



Vol. 3 No. 1

Quincy, Massachusetts

Fall, 1976



NORTH ROOM OF the Quincy Historical Society Adams Academy Museum was dedicated in honor of Past President H. Hobart Holly, Sept. 19. From the left are, Senator Arthur H. Tobin, Mrs. Holly, Mr. Holly, William O'Connell, new president; and Dr. James R. Cameron, first vice president.

[Quincy Sun Photo by Jack Tolson]

Marking Two Milestones

Museum North Room Dedicated In Honor Of H. Hobart Holly

On Sept. 19, the many friends and associates of H. Hobart Holly gathered together in the North Room of the Adams Academy to pay tribute to a man who has been president of our society for 20 years.

observance had the merits of a memorial service and a farewell party but not the disadvantages of either. He said, "I am neither departed nor departing and I look forward to the direction which the society is headed."

Dr. James Cameron, our first vice president, served as Master of Ceremonies for the event. He said that the reception in Mr. Holly's honor was an appropriate way to mark two milestones: Mr. Holly's 25 years of service as an officer of the society and the opening of the Academy building as the Society's museum and library.

Mrs. J. Davis Shuster of the Braintree Historical Society spoke highly of the man who has served as historian of that society for 13 years. Lawrence D. Geller, President of the Pilgrim Society in Plymouth lauded the contributions Mr. Holly has made as a fellow and trustee of that prestigious association. City Council President and State Senator, Arthur H. Tobin and Councilor, Paul Harold were in attendance. Councilor Harold, a former director of the Society, presented Mr. Holly with a certificate of recognition of his contributions to the city.

Our president, Mr. William O'Connell spoke of the many people of dedicated persuasion who have walked on the sturdy floors of the Academy and of the hundreds of promising young scholars who deliberated within the security of the brick and granite walls of the building. He speculated that neither masters nor students have left a more lasting impression on our city than the man for whom this wing of the Academy was being dedicated.

Letters of tribute were sent to Mr. Holly from US Rep. James A. Burke, D. Milton, Rep. Joseph Brett, the Massachusetts Historical Society and the Peabody Museum of which Mr. Holly is a member.

Perhaps the most surprised person in attendance was Mr. Holly, who was not aware of this decision. Thanking the members for the honor bestowed on him, Mr. Holly mused that the

We all certainly appreciate Mr. Holly's remarkable dedication to the society. In his capacity as historian we look forward to his aid in pursuing historical interests.

A Tribute To Our Volunteers . . .



WE SALUTE our volunteer staff including Edith Howlett, Helen Woit, Helene Johnson, Marion Carpenter and Eleanor Brown. See story on Page 3.

[Doris Oberg Photo]
Thomas Crane Public Library
 Quincy, Mass.

'The Need Of The Day Is Rapid Transit'

The Boston, Quincy And Fall River Bicycle Railway

A paper prepared for the QUINCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY by H. Hobart Holly, January 1967.

"The need of the day is rapid transit." "... a system of transit whose speed may be from seventy-five to one hundred or more miles an hour."

This sounds like the cry of a 1967 South Shore commuter; it is in reality a quotation from the Scientific American for Feb. 17, 1894. That makes it history; history that we hope will not repeat itself. The Boston, Quincy and Fall River Bicycle Railway never reached Quincy; moreover, it was a monorail.

The incorporation of the Boston Quincy and Fall River Bicycle Railway was approved by the General Court on June 11, 1897. (1) Nine Boston business men were the incorporators.* It was classified as an electric street railway, and described as "...an elevated and surface bicycle railway for the carriage of passengers but not freight ... under the bicycle railroad patents granted to E. Moody Boynton." The route was to be as follows:

Beginning at Dudley Street and Harrison Avenue in Boston, it traversed Warren Avenue, Blue Hill Avenue, Geneva Avenue, Gibson Street, Adams Street, Neponset Avenue to the Quincy line (1).

From the Neponset line, over and along Hancock Street, Quincy, to a point 240 ft. north of Newbury Street

Across Newbury Street, 58 ft. from Hancock Street

Across Myrtle Street, 178 ft. from Hancock Street

Across Squantum Street opposite Newport Avenue

Over and along Newport Avenue from Squantum Street to Wilson Street

Across the junction of Newport Avenue and Wilson Street

Across Hobart Street, 9 ft. from Newport Avenue

Over and along Newport Avenue from a point 50 ft. south of Hobart Street

Across junction of Adams Street and Newport Avenue

Across Dimmock Street, 30 ft. from Goff Street [Goff Street renamed Presidents Lane]

