



# THE MONOGRAPH SERIES

## RECORDS OF EARLY AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE AS SOURCE MATERIAL

EDITED BY RUSSELL F. WHITEHEAD, A.I.A.

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### VOLUME XX

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#### MONOGRAPH SIX

## Early College and Educational Buildings in New England

BY ELDON L. DEAN

*Research and Measured Drawings by Frank Chouteau Brown*

*Photographs by Arthur C. Haskell*

In many instances the original structures associated with the beginnings of early educational institutions in New England have long disappeared; or been superseded by later buildings, themselves already of considerable age and association. It was also the fact that in many cases the buildings first used for educational purposes were not especially constructed for that use; but merely adapted to the purpose. Classes for the younger children in the early colonies, in many locations in New England, usually known as "Dame Schools," were carried on in the homes of the "Dame" in whose charge the instruction of the children had been placed; or sometimes in another house more conveniently located, or of larger size, and therefore selected for the gathering of these small groups of local pupils of many varying ages.

No example of a small village schoolhouse, of an early date, especially built for the education of the younger scholars, is known still to exist in northern New England. A considerable number of one-room schoolhouse buildings may yet be found, scattered over some sections of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine—but usually they do not date from before 1830 to 1840. Some few have been kept nearly in their original condition (having been superseded by newer and larger buildings, and the "bus" system now in general use in rural communities having made them of no use on their original sites) but have been long closed and allowed to exist without care or repair. Many have

disappeared, from fire or neglect, but a few still "carry on," remote and forlorn. Many more have been changed or adapted to other uses; perhaps to serve as a "Union Church"; made into a farm cottage; occasionally they have become "studios" for some summer artist; or have fallen to the use of a roadside stand or gas filling station!

One or two examples of these simple structures, that may be regarded as more or less representative of the "little old red schoolhouse" of storied tradition (although, as a matter of fact, about as often "white" as "red" in the locality here represented!) are illustrated in this number; one—now actually a "summer studio"—conveniently located adjacent to the dismantled remains of an old "town pump" was the first public schoolhouse of Rockport, Massachusetts!

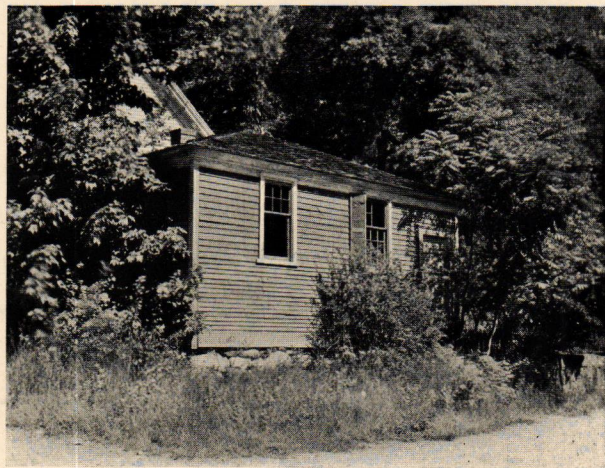
New England early town records carry many stories of the old "Academies" that were founded in most towns of any importance; some of which languished for many years before the rising ascendancy and success of the larger college institutions caused them to be abandoned. But a few have survived; some even flourishing today as accommodations for the younger scholars, in those localities where constant growth of surrounding towns and villages have made the need of an intermediate institution of this sort of continued neighborhood value. And two or three typical buildings illustrate this group of institutional architecture; the most pretentious being the three-story Derby Academy, in the old town of Hingham, in Massachu-





FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOLHOUSE, ROCKPORT, MASS.

setts, representative of the later and more prosperous structures of the period when these Academies most flourished; another being the original building (1763) of the little Academy founded and named after Lieut.-



SCHOOL AT GLOUCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

Governor Dummer, in Byfield, Massachusetts. Both these institutions are still flourishing and maintain a long record of educational ideals; although both now serve a far larger area than was ever contemplated as



DUMMER ACADEMY—ORIGINAL BUILDING 1763—BYFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

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possible at the time of their foundation.

