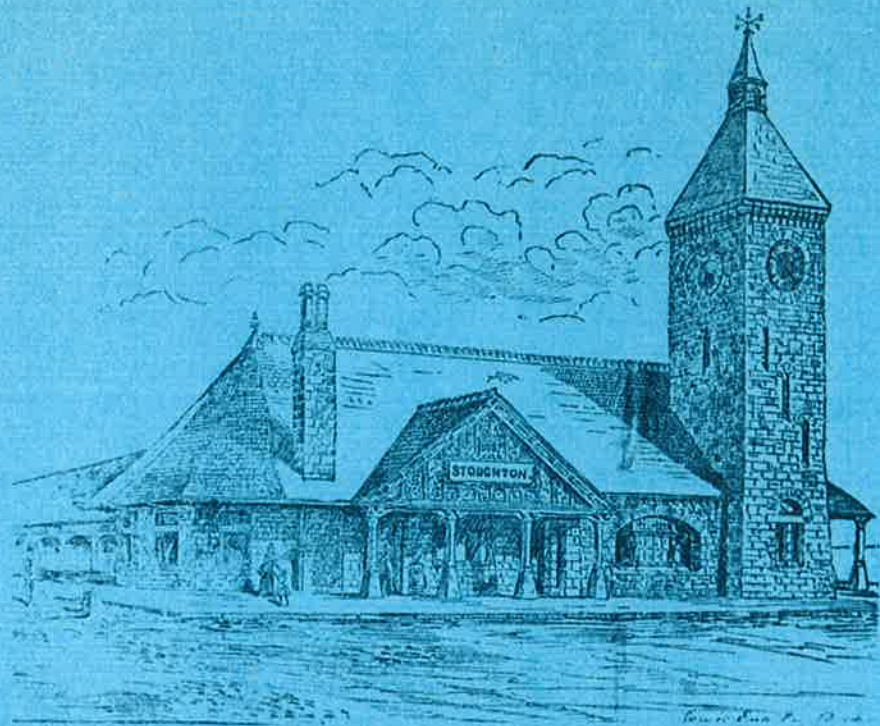
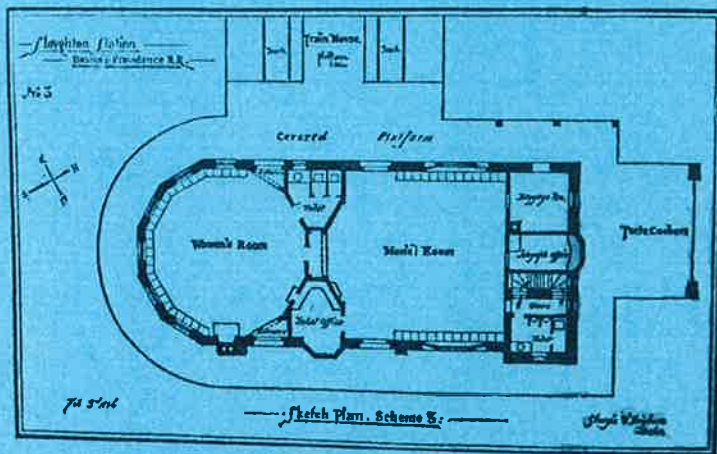


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Stoughton

GROUND PLAN OF THE HEAD HOUSE.