Across Saville Street, 75 ft. from Goff Street

Over and along the street in front of the Quincy railroad station [apparently Upland Road]

Across Goff Street, 20 ft. from Granite Street

Across Granite Street, 18 ft. from Goff Street

Across junction of School and Marsh Streets

Over and along Marsh Street from School Street to Quincy Street

Across junction of Brook Avenue and Water Street

Over and along Centre Street past the pumping station, near and parallel with the NY, NH & H Railroad

Across Centre Street at a point 600 ft. from the Braintree line [2]

From the Quincy-Braintree line, the route continued South

Across Cherry and Common Streets at their junction

Hollis Street westerly from Maple Street

Monatiquot Avenue 97 ft. easterly from Ash Street

Mt. Vernon Avenue, 363 ft. westerly from Washington Street

Central Avenue 8 ft. easterly from Tremont Street measured on the southerly line of Central Ave.

Tremont Street, 72 ft. southerly from Central Avenue measured on the westerly line of Tremont Street

Taylor Street, 85 Ft. easterly from Franklin Street measured

on the northerly line of Taylor Street

Franklin Street, 62 ft. southerly from Taylor Street measured on the easterly line of Franklin Street

Pond Street, 22 ft. easterly from the cemetery [3]

From Braintree through Holbrook, Brockton, Easton, Bridgewater, and Taunton, to Fall River. [1]

The description of the Boyton Bicycle Electric Railway is very interesting. (4) "The idea of the bicycle railroad is to provide a system of transit whose speed may be from seventy-five to one hundred or more miles an hour. Air resistance being one of the most adverse factors at this velocity, a car of small cross sectional area is preferable.

The inequalities of two parallel lines of rail is also a factor. In the railroad in question a narrow car with sharpened ends is employed, and is mounted upon two wheels, one at each end, and travels upon a single rail. It has the equilibrium of a bicycle, and like the latter disposes at once of the violent transverse wrenching strains which affect four-wheeled vehicles of the everyday type.

It is particularly well adapted for electric propulsion, the overhead rail giving a place for the current main." The descriptive article contains ten illustrations and detailed accounts of the various components and their operation. The car with its sharpened ends contains six compartments holding four persons each seated back to back, and having a side door. The arrangement of the wheels and the overhead steadying guides was very ingenious."

The car is carried by two wheels. Each wheel is journaled

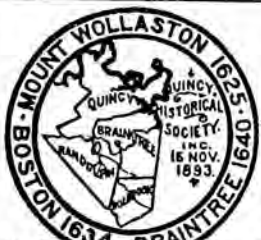
in a frame at the bottom of a vertical shaft or column rising through the car roof. The upper end of this column carries a frame with four guide wheels, which have vertical axes, and between which is a space for the upper guide rail. In passing around curves these four rollers turn the column, so that the axis of the large wheel is always normal to the curve.... The car body swings on springs from the two columns. "A copy of the complete article is appended hereto.

The difficulties facing the Boston, Quincy and Fall River Bicycle Railway seem to be indicated by comment in connection with the first petition for permission to cross Quincy streets "either above or below grade". (5) It is noted that it would run almost entirely over private property. This would be expensive and make procurement of rights difficult. Fewer objections could be seen for the proposed route than for almost any other that could have been selected, but "it still goes through the heart of Quincy". "There is considerable doubt that the railway will ever be built, but a showing must be made soon if the company means business."

It is noted that under the Act of Legislature, the privileges granted by the Act would be forfeited if 20 miles of railroad were not built within two years of the date of the Act. It was proposed to build and operate first the 20-mile run from Boston to Brockton, to meet this requirement. This would have to be accomplished by June 11, 1899; and here in August 1898, the way was not even clear to start work.

A public hearing was held, and the public sentiment shown was

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Kathleen T. Mitchell
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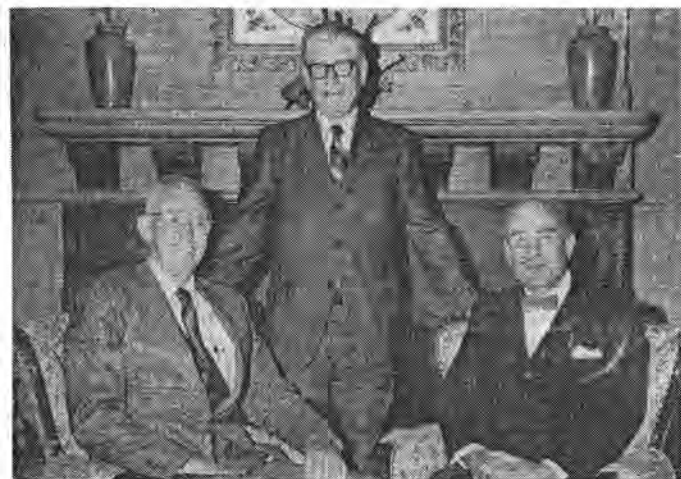
* Incorporators:

John F. Shaw
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E. Moody Boynton
L. Edwin Dudley
Edward A. Perkins

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[signed petition as General]
Boots and Shoes
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Real Estate

Names are from incorporation papers [1].
Occupations given are from Boston Directory for 1896.