Of the old College buildings in this section, it must at once be acknowledged that the earliest buildings of the first Institutions founded for the inculcation of learning have long since disappeared! There is every probability that those first constructed entirely for this

the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities for April, 1933, Vol. XXIII, No. 4; illustrated by some drawings of conjectural restorations of the first building at Harvard College, in Cambridge, made by Perry, Shaw & Hepburn, the "Old College," which was built in 1638 and finally destroyed in 1679.



DERBY ACADEMY, HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

purpose must have followed examples established by earlier collegiate buildings of European precedent, particularly in England. Those especially interested in these earliest structures may be referred to the article by Professor Samuel E. Morison in the publication of

It was modeled upon the sort of Tudor structure that may still be seen in some of the earlier Colleges in Cambridge, England.

But actually none of the earliest existing Collegiate structures to be found in New England exhibits any

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architectural Tudor characteristics — unless perhaps what are claimed as remainders of the old single "Studies" of the English Colleges—small rooms about 5'0" x 8'0"—some of which are still to be seen in the present Hollis Hall, in Harvard (though now used as lavatories or closets), may be considered as such a survival!

As a matter of fact, Harvard University preserves more early buildings than are to be found in any other College among the northern New England states; in their original exterior aspect, at least. It is acknowledged that the changes caused by accident, fire, wear, and usage have left little of their interior finish or structure in original condition. Among its earlier buildings are Massachusetts Hall, 1720; Hollis Hall, 1763; Harvard Hall, 1766; Stoughton Hall, 1805; Holworthy Hall, 1812; and Holden Chapel, 1744. All these are built of brick, and are representative of their periods, only Harvard Hall having been very much altered upon its exterior by later changes and additions. The yard also boasts of University Hall, the fine granite structure designed by Charles Bulfinch.

Brown University in Providence has preserved three of its first structures, University Hall, 1773; Hope College, 1825; and Manning Hall, the latter a fine example of the Greek revival influence, dating from 1833. Some of the other smaller Colleges have also kept one or two of their earlier buildings, though generally of later date than those listed.

Both at Cambridge and Providence, the buildings dating from before the Revolution were used during the war as barracks for soldiers; and at Harvard, both Massachusetts and Hollis have been largely rebuilt inside, having been used both for recitation rooms and dormitories at different times. Fires have also damaged the interiors of parts of these buildings, causing new firewalls to be installed, and many minor changes in stairways and interior partitions have had to be made from time to time.

These same factors have even extended to affect most of the structures dating from early in the Nineteenth Century; and have in some cases even altered their exterior appearance; as has been the case with several of the older buildings at Phillips Andover



ABBOTT HALL, ABBOTT ACADEMY—1829—ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

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FRAMINGHAM ACADEMY—FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

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Academy, for instance. Here no less than four of the existing buildings were designed by Bulfinch; but it is obvious, from any close study of the structures themselves, that their present state exhibits evidence that many changes—sometimes of considerable importance—have been made at various times to affect their fabric and exterior appearance. In the case of these particular structures, for instance, the belfries or cupolas are obviously not in their original relation to the designs. A large part of Pearson Hall, on both principal façades, show considerable areas of brickwork of a different period from the rest of the building; and several of the entrances exhibit evidences of changes and alterations that may have extensively varied their exterior appearance.

In general, however, despite changes in openings and roof lines; the additions of dormers, roof balustrades, or cupolas; these early College buildings are among the most interesting records of early brick masonry that have been preserved from Eighteenth Century periods. Several of the illustrations included in the *Monograph Series* (Vol. XX, No. 2) may be used to demonstrate the record in this particular. In every case, they exhibit an interest of texture that—secured by the use of irregular brick units, early bond variations, and varied joint treatments—contains material for the study and consideration of architects appreciative of maintaining the variety and values of historic periods of craftsmanship in masonry, or to avail themselves of the inherited traditions of that trade, and apply them to modern problems of architectural design.