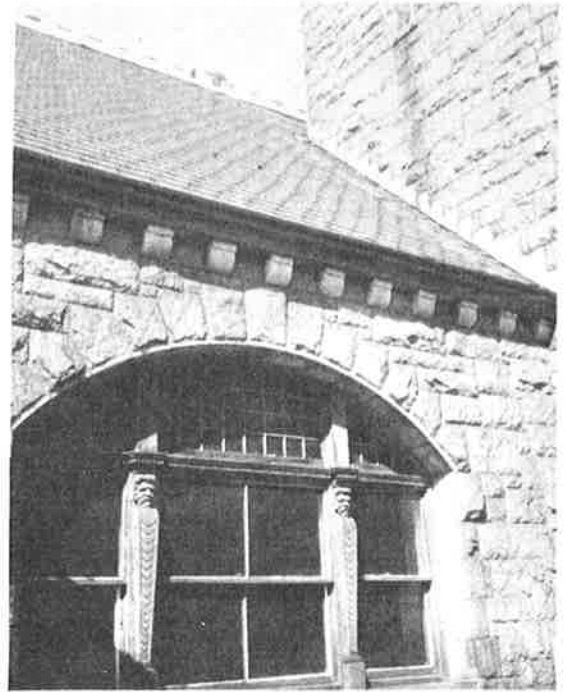
BOSTON & PROVIDENCE RAILROAD STATION
STOUGHTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Charles Brigham - 1888

Architectural Heritage, Inc.
Boston, Massachusetts
October 16, 1967
by
M.H. Floyd



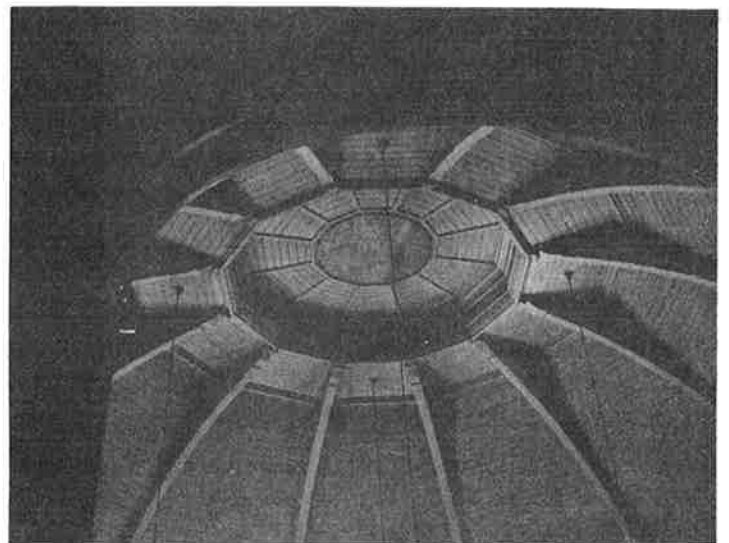
Detail: Tower & Entrance Porch



Detail: Triple Window



Interior View: Ticket Window and Arched Passway to West Room



Interior Detail: Roof Timbering
Women's Waiting Room on West End

FIGURE 1. Stoughton Railroad Station
by Charles Brigham 1888

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE STOUGHTON RAILROAD STATION

To: Miss Bertha K. Reynolds, Secretary
Stoughton Historical Society
Stoughton, Massachusetts

From: Architectural Heritage, Inc.
Boston, Massachusetts
October 16, 1967

In our opinion the Boston & Providence Railroad Station has local importance as the most significant public building in Stoughton. It is well located, essentially unaltered, in excellent condition, and is historically linked closely to the development of local industry.

The building has state-wide historic importance because of its pivotal involvement with the early extension of the railroad in southeastern Massachusetts. It is currently unique for both its distinction of design and as the only remaining example in its area of the towered terminals built in Massachusetts towns by the railroads in the late Nineteenth Century.

Additionally, as the first independent and possibly most significant public building by Charles Brigham, whose stature for his crucial role in the development of the Classical Revival of the 1890's is bound to grow, the station holds potential for national architectural significance.

We recommend that steps be taken to list the building with the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Historic American Buildings Survey and the newly established National Register. For its protection we suggest that every effort be made to establish an adaptive use for the station as soon as possible.

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LOCAL IMPORTANCE OF THE STATION TO STOUGHTON

Historically important as a thoroughfare, Stoughton is located on the high watershed which forms the only convenient route of travel south from Boston, avoiding swamps and low ground. From this area rivers are deflected toward Massachusetts Bay to the east and Narragansett Bay to the west. The Bay Road, which now forms the boundary between Stoughton and Sharon, has been used for centuries by Indians and others travelling south toward Rhode Island, while the Boston-Taunton Turnpike to the east ran down to New Bedford and Fall River as early as 1806. (Figures 1 & 2.)

