

OUR TOWN 1915-1965

Not content to wait one hundred years, the Hopkinton Historical Society, founded in May, 1951, largely through the efforts of Ethel L. Buckley, has undertaken to bring this little booklet up-to-date and to record the history of the last fifty years.

As you enter Hopkinton on the Route 135 you will notice on your left a monument. It is a life-size bronze figure of a soldier or "Dough-Boy" as they were then called. This was erected in the year 1931 to honor our boys who served in World War I, 1917-1919. It faces west and has a granite base, with a tablet of bronze on which is inscribed the names of all the boys who answered their country's call.

To the right of the "Dough-Boy" situated in the Common facing north is a three-paneled white granite monument. On the left is inscribed World War II, 1941-1945. On the right the Korean Conflict, 1950-1951. In the center the list of those who made the supreme sacrifice. At night bright lights enhance their appearance.

At the junction of Hayden Rowe and Main Streets is a marker erected to the memory of Lt. Leigh D. Hughes, the first World War I casualty.

Monument marking the site of "First Meeting House 1724." Near this spot stood the First Meeting House, erected by the First Congregational Church in 1911.

The Congregational Church after outgrowing its original building and losing the next by fire, rebuilt in 1882 and here celebrated its two hundredth anniversary in 1924. The occasion, August 31 – September 2, was observed with appropriate exercises and a fine historical address was read by the minister, The Rev. Halah H. Laud.

On September 21, 1938, hurricane winds blew the steeple down and sent the great bell crashing through the roof of the sanctuary, thereby demolishing it. Loyal members and generous contributors made the work of rebuilding possible so that the corner-stone of the fourth edifice was laid on May 14, 1939. With Allison Williams as contractor a white wooden church of simple Colonial lines was erected. The bell was unharmed and is in use again.

In addition to the sanctuary and Sunday School rooms the new building contains McLean Chapel and Eldridge Hall, named in honor of generous contributors. The Rev. Edwin B. Nylen was pastor at the time of the dedicatory services April 7-14, 1940.

With the growth of the Sunday School, three additional rooms have recently been created over McLean Chapel and named in honor of former pastors; Edwin B. Nylen, John Edward Thomas and Frederick C. Wilson.

For the past ten years a very successful Teen Canteen program sponsored by the Pilgrim Fellowship under the direction of the Religious Education Committee of the Church has been held on Saturday nights in Eldridge Hall. These Inter-Faith dances, chaperoned by parents of the teen-agers, attract from 100 to 150 each week and are entirely self-supporting.

In 1959 6 ½ acres of land off Winter Street was given by Mr. Sterling Hager on behalf of Troop One Boy Scouts. This land adjoins that so generously leased by Mr. Russell Phipps to the Boy Scouts and on which their building stands.

In 1960 the old parsonage on Hayden Rowe was sold and land on Ash Street was purchased for a new eight-room parsonage. The present minister, Rev. Forrest C. Higgins and Mrs. Higgins held Open House here on June 17, 1961.

On June 4, 1961, after several meetings and discussions, the Church voted "That this Church become a member of the United Church of Christ by ratification of the constitution" of that body.

After a fire destroyed the Park House block which housed the John Warren Lodge of Masons, the Masons acquired the land on Main Street next to the Congregational Church.

In 1951 foundations were laid and on September 16, 1952, the first meeting was held in the basement of what was to become an exceptionally lovely Masonic Temple. Under the inspired leadership of William Hamilton with each craft contributing its talents and loyal members their time the building took shape over the next several years. Dinners were catered by members, auctions were held, etc., to raise money for materials; finally, dedicatory exercises were held December 8, 1958.

The excellency of workmanship and the efficiency of design are such that the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts now points with pride to Hopkinton as a role model for other building committees.

On February 28, 1965, the lower or social hall was named Doughty Hall and dedicated to "Frank and Catherine Doughty in recognition of their long and faithful service to John Warren Lodge and the Hopkinton Acacia Club."

St. Paul's Episcopal Church has shown a constant growth and is now able to support a full time pastor, Rev. George Hearn. A rectory on Main Street was purchased in 1961.

The early ill-fated Episcopal Churches were located west of the old tombs. Later this site was used for a Hopkinton Elementary School and as a gymnasium. The town agreed in 1957 to accept a token payment from St. Paul's for this building. After extensive repairs it has been converted into a useful parish house.

Thus "the Episcopal people have returned to the site of their early beginnings in Hopkinton."

A lot on the corner of Church Street and Church Place was the site of the Methodist Episcopal Church which was razed in May, 1918, and the Society was dissolved. The remaining members affiliated with other churches.

The Hopkinton Catholic Parish will observe its centennial at St. John the Evangelist Church in 1966. Meanwhile, under the direction of the Pastor, Rev. William R. Hodgkinson, major upper church restoration is taking place.

Of special interest is the refinishing of the beautiful paintings and the décor of gold leaf which high lights the many arches of the edifice. This work is being done by the well known company of Gaston Goyette, Inc., of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The names of the members who served their country in World War I are listed on a bronze tablet in the Church. Those who served in World War II are honored by the marble statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, which graces the Rectory grounds.

During the past forty years severe storms have damaged the Woodville Baptist Church. The spire was struck by lightning in 1925 and after the 1938 hurricane two years were required to make necessary repairs.