DISTINGUISHED VISITOR - Thomas Boylston Adams [right] spoke on television's 'The Adams Chronicles' at meeting of Quincy Historical Society. With him are Society President William O'Connell and Dr. George Horner, program chairman.

[Doris Oberg Photo]



At the last meeting of the Society, Mr. Yurdon and Mr. O'Connell accepted a check for \$100 from The Quincy City Club. Presenting the check for The City Club is Richard Koch.

Tax Deductible

Corporate Memberships

New Category

William A. O'Connell, President of our Society is once again active in increasing our membership.

We are all familiar with the tremendous increase in membership in the Society in the past few years, and now a new category has been established to enable the professional and business community to support the Society.

Corporate membership on a continuing annual basis has been established in several categories: Pioneer \$50, Pilgrim \$100, Patriot

\$250, Puritan \$500, and Patron \$1000. As a chartered corporation the Quincy Historical Society qualifies as a non profit educational and charitable organization under Internal Revenue code 501 (c) (3). Therefore, dues and contributions are tax deductible.

The response to date from these corporate members has been very encouraging. Anyone who seeks further information concerning these memberships may contact Mr. O'Connell.

A Tribute To Our Volunteer Staff

Have you ever stopped by the Academy on a Monday afternoon? Those of us who have can attest to the fact that the same dedicated women can be found busily carrying out their appointed tasks. According to Doris Oberg, these wonderful people have contributed over 5000 hours of volunteer service to the Society.

All former educators, now retired, Edith Howlett, Helen Wiot, Helene Johnson, Marion Carpenter and Eleanor Brown are putting their knowledge and efforts to good use as members of the Volunteer Staff of the Adams Academy Museum and Library Building.

Since 1970, Edith Howlett has been in the curatorial department rearranging our artifacts, checking and cataloguing items so that they will be readily available for research and display.

The textile department is managed by Helen Wiot and Helene Johnson. All the costumes are catalogued according to date,

style and their connection to important people. All other textiles have been made readily accessible by proper numbering and storage. Helen handled this job alone from 1971 until Helene joined the staff last year.

Marion Carpenter joined the volunteer staff in 1971. She has been particularly involved in organizing the museum library. Mrs. Carpenter's responsibilities have included cataloguing books, manuscripts, pamphlets and maps, mounting pictures and clippings and lately working on the records of the society itself.

Eleanor Brown joined the group in 1972, and has performed many tasks. At present she is working in the library checking and double checking to see that the materials are maintained in perfect order.

Doris Oberg has overseen this work and has been most faithful to the society since she became librarian almost 20 years ago.

It is certainly an impressive record.



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Serving the County of Presidents

Bicycle Railway

[Cont'd from Page 2]

definitely against building the Bicycle Railway through Quincy. (6) On Oct. 29th it was announced that a second petition would be presented by the Hon. E. Moody Boynton, the inventor of the bicycle railway and Democratic candidate for congress, who would illustrate his talk with stereopticon. It was stated that much public interest was expected, and that the students of the Quincy Mansion School would attend in a body. (7) The young ladies were in for quite a show.

The newspaper devotes three columns to its report of the hearing. (8) Mr. Boynton opened by saying that he "regretted to come here where descendants of signers of the Declaration of Independence had objected to his system without looking at it." "He roasted all those who differed from him." "They cannot give one reason why the one rail will not be a substitute for two." He claimed that one could go from Quincy to Boston in 6 minutes, including stops."

Then you would ride for 5 cents and without the slightest danger. Quincy should welcome us. We do not want to leave you out. "After complimenting the steam railroad people for the fine service they give, he said "We are going to give the steam railroads the hardest fight they ever had. "He stated that he could raise the capital in 30 days and save the charter in the spring. When asked about his capital, Mr. Boynton said he had 5 million in stock and 5 million in bonds.

The questioner then asked how much of the stock was paid in, to which the Hon. Mr. Boynton replied that it was none of his business, and said that the questioner must have and interest in the New Haven Railroad. The meeting had been heated before this, but fists nearly flew before order was restored.