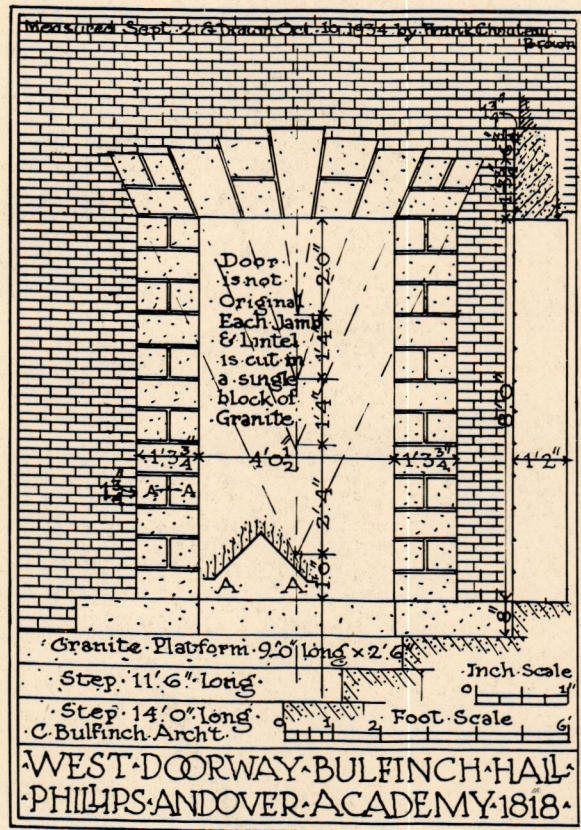
Structures dating from the earlier years of the Nineteenth Century, on the other hand, exhibit another aspect, also valuable and suggestive to the modern designer. A study of the several buildings by Charles Bulfinch, for instance—and perhaps most particularly the building at Phillips Andover called by his name—

is illuminating from the severity and chastity of their design, as well as the extreme simplicity and reserve of their molding treatment and ornamental embellishment.

