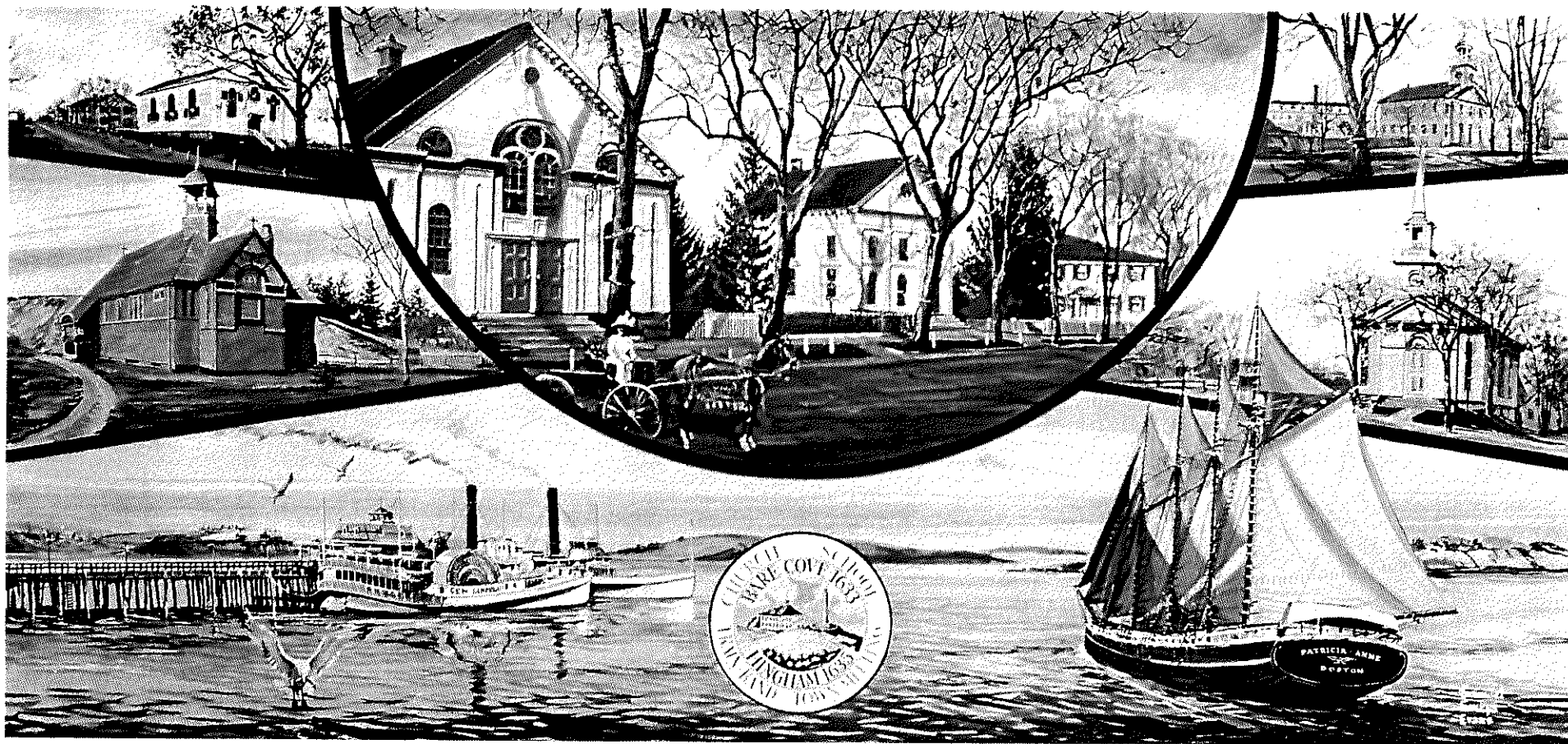
NEW NORTH MEETING HOUSE

The New North Meeting House on Lincoln Street was completed Oct. 25, 1806, its design adapted from the work of that famous early New England architect, Charles Bulfinch. Its cost — \$9,340 — was met by the sale of 64 pew shares to 55 persons. Controversy over the Rev. Joseph Richardson as successor to the Rev. Dr. Henry Ware who resigned the pulpit of the North Meeting House (Old Ship) to become professor at Harvard, resulted in the establishment of the New North congregation March 16, 1806. Led by four deacons, 99 members withdrew their affiliation with the old North Meeting House to start the new church. By special acts of the Legislature, the Third Congregational Society and the New North Meeting House Corporation were formed in 1807 with Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, who had received Lord Cornwallis' sword at Yorktown, as president. New North is held in such high esteem, architecturally, that every detail of the structure is shown on complete drawings which are kept in the archives of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

