

**TWO DISCOURSES, CONTAINING THE  
HISTORY OF THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY  
IN COHASSET, DELIVERED DECEMBER 16,  
1821; BEING THE FIRST LORD'S DAY  
AFTER THE COMPLETION OF A CENTURY**

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Two discourses, containing the history of the church and society in Cohasset, delivered December 16, 1821; being the first Lord's day after the completion of a century by Jacob Flint

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**JACOB FLINT**

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HISTORY OF THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY  
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*differs 2 or 3*  
TWO DISCOURSES,

CONTAINING THE

History of the Church and Society

IN

COHASSET,

DELIVERED DECEMBER 15, 1821; BEING THE FIRST LORD'S DAY AFTER

THE COMPLETION OF A CENTURY

FROM THE

GATHERING OF THE CHURCH IN THAT PLACE, AND THE  
ORDINATION OF THE FIRST PASTOR.

WITH

A GEOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF COHASSET.

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BY JACOB FLINT,  
MINISTER OF THAT TOWN.

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1838. Dec. 24  
Gift of  
Rev. Josiah Cogswell  
of Cohasset.

TO THOSE, BY WHOSE SUBSCRIPTION THE FOLLOWING HISTORY  
OF COHASSET IS PUBLISHED,  
AND TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY  
WHICH IT DESCRIBES,  
IT IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY  
THEIR SINCERE AND OBLIGED FRIEND,  
THE AUTHOR.

A. Kudge & Son, Printers.

## DISCOURSE I.

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JEREMIAH vi. 16.

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

Most of you, my hearers, drew your first breath, tasted your earliest pleasures, and formed the most tender and attractive associations within the limits of what is now called Cohasset. If you have that attachment to the place of your nativity which is said, by a profound statesman and scholar,\* to be felt by every virtuous mind an "attachment tender and sublime, which vibrates in every fibre, and is intermingled with every affection of the heart," you will feel a lively interest in whatever relates to this town, the birth place of your fathers and yourselves, and which has furnished the principal scenes of your labours, pleasures, and hopes.

It has been a laudable practice for serious and grateful minds to commemorate, at remarkable periods, God's goodness and mercies towards them, manifested by his everwatchful and beneficent Providence. Speaking in the name of the church and people of Israel, I will mention, said the prophet, the loving kindness of the Lord, according to all that he hath bestowed on us.

The fourth day† of the last week completed a century, since

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\* Hon. J. Q. Adams.

† December 13, 1821.

the first gathering of "a church, and the ordination of a pastor in this place." I have thought it might afford useful instruction, and gratify a laudable curiosity, to present to your contemplation a concise history of the divine Providence with your fathers and yourselves, from the first settlement of the town to the present time. You are now in the place, where you may see, and ask for the old paths, and learn where is the good way, that you may walk therein and find rest for your souls.

The town of Hingham, which, till 1770, included Cohasset, was settled by the Rev. Peter Hobart, with part of a church and congregation to which he had been pastor, in Hingham, County of Norfolk, in Great Britain. Debarred the free exercise of their civil and religious rights, they, like the pilgrims at Plymouth, fled to the wilderness in New England for the enjoyment of that freedom to which as rational beings they were entitled, and that religious liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. Their arrival was in the year 1635; and having obtained from the natives, deeds of land to form their town, on September 18 the same year they held their first meeting for civil purposes, which they called a town meeting; and their town, from the name of that they had left, they called Hingham.\*

Their pastor was respectable for his talents and christian piety. His descendants have been many, a considerable number of whom have been graduated at Harvard University; and some of them eminent preachers of the Gospel. The Hingham company preserved, generally, a good standing with the natives. And, excepting a dispute on the subject of military election and liberty of conscience, which in 1645, interrupted the harmony of the town, and made some difficulty in the province,† and a

\* See Manuscript of D. Cushing, 2d T. Clerk, Hingham.

† See Hubbard's History of New England, and papers in the Cabinet of the Historical Society.



violent contest in regard to the placing of a meeting-house, in which the interference of the general court was required; the social order of the inhabitants has been good. The constant and liberal provision, which they made for the support of public worship and schools for the young, with their general attention to the ordinances of religion, for a hundred and seventy years, furnish good evidence that the first settlers were wise and good men, that they educated their children in such principles and habits as rendered them useful and happy citizens and rational christians.

