

## **New North Church Collection, 1807-1959**

**Repository:** Hingham Public Library

**Manuscript Number:** MSC #14

**Quantity:** Half document box

**Processed By:** Emily Lapworth

**Access:**

**Related Materials:** Bicentennial Collection, First Parish Collection

### **Provenance**

This collection was created and donated by Joseph Richardson in 1976 and 1980 as part of the Bicentennial Collection.

### **Historical Note**

New North Church, also known as Third Congregational Society, was formed by a group of church members and parishioners that split from First Parish in 1806. This group did not support the election of Rev. Joseph Richardson as minister of First Parish, but political rivalry between Republicans and Federalists is the real cause for the split. The leaders of New North Church were Federalists fighting to keep Jeffersonian Republicans out of positions of power, a battle which they lost.

The first services of the Third Congregational Society were held in Derby Hall, led by Henry Ware, Richardson's predecessor who returned from his new position as Professor of Divinity at Harvard. A meeting house was constructed in 1806. The church building is a well-admired example of Bulfinch architecture, although there is no definite evidence that it was designed by Charles Bulfinch himself. In 1807 the Third Congregational Society was incorporated and the New North Corporation was formed by pew owners.

The two congregations remained bitterly divided; little boys threw stones at people going to the other church, and people would only call doctors within their own parish. By 1847, when Richardson suggested an exchange of pulpits, the New North congregation still refused, although their pastor, Rev. Oliver Stearns, was willing. Stearns brought both congregations together for the first time in 44 years in 1850 when he conducted a baptism outdoors with Richardson alongside him.

Both First Parish and New North were Unitarian, although at the time of the split members of First Parish considered themselves more orthodox. New North Church dissolved its connection with the Unitarian Universalist Association in the 1960s, and reopened as a multi-denominational community church in the 1970s.

Notable members of the church include General Benjamin Lincoln, Governor John A. Andrew, and Governor John D. Long. The second minister of New North Church, Charles Brooks, was important to the town beyond his religious role. Brooks introduced the use of anthracite coal, and he helped establish the Hingham Institution for Savings, the State Normal School at Bridgewater, and the first line of steamships to Boston.

### Ministers of New North Church

1807-1820	Rev. Henry Colman
1821-1839	Rev. Charles Brooks
1839-1856	Rev. Oliver Stearns
1859-1863	Rev. Daniel Bowen
1864-1868	Rev. Joshua Young
1869-1872	Rev. John Snyder
1873-1875	Rev. William G. Todd
1876-1883	Rev. Dr. Henry A. Miles
1884-1887	Rev. Alexander T. Bowser
1890-1896	Rev. Charles T. Billings
1897-1899	Rev. Charles H. Porter
1900-1906	Rev. Charles E. Park
1908-1912	Rev. Paul S. Phalen
1913-1918	Rev. George Browning Spurr
1919-1928	Rev. Edward P. Daniels
1929-1930	Rev. R. Lester Mondale
1930-1932	Rev. Cornelius J. Heijn
1932-????	Rev. Abbot Peterson, Jr.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The collection includes many printed booklets of sermons and discourses given by ministers of New North Church between 1812 and 1872. It also includes programs and broadsides from 1821-1959 describing services, events, and the church's history. Other materials included in the collection are a copy of the church's 1807 charter, a 1916 pew receipt, a 1932 newspaper article about the church and its history, Rev. Charles Brooks' 1837 Farmer's Almanac/Diary, and historical notes written in 1869 by Solomon Lincoln and Charles Brooks about the church and about Brooks himself.

### **Arrangement**

The collection is arranged into the following series:

- Series I. Church Records, 1807-1959
  - Subseries I. Copy of charter, 1807
  - Subseries II. Sermons and discourses, 1812-1872
  - Subseries III. Programs and broadsides, 1821-1959
  - Subseries IV. Pew receipt, 1916
- Series II. Historical Material, 1837-1932
  - Subseries I. Charles Brooks' Farmer's Almanac/Diary, 1837
  - Subseries II. Historical notes by Solomon Lincoln and Rev. Charles Brooks, 1869
  - Subseries III. Newspaper article, 1932

### **Series I. Church Records, 1807-1959**

#### **Subseries I. Copy of charter, 1807**

Flat file drawer, oversized folder 1

This subseries consists of a “true copy” of the 1807 charter of the Third Congregational Society.

### **Subseries II. Sermons and discourses, 1812-1872**

Box 1, folders 1-3

This subseries consists of printed booklets of sermons and discourses from 1812-1872. The sermons and discourses are from 1812-1872 and were delivered to the congregation of New North and to outside audiences. Included are Rev. Henry Colman’s discourses on topics such as politics, benevolence, the providence of God, promoting christianity, patriotism, and pastoral duty. Also included are the ordination sermon of Charles Brooks by Henry Ware and discourses written by Charles Brooks (one for the internment of Rev. Jacob Flint, and one entitled “Elementary Instruction”). Oliver Stearns wrote several sermons in this subseries: “The Duty of Moral Reflection with Particular Reference to the Texas Question,” “The Gospel Applied to the Fugitive Slave Law,” “Peace Through Conflict,” “The House of the Lord,” “The Incarnation: A Sermon preached at the Ordination of Rev. Calvin S. Locke,” “The Preacher: A Sermon preached at the Ordination of Frederick Frothingham,” and “A Farewell Sermon.” “Christian and Worldly Contentment,” a sermon delivered following the death of Mr. Thomas Whiton, is also in this subseries.

### **Subseries III. Programs and broadsides, 1821-1959**

Box 1, folders 4-5

The programs and broadsides are from 1821-1959. These include orders of services for the ordinations of Charles Brooks, Daniel Bowen, John Snyder, Edward Perry Daniels, and Richard George Kimball; concert and performance programs; and anniversary booklets that include brief historical sketches of the church.

### **Subseries IV. Pew receipt, 1916**

Box 1, folder 6

This subseries consists of a 1916 pew receipt from the New North Meeting House Corporation to William Wallace Lunt, Treasurer.

## **Series II. Historical Material, 1837-1932**

### **Subseries I. Charles Brooks’ Farmer’s Almanac/Diary, 1837**

Box 1, folder 7

This subseries consists of an 1837 Farmer’s Almanac that belonged to Rev. Charles Brooks. Brooks kept notes of events in this almanac, treating it like a diary or planner. Some entries are only dates and names, and others are more descriptive, such as the entry recording the death of his wife.

### **Subseries II. Historical notes by Solomon Lincoln and Rev. Charles Brooks, 1869**

Box 1, folder 8. Flat file drawer, oversized folder 1

This subseries includes correspondence and historical notes written by Solomon Lincoln and Rev. Charles Brooks in 1869. Solomon Lincoln was working on a History of Hingham at the time, and Charles Brooks provided his own autobiography and information about the church. Brooks’

autobiography is a list of answers to questions asked by Lincoln, such as place of birth, education, travel, marriage, etc., at the end of which is a letter to Lincoln. The autobiography is four pages long and located in the oversized folder.

**Subseries III. Newspaper article, 1932**

Flat file drawer, oversized folder 1

This subseries consists of a 1932 newspaper article from the Boston Evening Transcript about the church and its history, entitled: "Hingham's New North Meeting House Is 125 Years Old."