Boynton's claims of indorsement by prominent engineers and others were questioned and insulting remarks passed. Some facts of interest, however, came out of the questioning. The structure would be up one foot, and the cars elevated four feet. It was claimed that the cars could not be heard 100 yards away. When asked

about stations Mr. Boynton replied "Treat us well and you can have them as often as possible."

The discussion was finally turned away from technical matters and onto the question of location, to which there was considerable objection. One councilman stated that he did not see the need for a second railroad to Quincy, since he expected that the New Haven line would be electrified shortly and provide the needed rapid transit.

The Quincy City Council next offered the Boynton Railway a location that would take it through West Quincy. (9)

Starting at the City line at Neponset, and running 4 ft.

West of and separate from the Neponset Bridge, then 4 ft.

West of Hancock Street for 600 ft.

Across Newbury Street.

Across the junction of Walnut and Myrtle Streets.

Across the junction of Squantum Street and Highland Avenue.

Across Beale Street, 4 ft. east of the Milton line.

Across Adams Street, 800 ft. east of Beale Street.

Across Reardon Street, 500 ft. west of Common Street.

Across Cross Street, 400 ft. west of Common Street.

Across the junction of Copeland and Common Streets.

Across West Street, 200 ft. west of Copeland Street.

Across Centre Street opposite Kent Street.

Across Liberty street, 200 ft. west of Centre Street.

All in accordance with a map by H. T. Whitman dated November 14, 1898.

An analysis of the route shows that it is shorter than the one proposed by Mr. Boynton, and has fewer grades and street crossings.

The west Quincy location was voted by the City Council after some discussion. One person questioned the value of the railway to West Quincy since "you cannot develop swamps". The fast trip to Boston would be of no value in this location, except for people south of Quincy. Mr. Henry H. Faxon doubted that Mr. Boynton would accept it, stating that it should be in the center and the hope that it would go through



ENJOYING VISIT to the USS Massachusetts are Edward McDonagh, Lois Walker, Linda Day, Laurence Gall, Effie Cossaboom and Quincy Historical Society President William O'Connell.

[Doris Oberg Photo]

his land. Councilman McGrath said that he would oppose it if he thought that it would be built, but that he considered it only visionary. Three columns were devoted to the discussion. (10)

Shortly after the voting of the West Quincy location, it was noted that the railway would run closer to houses than some had thought. (11)

The next mention in the newspaper is a description of the location that had been voted in Brockton. (12) It was later reported (13), that in connection with the route through Brockton it had been ruled that the Boynton Bicycle Railway was not a railway but a railroad, and therefore subject to regulations applicable

to railroads. Whether or not this was the last straw cannot be determined, but a check of newspapers to within two months of Mr. Boynton's deadline failed to reveal further news of the Bicycle Railway.

So we commuters must return to our dreams; and since the bicycle rage of the 1890's has subsided, it appears very doubtful that the answer will be Mr. Boynton's bicycle monorail railway. We may never have the promised pleasure and comfort of riding to work at over one hundred miles an hour, seated frontwards or backwards, in a 4 ft. wide by 51 ft. long bicycle built for twenty four.

REFERENCES:

- [1] 1897 Acts of the General Court of Massachusetts, Pages 563-570, incorporating the Boston, Quincy and Fall River Bicycle Railway. Approved June 11, 1897.
- [2] Quincy Daily Ledger, August 20, 1898. Petition filed with City Clerk of Quincy for Bicycle Railway to cross Quincy streets.
- [3] Braintree Observer, March 26, 1898. Petition filed with Selectmen of Braintree for Boynton Bicycle Railway to cross Braintree streets.
- [4] Scientific American, February 17, 1894. Description of the Boynton Bicycle Electric Railway.
- [5] Quincy Daily Ledger, August 22, 1898. Comments on the Bicycle Railway's petition to cross Quincy streets.
- [6] Quincy Daily Ledger, October 11, 1898. Comments on first public hearing.
- [7] Quincy Daily Ledger, October 29, 1898. Announcement of second public hearing.
- [8] Quincy Daily Ledger, November 1, 1898. Report of second public hearing.
- [9] Quincy Daily Ledger, November 15, 1898. Council maps railway location in West Quincy.
- [10] Quincy Daily Ledger, November 21, 1898. Railway location in West Quincy voted.
- [11] Quincy Daily Ledger, December 1, 1898. Comments on West Quincy location.
- [12] Quincy Daily Ledger, December 15, 1898. Location through Brockton described.
- [13] Quincy Daily Ledger, January 28, 1899. Ruling that the Bicycle Railway is a railroad.