By the descendants of these men, with others of virtuous character, the town of Cohasset was first settled. The names of seven, viz. Cushing, Lincoln, Tower, Beal, James, and Sutton, found among the first Hingham company, with those of Bates, Pratt, Kent, Orcutt, Stoddard, and Nichols, from other places, were the names of those dauntless and worthy men, who first laboured to subdue the soil in this place, which was then called *Conohasset*, an Indian name, signifying a fishing promontory.

The parts of the town first improved, were those which have received the names, Rocky-nook, Jerusalem, Mill street, extending to the harbour, the Plain, and Beachwood street. They were, as well as I can learn, settled successively in the order above named. To these parts your progenitors came, the most of them with their families; and their perseverance and success evince that they possessed much christian fortitude, patience of labour, and pious trust in the good providence of God. The greater part of the soil, though of a good quality, was so much interspersed with rocks, many from their size immoveable, as to render their prospect rather dreary and forbidding. But having Hingham on their south-west, and Scituate south, adjoining them, which were now flourishing plantations, with their shores abounding with fish of the best kinds, they were not discouraged. They took their stand; and

wrought with industry and patience, devoutly looking to God for protection and a blessing on their labours. He gave them his blessing. He gave them, by his providence and his word, health, supplies, and peace of mind, and enabled them to prepare a goodly heritage for their children, unto the third and fourth generation, as it is this day.

How early some few families settled within the limits of this town, I cannot now ascertain with certainty; probably, in the year 1670; for about that time, Conohasset, from being all undivided common land of Hingham, was divided among its proprietors.\* All, however, who became residents here, till 1714, when "they obtained liberty to build a house of worship," considered themselves as belonging to the religious society of Hingham. With that town they acted in all civil and religious matters. Thither, bad and long as the roads were, they repaired to worship on the Lord's day, and there they buried their dead. But in the year last mentioned, their numbers and substance had increased to such a degree, that they felt themselves able to support a minister, and provide instruction for their children. Accordingly, in the year 1714, they petitioned the town of Hingham to remit to them their ministerial and school taxes. But their petition for this object, however just and reasonable, was twice rejected; nor could they obtain the privileges of a parish, till the next year, when for this purpose they made a successful petition to the general court.

Having a house of worship, they probably had preaching in it before they invited the candidate whom they settled as their first pastor. Mr. Nehemiah Hobart came to preach to them in July 13, 1721; and as the custom was, before the forming of a church, he "preached a fast," and continued with them, till December 13, of the same year, when the church was organized, and the pastoral charge of it, by solemn ordination, was com-

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\* See Town Records of Hingham.

mitted to him. On that occasion the services were as follows: Introductory prayer by Rev. Eben. Gay of Hingham: Sermon by Rev. Daniel Lewis of Pembroke: Charge by Rev. Nathaniel Pitcher of Scituate: Right Hand of Fellowship by Rev. Samuel Whitman of Hull.

After his ordination, the Rev. Mr. Hobart wrote, in his book of records, the following reflections: "O my soul, never dare to forget that day, and the solemn charge I received thereon, but be mindful of 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2, the preacher's text; that at the last I may be able to say as in Acts xx. 26, 27. I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

Thus, my hearers, one hundred years ago, the inhabitants of this town took the important character of a distinct christian church and society. They no longer travelled far, through rough and dreary ways, to worship. In the midst of them they had built a house for God. Their eyes beheld in it their christian priest, clothed with salvation. There was the ark of their strength, and the testimony of their faith and hope, and there we trust, they worshipped the Father, in spirit and truth.

As a new society, they were weak in numbers and wealth. According to their ability their first house of worship was small and without expensive ornaments. It was, I have been told, about 35 feet long and 25 wide, with pulpit, pews, and seats of planed boards, of simple construction. To them, however, it was probably quite as expensive as was the temple of Solomon, to those who built that magnificent edifice.

At the formation of his church, Mr. Hobart drew up a well written instrument, not as a creed, but a covenant, in which are recognized their obligations to God and Jesus Christ, and in which are made their solemn vows to live, by God's aid, in christian obedience, brotherly love, and mutual assistance. After a preamble, expressive of their belief, that they were called