In 1726, with pressure of immigration from Dorchester south to the Plymouth Colony, Stoughtonham became one of the New Grants and was named after William Stoughton, first Lt. Governor under the Charter of William and Mary. During the course of the 18th and early 19th Centuries portions of Dedham, Foxborough, Brockton, Norton, Wrentham, and Sharon were separated from Stoughton. Finally in 1888 when Avon separated to the north, the present boundaries were established.

The topographical aspect of Stoughton lent itself easily to the use of skilled labor for manufacture on the many small streams. A steady increase in the population took place in the Nineteenth Century moving from 1,020 in 1800 to 7,724 by 1908[#] although the land area decreased markedly. The greatest single population increase was just after 1900. The advent of early thread mills, followed by "Boot & Shoe" and other manufacture increased steadily along with the excellent railroad service to carry raw materials and the finished products both north to Boston and south to Providence.

The present railroad station, constructed of native granite from Myron Gilbert's quarry, was built on Wyman Street by the Boston and Providence in 1888, while a roundhouse and turntable were built on the site of the original wooden station on Railroad Avenue. Although the roundhouse is now gone, the station stands today with its 62' tower, centrally located on a large open area and is unquestionably the most significant public building in Stoughton.

Eight additional buildings qualify as noteworthy or excellent and more may be listed when an inventory of Stoughton is complete. However, no one of these individually associates with as many historic themes, local, state-wide, or national, as the railroad station. None qualifies for greater architectural distinction.

[#]NOTE: This population figure was issued in 1908 for the Souvenir Program for Old Home Week. It differs slightly from the other official figures.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STOUGHTON STATION TO MASSACHUSETTS

In 1825 the "Granite Railway," first in the nation, was constructed at Quincy, Massachusetts. The years following saw the establishment of a series of small independent railroads which gradually consolidated as the century progressed. As a terminal, Stoughton played a pivotal role in the development of early railroads in southeastern Massachusetts.

The Boston & Providence Railroad was formed and service organized in the summer of 1831. The branch from Readville to Dedham opened in 1835 while the main line, opened to Readville in 1834, was through to Canton Junction in August of 1835. The Boston & Worcester was the earliest through line (1841), while the Boston & Maine boasted the longest line by 1842.

On March 16, 1844 the Stoughton Branch Railway was organized and opened on April 7, 1845 amid much fanfare. The line was mortgaged to the Boston & Providence Railroad Corporation in 1845 and operated from Canton Junction on the main line to Stoughton for ten years. Baldwin No. 1 & 2 provided commuter service regularly to the Stoughton Terminal. In 1855 the line was extended 3.8 miles to North Easton but this section was operated for only eleven years until 1866 when it transferred to the Old Colony Line and Stoughton was again the terminal for the Boston & Providence.

Parallel extension had been taking place to the east, for the rival Old Colony Line opened Boston to Plymouth via Quincy and Abington in 1845. The Dighton and Somerset Railroad, extending up from the south, was finally authorized to merge with the Old Colony in September 1866. It was operating from Mayflower Park (Braintree Highlands) through North and South Stoughtons and from North Easton to Somerset Junction, a total of 32.8 miles. It was at this time that the Old Colony took over the North Easton extension leaving Stoughton again the terminal of the Boston & Providence Line.

Tremendous commercial prosperity in the 1880's brought increasing demand for replacement of the Stoughton station on Railroad Avenue. Not only was the station old, but the Old Colony had built a modern stone station in nearby North Easton, engaging the reknowned architect H.H. Richardson through the influence of the Ames family.

An initial plan to combine the station and town offices failed when the station burned. Eventually, after several years of negotiation, H.A. Whitney, President of the Boston and Providence Corporation, obtained land on Wyman Street. The land on Railroad Avenue was used for a turntable and roundhouse while the new station was to be the finest in the region, complete with a tower. To this end Mr. Whitney commissioned Charles Brigham, architect of his own mansion on Marlboro Street in Boston to create the design.