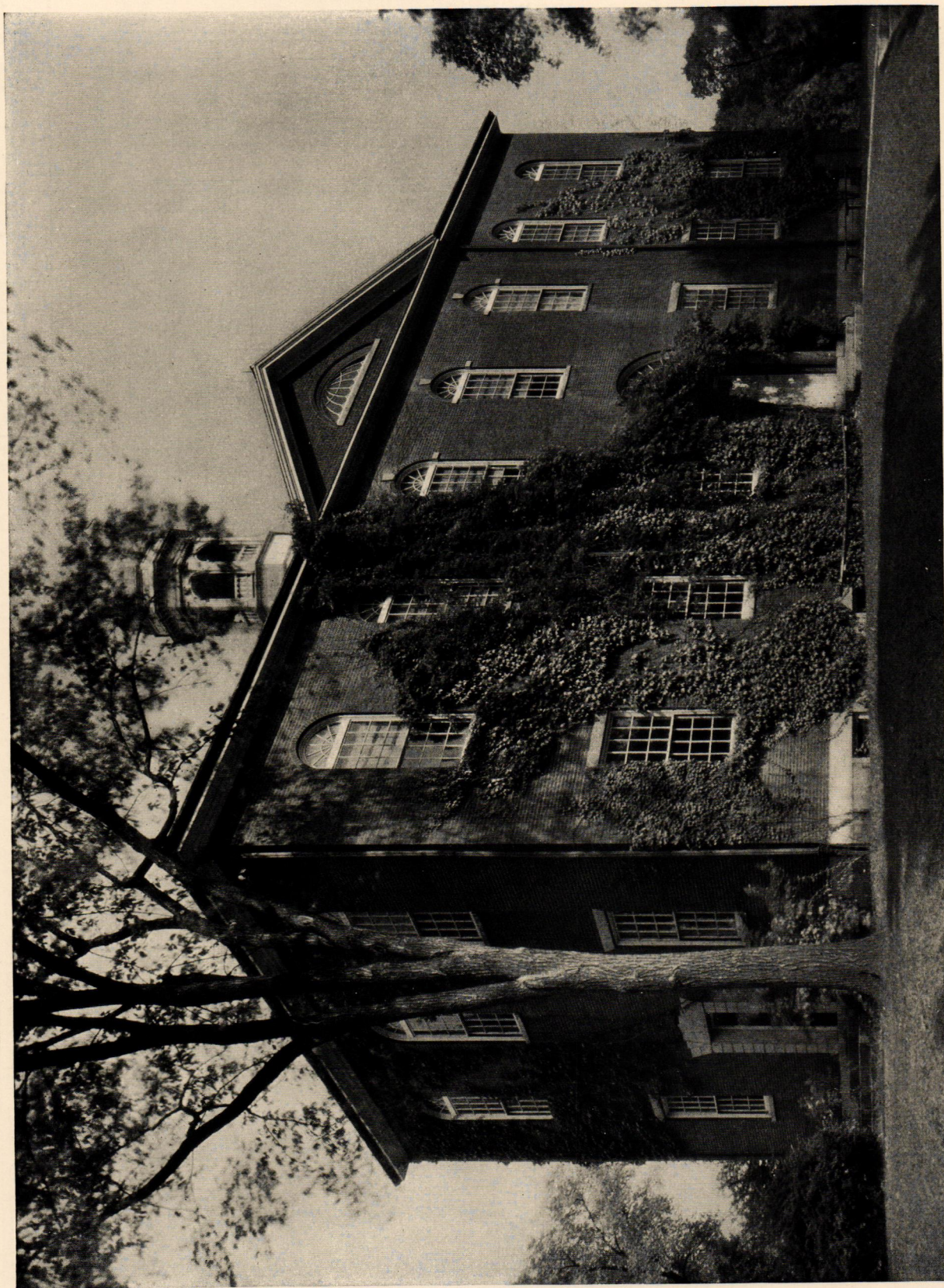
Very probably this may have been the result of the requirement of economy imposed upon their designer by the conditions under which he was working at the time; of the need of these institutions to secure the utmost possible amount of building for the least possible amount of expenditure (a problem not very far removed from that confronting the profession during

these very current years of the Twentieth Century!). But, whatever the cause, the results secured have great interest and value for architectural designers today. For interests of texture in the wall, other values have been substituted that may not be as widely interesting or appealing; for the romantic tendencies evident in the earlier designs, there are now to be seen the greater fineness and reserve of a Greek-derived delicacy and precision of outline and composition of area that almost approaches "bareness" in its result. The resulting simplicity certainly requires more understanding and a finer appreciation of the problem of architectural design upon the part of the public than might have

been expected to exist at that time, even in New England. Or it may be that it was a direct outgrowth of the very social conditions then animating this section of North America; the natural expression in architecture of the civilization then being derived from the early years of the Republic; of the conditions of life and living then surrounding the developing mentality of the region that was to flower a little later in the school of literature and thought that was to achieve its fullest culmination in New England in the philosophy of Alcott, Thoreau, and Emerson!





