Union Square Revisited

INTRODUCTION

The amount of information which the Federal government requires when applying for a Historic District designation is extensive. Rather than filing away the interesting maps, photographs, interviews, and architectural history, we have made them available to you in this pamphlet. The pamphlet contains basic historical information about the Union Square area, a catalogue of the major styles of architecture, a walking tour of forty buildings in the square area (including those nominated for the historic District), and a few notes for residents and owners regarding maintenance and renovation of older buildings.

Since 1975-76 is the year of the bicentennial celebration, it seems appropriate for Somerville to commemorate the year with a publication, which celebrates a significant element of local history. Also, the completion of the new traffic pattern and pedestrian improvements in Union Square this fall demonstrates a new interest in the area, which can be amplified with the historic perspective.

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UNION SQUARE REVISITED

A Walking tour of, with a Brief history and Guide to the Architectural Styles

Written and Illustrated by Lisette Elis
Aron Fagere
Margo Jones
Drawings by Julian Smith

Under the auspices of the Somerville Historical Commission and the Office of Mayor S. Lester Ralph. 1975.

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HISTORY

Somerville, until 1842, was part of Charlestown, and was called "Charlestown without the Neck" or "Charlestown Beyond the Neck". At the time of the first settlement, the tide ebbed and flowed in the local rivers all the way from the bay to what is now Washington Street, one of the oldest thoroughfares in the area. "Skirting marshes and river", it followed an old Indian Trail from Charlestown to Watertown. The first local settler, an Indian Trader named John Woolrich, came to the area in the early 1600's; by 630 the early the early Indian path had become a thoroughfare, the "Highway to Newtowne", leading from Charlestown Neck to Cambridge or "Newtowne". By the mid-1600's, a throughway to Arlington called "Charlestown Lane" was defined. This old road today is known as Somerville Avenue, Bow Street, Elm Street and College Avenue.

For the first 100 years of it's settlement, the early citizens of this area were gradually developing enough commerce to sustain them. Major activities by the mid-18th century included cattle raising, farming, brick making, quarrying, and oystering. The "Highway to Newtowne" and "Charlestown Lane" continued to support most traffic in the region and subsequently provided the routes that allowed the area, later named Union Square, to play a role of national significance in the early stages of the American Revolution.

In 1775, "Charlestown Beyond the Neck" was the land first traveled by the British on their way to Lexington and Concord. The 800 British troops arrived near Prospect Street from their boat across the Charles. From there they proceeded along the "Highway to Newtowne", and onward to Lexington. The British later retreated through Union Square, and several small skirmishes with the colonists occurred in the area, known today as the "Skirmish of Milk Row".

The local post-Revolutionary commerce became increasingly sophisticated, and served as an impetus for an independence movement which resulted in Somerville's being named and incorporated as a town in 1842. In addition to brick-making and quarrying, several other industries were developed in the early 19th century, including dairyng, bleacheries, dye and rope works, potteries, grist mills, distilleries, glass factories, saw mills, and eventually, slaughtering.

Originally, Bow Street took its bowed form by skirting marshland to its south. Later, between 1821 and 1830, Milk Row (now Somerville Avenue) was continued straight to Union Square, replacing Bow Street as the main thoroughfare. The name comes from that time, when bow Street was first bypassed and left as a protected pocket for the buildings, which came in the 19th century. Subsequently, the form of the curving street has allowed its succession of buildings to develop a spatial integrity and visual rhythm with few modern intrusions.

The largest burst of population and housing growth in Union Square and Somerville occurred after 1850 when many immigrants came to Boston, and the expansion of the horse drawn streetcar transformed Somerville from a farming community to a working suburb.

The Boston metropolitan region experienced tremendous growth in the second half of the 19th century. In 1850, Boston had 200,000 inhabitants living within a three-mile radius; by 1900 there were over 1,000,000 people and the city encompassed a region with a ten-mile radius. Most of the metropolitan growth occurred in the citied and towns which

bordered on Boston proper. Two years before it was incorporated in 1872, Somerville was a town of 14,700. By 1900, it had expanded by almost 500% to a population of 69,000.

Union square remained the main commercial and municipal center of Somerville. A primary reason for the importance of the Square was the growth of the street railway. The first horse drawn streetcar in the Boston area was established in 1852 between Union Square and Harvard Square. Providing a quick and inexpensive means of commuting to work, streetcars proliferated throughout the Boston area after the Civil War. In 1899 the first electric trolley was installed on Beacon Street in Boston. A transportation map of 1892 shows railway lines operating on Somerville Avenue, Washington Street, and summer Street. According to one source, West end trolley cars stopped in Union Square 88 times a day in Union Square.

Street railway transportation opened up a much wider territory for housing. Now working people could live up to six miles away and still commute to work within an hour. During this time Boston changed from a compact seaport to an industrialized center. Consequently, the downtown became a less desirable place to live and those who could afford the move relocated to the quieter outlying regions.