The roundhouse is gone but the station, with tower, is today still used for daily commuting (except Sundays) by the New Haven Railroad. Freight service is considerable but the future use of the station by the railroad is most uncertain.

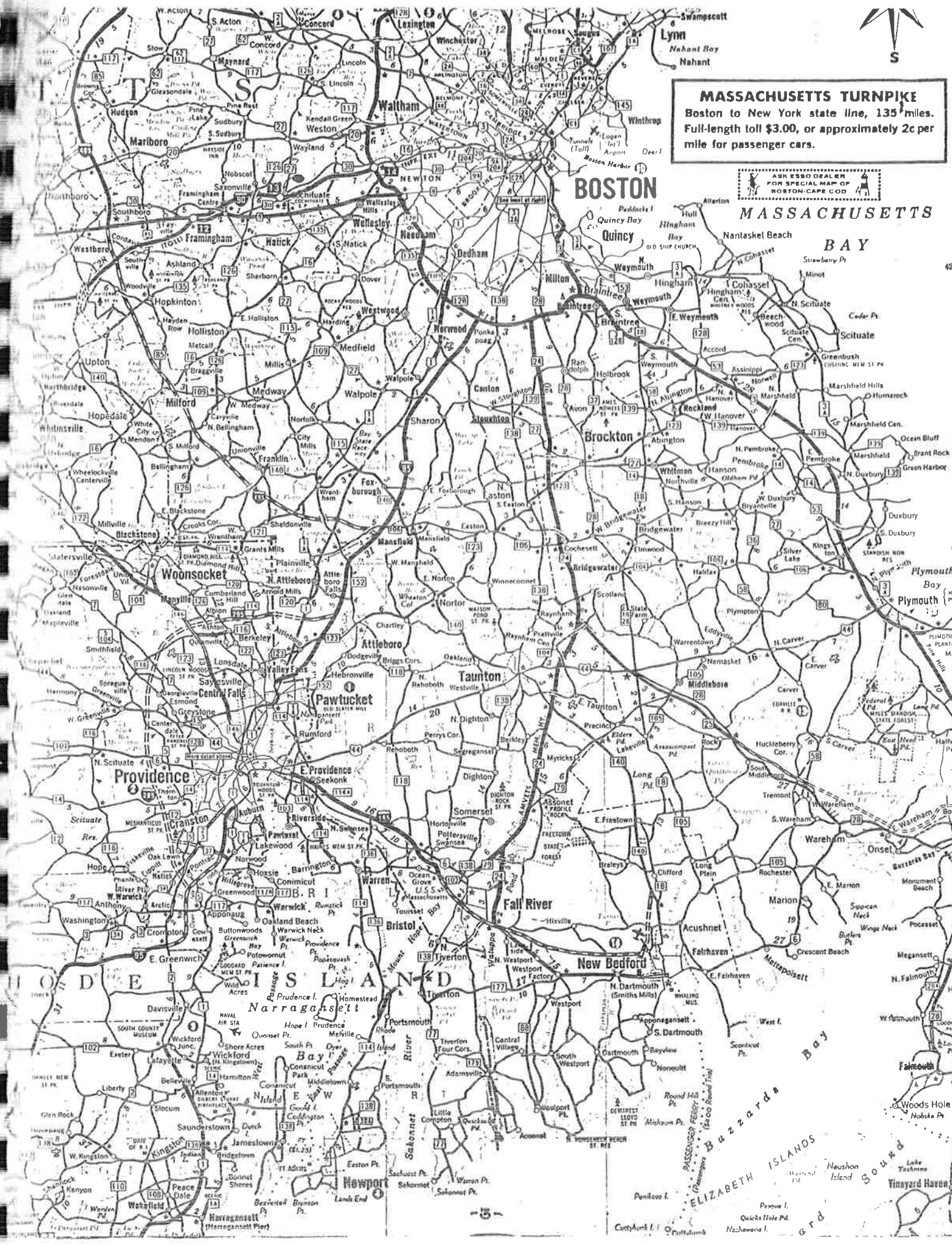


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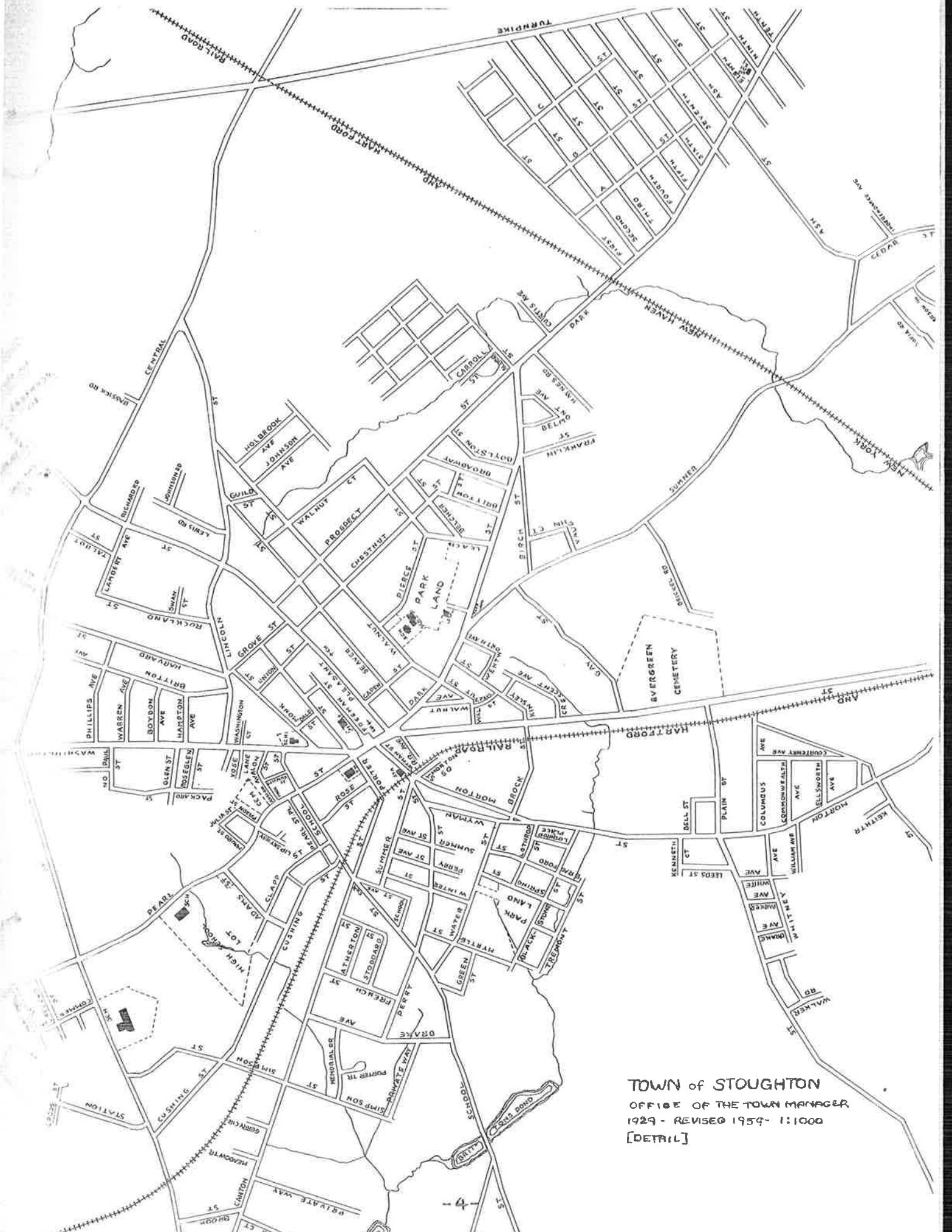
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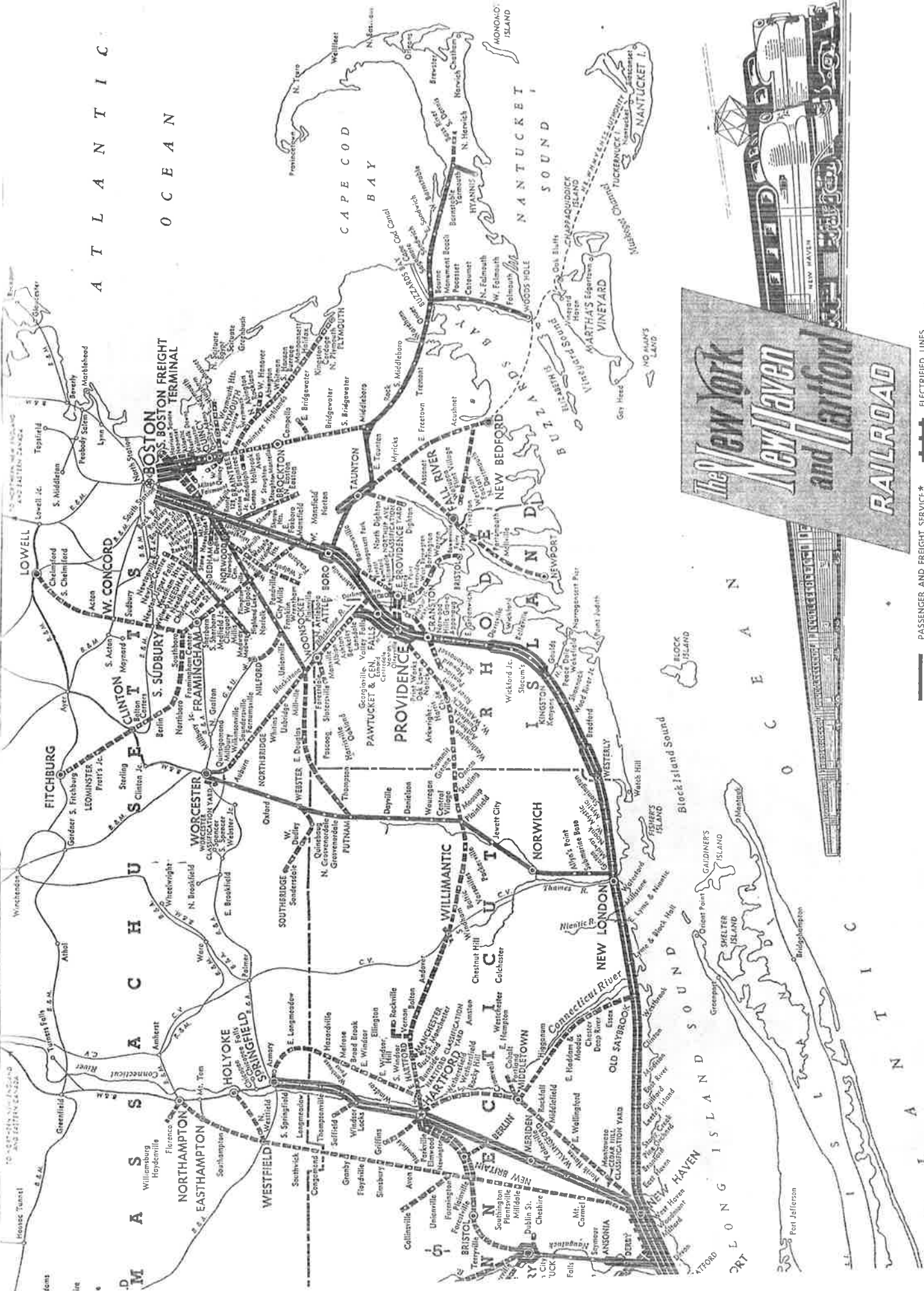
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TOWN of STOUGHTON
OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER
1929 - REVISED 1959- 1:1000
[DETAIL]

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