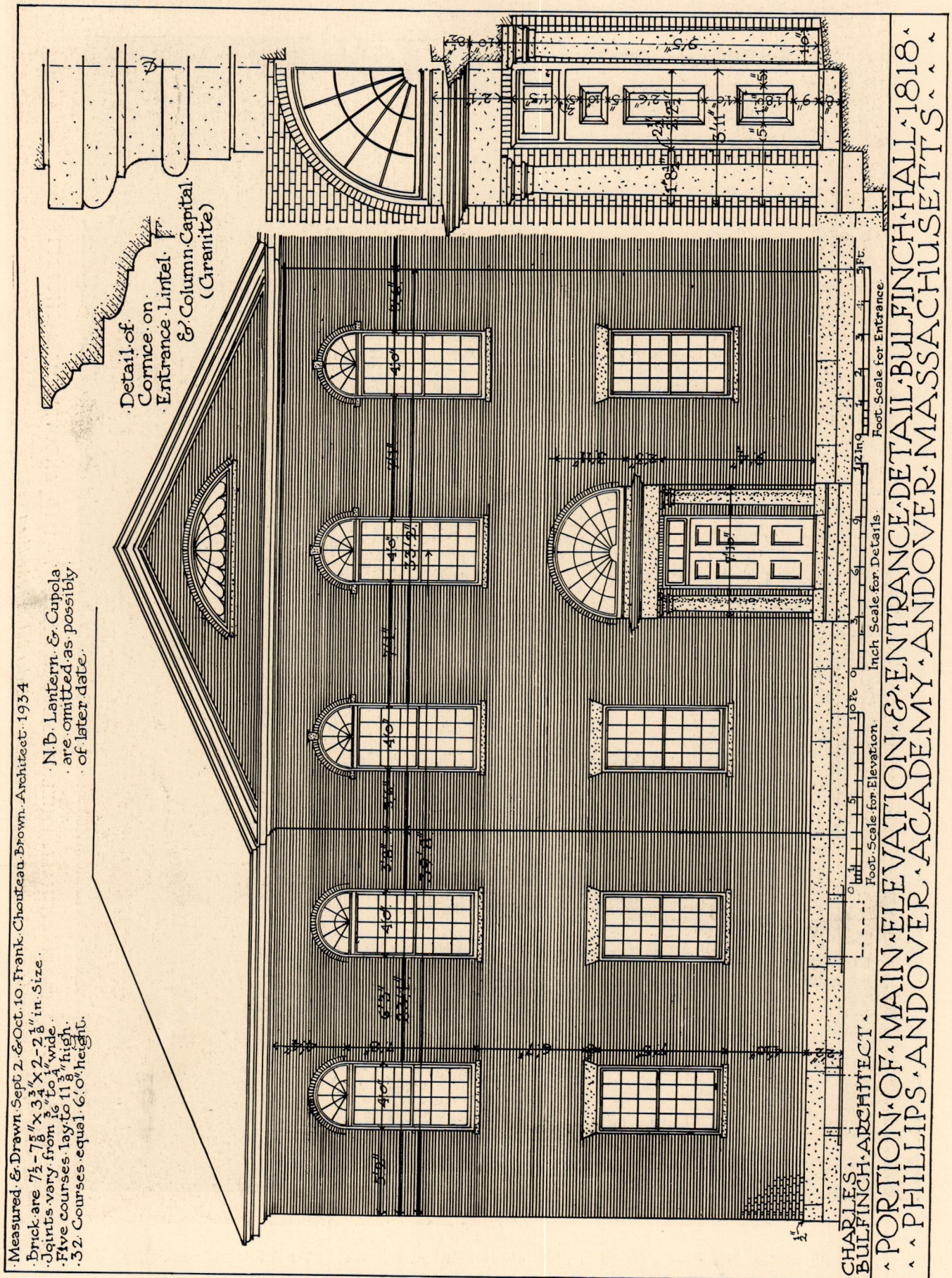


BULFINCH HALL, PHILLIPS ANDOVER ACADEMY—1818—ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