It was during this period that Somerville's dairy farms, stone quaries and brickyards were changed into residential neighborhoods and Somerville became known as the "City of Homes". According to the 1940 housing census, 76.4% of all dwelling units in Somerville were built between 1880 and 1920, and 50% of Somerville's houses were constructed between 1890 and 1900. This rapid real estate development caused Somerville to become one of the most densely settled cities in the country.

An example of the new industrialization which dominated Boston and Somerville economy is North Packaging and Provision Company. This company, referred to as the largest packaging company of East Chicago, covered twelve acres at the intersection of Somerville Avenue and Medford Street. At its peak it employed 1,000 men and had a capacity of butchering 5,000 hogs per day. Established in 1855, it was incorporated in 1890 with G.F. Swift as president. Other smaller industries close to Union Square were a barrel maker, S. Armstrong & Co., employing 80 men, and I.H. Brown & Co. at 289 Washington Street, a mill working operation that had mechanized drying equipment.

With the advent of corporate economic development came a new class of whit collar workers. Union Square was a prime location for business and professional offices. Bow Street became known as "Doctors' Row" as several doctors and dentists established residences with offices there. The major banks and local newspaper located nearby, and the upper floors of the Union Square block building were occupied by real estate, insurance and other office workers.

Later, during the Depression of the thirties, business lagged and many buildings were significantly altered to adapt to the slackening pace. For the past thirty-five years, the automobile has had an increasingly adverse effect on the Square's economy; shopping centers with drive in parking have encroached on the commercial livelihood of the Square. Although some offices remain, the number of professional practices has decreased. Elderly housing has been constructed near the Square, and many community organizations are finding uses for the buildings, which have outgrown their original purposes. The State Department of Transportation is constructing a new traffic pattern in 1975 in an attempt to adapt a 19th century urban environment to its 20th century needs.

This and other actions need to be taken to revitalize a historically and architecturally significant resource.

THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

At the time of this printing, seventeen buildings on Bow Street have been nominated by the Massachusetts State and the city of Somerville Historical Commissions to be designated by the National Register of Historic District. This group of buildings was selected because its valuable architecture represents the period of Somerville's largest growth, the late nineteenth century.

The National Register of Historic Places records those properties worthy of preservation for their historic value, as legislated by Congress in the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and Historic Preservation Act of 1966. It is published biennially with pertinent information about each entry, with a growing list of over 1,000 entries.

In addition to this recognition, the Register projects area from Federally funded or licensed projects, which might have an adverse effect on the property, or might jeopardize the significance of or character of the area. Indirectly, these National Register properties are also afforded similar protection from state funded projects. (When no Federal funds or licenses are involved, there is no control over an owner's use or treatment of any National Register property.)

A National Register listing makes a property owner eligible to apply for grants-in-aid assistance from the National Park Service for allocated and administered on the local level by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

It is hoped that the present physical character of the Bow Street area will continue to be maintained and enhanced. We have included a special section and bibliography at the end of this pamphlet, which offer some pointers to owners and residents who wish to improve their properties. Any questions regarding the Historic designation can be addressed to the Somerville Historical Commission at City Hall.

The late phase of Georgian architecture is known as the FEDERAL or Adam, style, which emerged in part from the work of Charles Bullfinch in Boston, from 1790 to 1820. Proportion and clarity in both the massing and the façade have priority over extensive ornamentation. The simple geometric forms and uncluttered wall surfaces are important elements. The cornice is crisp, and seldom across the façade on he gable end symmetrical, with longer windows on the ground level, and an entry with sidelights and fanlights. Elements of the Federal style came into vernacular use in the early nineteenth century, and such buildings were generally characterized by delicate trim and flat façade.

In the second quarter of the 19th century, The GREEK REVIVAL style became almost a national style of architecture. It began as an adaptation of the Greek temple form to a functional 19th century dwelling. Houses were usually sided with clapboards with gable roofs open to the front or side, and either center, or (more commonly) side hall entries. The style is most easily identified by protruding molding on the gable and cornice lines, which forms a large triangular pediment. Heavy window frames and corner pilasters are usually present on the façade, and there is often an entrance porch carried by Doric columns. Such buildings were invariably painted white. In vernacular building, any and all of these details were used in an endless variety of single and double houses.

The GOTHIC REVIVAL came to Massachusetts in the 1830's, copied from English and Continental prototypes. The early Gothic Revival is characterized by a steep, pointed gable roof and pointed or lancet window arches. Any surface ornamentation (window tracery, moldings, etc.) appears thin and fragile. The commercial and institutional Gothic Revival buildings of the 1870's are often larger than early examples of the style, and often combine multi-colored stone trims with patterned brick walls in a variety of color and texture. The steep gable and pointed arches remain, although these elements in later buildings tend to be exaggerated in a building of great perpendicular thrust.