The church has entered a period of growth under the leadership of Rev. Andrew Halko.

In 1962, the Church celebrated its 125th anniversary. There was a week-long program consisting of an Early Singing School, open house with a silver tea, a historical tour, a banquet and memorial services.

The adjoining Wood Chapel which served for many years as the Woodville Library is now being used for many years as the Woodville Library is now being used for church meetings and Sunday School.

During the years when Hopkinton was a thriving boot and shoe manufacturing town, there were, in the outlying areas ten district schools. As industry decreased, the need for these diminished, and shortly after the turn of the century, only three were in use. They were the Hayden Rowe and Bear Hill, from which pupils were transferred to the Center School in 1928, and the Woodville, which was closed in 1918.

At present, the Hayden Rowe is the meeting place of Hopkinton Grange No. 173, and the Woodville is the Rod and Gun Club House, and the Bear Hill is a community center.

The opening on January 9, 1928, of the new Center School on Ash Street, was a memorable event. The construction of the building was carried on directly in back of the old one- and two-room

schools "without disturbance to the workers or classes." During the Christmas vacation all necessary materials were transferred to the Center School and the old buildings were razed.

Later, when extra rooms were needed, there was no space problem since abutting land had wisely been acquired, which, with that already owned by the town, amounted to three acres.

The addition of fourteen class rooms, an office, and a clinic was completed in 1950.

The new Junior-Senior High School for grades seven through twelve opened January 3, 1956. It is located on the site of the original athletic field on Hayden Rowe Street.

An addition to accommodate grades five and six opened September 7, 1960.

Interest is being centered in the school now in process of construction on land abutting Wood and Elm Streets. It will be occupied in September 1965, by pupils of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades and by a special class. Twelve teachers will be transferred from the Center and Junior-Senior Schools and additional personnel will be appointed as needed. Sixteen class rooms will be in readiness and there will be an expansion possibility to a twenty-room system.

The original Hopkinton Academy (High School) was moved to Church Street from Hayden Rowe Street and converted to a dwelling house. It was recently purchased by St. John the Evangelist Parish to be used for Parish activities.

The High School building on Main Street is being used for industry.

The four-room school on Ash Street (for many years called the New Building) was acquired by St. Paul's Episcopal Church and is a Parish House.

"Open House" was observed for the new Fire and Police Station Sunday and Monday, June 26 and 27, 1954. The Town now has a fine and necessary addition in this building, one of the finest of its class in the state.

On June 14, 1964, a "Firefighters Memorial Dedication" was held. This monument is located on the grass plot in front of the cemetery on Mayhew Street.

The Flag Pole erected by a citizens of Hopkinton in 1923 to the memory of Rev. James B. King;

Born – Gettysburg, Pa., 1839

Died – Hopkinton, 1923

Department Chaplain, Mass, G.A.R.

Soldier – Pastor – Friend

With the growth of homes in the town the demand for water has increased and in 1922 a 60-foot stand-pipe with a capacity of 313,000 gallons was installed.

In 1928, eleven and one half acres of land on Fruit Street was purchased from Bernice Rocheleau and George W. Claflin (Dickman Land) to augment the water supply and in 1930 new wells and Pumping Station were installed at Fruit Street.

Land was again required for expansion and in 1954 an area on West Main and School Streets was purchased from Mrs. Gladys G. Temple on which is a 70 Foot Stand Pipe with a capacity of 880,000 gallons. In 1959 a new gravel packed well with 500 gallons per minute pump was installed at Fruit Street.

To keep abreast of our expanding growth of new homes, a new well, 500 gallons per minute and pump house, were installed at Fruit Street in 1964.

To complete the Water Department System plans, a 1,500,000 gallon stand pipe will be erected at Grove Street in 1965, ample for all foreseen future requirements.

After the disastrous fire of November, 1909, which destroyed the "Reservoir House" and many of the surrounding buildings in Woodville Center, a store was built on part of this site, and a carriage house became a two-family dwelling. Soon the store became the post-office only, and the equipment of a trucking company uses the remainder of this area.

The Woodville Fire House, situated on the edge of Whitehall "Little Pond" once housed the famous Champion 1858 Edward Hopkins Hand Tub. In the near future this building may be replaced by a modern one large enough to house up-to-date fire equipment.

Many changes have taken place in the appearance of Woodville Center, such as the exterior of the old general store, the removal of the band-stand and horse watering fountain.

Woodville has a prosperous factory which builds fire engines, a busy lumber mill and a business which builds wooden pallets or "cradles" to hold machinery for safe transportation. This later business is built on the site of the old Hopkinton Springs Hotel.

The Toll Road built in 1957, with the over-pass at North and Wood Streets, new Route 495 and planned connections to the Worcester Expressway, will open up possibilities for even greater growth to this section of Woodville in the next fifty years.

When the Highway Department outgrew their quarters at the corner of Main and Grove Streets a much larger building was constructed on Wood Street.

The old Coburn Factory on Hayden Rowe Street is the last of the many large and prosperous concerns of 50 years ago. This building has been completely renovated by the General Packets, Inc.

State Park Headquarters Building was built in 1958 to service the Ashland-Hopkinton complex of State Parks and Reservoirs.

Retyped from the original by Bill Shaw, 5/31/2014