*Charles Bulfinch, Architect*

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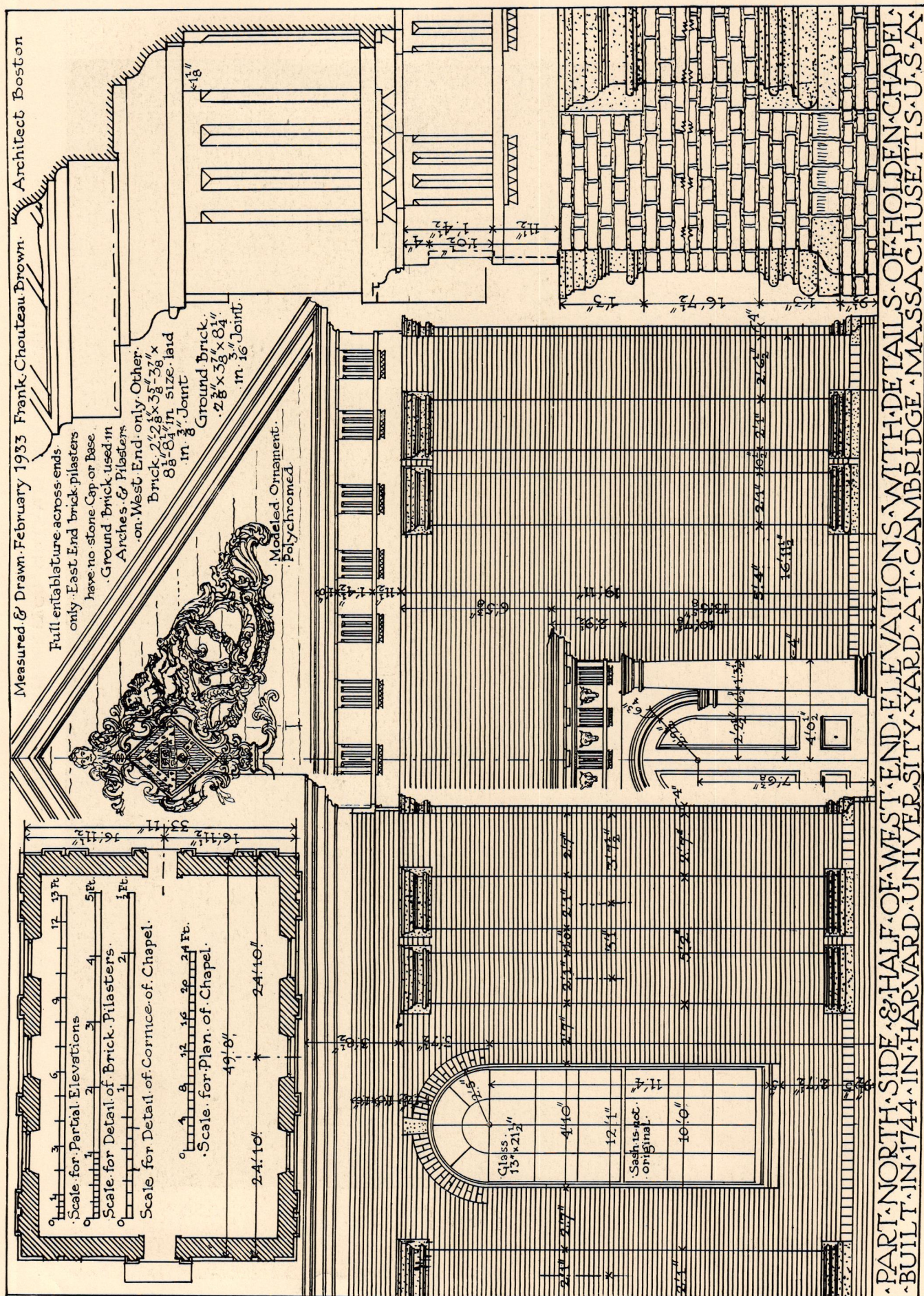




HOLDEN CHAPEL, HARVARD UNIVERSITY—1744—CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

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GROUP OF BUILDINGS—AMHERST COLLEGE, AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

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GRIFFIN HALL, WILLIAMS COLLEGE, WILLIAMSTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS

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UNIVERSITY HALL, BROWN UNIVERSITY—1773—PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

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HOPE COLLEGE, BROWN UNIVERSITY—1825—PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

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