To the left rear is the factory building erected 1866, where Burr, Brown, & Co. manufactured tassels, cords, fringe and braiding. The factory was taken down in 1935. St. Paul's Parochial School now occupies the site.

HINGHAM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Rev. Ebenezer Foster Dyer, a Boston city missionary "upon invitation of the Norfolk Conference of Churches visited Hingham (1847) with a view to establishing Evangelical Congregational Preaching." That was the beginning of the Hingham Congregational Church which was organized, formally, Oct. 21, 1847. Religious services had been held in the Town Hall and in September 1847, Mr. Dyer was engaged as preacher. On the formal organization of the church he became its first minister. The edifice pictured here was dedicated Jan. 4, 1849.



HINGHAM STEAMBOATS

To the Rev. Charles Brooks, minister at New North, goes credit for "starting the project of a steamboat between Boston and Hingham." That was in 1821. But not until 1831 did regular passenger service between Boston and Hingham become a reality, when the "Gen. Lincoln," the first of the name, was placed in operation by the Boston and Hingham Steam Boat Company. The "Gen. Lincoln," which had two engines and two boilers, and was wood-fired, made the trip to Boston in

1½ hours. When Melville Gardens was created and the Downer Landing pier built in 1872, the Hingham, Hull and Downer Landing Steamboat Co. acquired the "Gov. Andrew" and the former "Nahant," built in Chelsea, which after refurbishing became the second "Gen. Lincoln." Both vessels shown in this picture were in service for a number of years.

Melville Gardens was named for Thomas Melvill, whose grandson, Herman Melville, the

writer, added an "e" to the name. Thomas Melvill died in 1832, perhaps the last survivor of the Boston Tea Party. Mrs. Samuel Downer was a granddaughter of Thomas Melvill, whence came the name Mr. Downer adapted for his Downers Landing development.

This view shows Hingham Harbor from Downers Landing looking toward Boston with Ragged and Sarah Islands ahead of the four-masted schooner.

The year 1834 was not a particularly auspicious one for starting a bank, for President Andrew Jackson had helped precipitate a financial panic in the country by refusing to renew the charter for the Bank of the United States.

Nonetheless, Hingham petitioners for a bank were successful. A group of 20 public-minded citizens sought from the Massachusetts General Court, permission to establish a savings bank. And on April 3, 1834, a charter was granted creating the Hingham Institution for Savings. Its object: "to receive and securely invest the savings of persons in moderate circumstances, who have not the means or opportunity of making investments for themselves."

In the Hingham Gazette, the local newspaper at the time of the establishment of the bank, the following appeared:

"We believe that savings institutions are admitted to be among the most useful which have been devised for the protection of the interests of the frugal and industrious who wish to make provision for times of need. Parents, by making their children depositors, can teach them the advantage of saving habits and inculcate lessons of economy. Seamen, particularly, who wish to invest their earnings where they will be secure in their absence, will find a great advantage in institutions of this kind. We believe that the gentlemen who have consented to manage the affairs of the institution here, from their practical experience and knowledge of the affairs of our community, are exceedingly well qualified to discharge their trust in a manner which will be highly satisfactory to all who are interested."

The first office of the Hingham Institution for Savings was in the Hingham Bank building on North Street. It was open only on the last Saturday of every month from 10 a.m. till noon "to receive deposits and transact other business." The treasurer also received deposits "at his office whenever they may be offered."

The first deposit was recorded Dec. 24, 1834. By the end of its first year, 264 accounts had been opened with total deposits of \$30,113.54. Hingham in those days had a population of about 3500.

How well the Hingham Institution for Savings has served the community is evidenced by almost 11,000 accounts today with resources totaling in excess of \$31 million. But one can still open a savings account here just as in 1834, with the deposit of \$1.