The ITALIANATE or BRACKETED style began in imitation of Italian country villas. The silhouette of this building style is heavy and irregular. Windows, especially at the attic level, can be half-rounded. Bay windows, balustraded balconies and verandas are all common Italianate features. The wooden bracket was one of the popular successes of the Italianate style, a detail made possible on a large scale by invention of special saws and lathes in the mid-19th century. The brackets many varieties, low cost, high visibility, and adaptability resulted in its wide use between 1850 and 1900, and it can be spotted today on countless vernacular buildings of all types.

The MANSARD or Second Empire style has its roots in an academic movement in France, which advocated monumental scale and heavy ornamentation, including a high, slate-covered, double-pitched roof. A mid-19th century designer, Henry Greenough, introduced a version of the style to Cambridge, which emphasized a tall, richly modeled façade. The original French style became Americanized with the use of porches, verandas, and asymmetrical facades. It was popular in this country in the 1850's due to its European fashion ability and the practical effect that the top story space became usable without raising the cornice line. Eventually, the "French roof" became and ornamental feature of the house construction like brackets, bay windows and porches.

Queen Anne refers to a general style of building, which became popular after 1870. The style is marked by bold experimentation in floor plan and exterior features, which contrasts with the formal academicism of revival styles. Irregular plan and massing characterize a style, which grows from an additive building process, the result of an understanding of, and respect for the inherent nature of materials. Roofs are high and multiple; bay windows are often used, and frequently there are many gables and chimneys. If there is any classical trim, it tends to be small in scale.

The STICK STYLE is one of the few uniquely American architectural styles of the 19th century. The variety of massing, texture and color which began with the Queen Anne style is accented with extensive exterior "stickwork" which symbolizes, an unseen structural frame. The eaves project and are often supported by large brackets and knee braces.

The SHINGLE STYLE is another of the asymmetrical of the Queen Anne group. Shingles are used instead of the usual clapboards to emphasize round and continuous form. Often decorated singles are used on an upper floor.

The Georgian movement was an English version of the architecture of Italian Renaissance. It was the predominant style in America from the 1730's to the 1820's, and since its revival in the 1880's it has been in many respects in dominant architectural style in America. Georgian structures built after the mid-19th century are said to be in the COLONIAL REVIVAL style, the influence of which can be seen in many Somerville houses. The roof is low in pitch, and he façade symmetrical with large, double-hung windows and a restrained cornice, which often has a row of small, closely- spaced blocks called dentils. Later versions of the Georgian Revival use its details in isolation on buildings designed by carpenters and small builders, rather than imitating the pure rectangular European design.

The ROMANESQUE REVIVAL began in the 1840's and was later popularized by H.H. Richardson; the architect of Trinity Church is in Boston. The characteristics of Romanesque are round arches, semicircular forms, and often-different colors of masonry. Richardsonian Romanesque is distinguished by its rough-cut stone masonry, which forms the ground level, arches, lintels, and transoms. The upper exterior walls are made of a different masonry material than the structural features, reinforcing the sense of weight and massiveness. Square towers are topped with pyramidal roofs; windows are arched or straight-topped and divided into rectangular sections by stone mullions and transoms.

Another means of distinguishing residential architecture is by BUILDING TYPE. In the first part of the 19th century, residential development usually took the form of the single house, or single houses put together into double or row houses. Unit divisions were vertical, enabling residents to own the land upon which the house was situated. By the end of the 19th century, most multi-family housing was achieved by horizontal division, which meant that only one party could own the land. The two-family house is very common in Somerville. Making a flat roof enabled the addition of a third apartment to

the top level, a building type known as the triple-decker. Much larger versions of this style developed into tenement or apartment blocks.

GLOSSARY

Arch: a lancet with a sharp point; segmental- slightly rounded; stilted- with a very high center.
Board and batten: a facing of boards with a narrow strip (or batten) covering the vertical joints between the boards.
Buttress: a pier which helps supports a wall.
Corbel: masonry or wood built in consecutive rows to extend beyond the wall surface.
Dormer: a small gable in a larger roof, often with window(s).
Eave: the portion of a roof that extends beyond the exterior wall.
Eli: an addition built at a right angle to the length of a building.
Entablature: a detail composed of three horizontal parts, originally parts above classical columns.
Gable: the end of a building where the outside wall meets the edge of a sloping roof
Lintel: a short horizontal beam, often seen at the tops of doors or windows.
Mullion: the vertical dividing member between multiple windows or doors.
Pediment: a triangular form made within the angle of a roof gable.
Pilaster: a low relief pier, which is joined to a wall and often, has the proportions and detail of a classical column.
Sill: the horizontal member at the bottom of a door or window.
Tracery: curving mullions
Transom: the opening above a door or window.
Vernacular: local, characteristic of the area.
Cornice: a projecting horizontal place at the top of a wall.

All of the above definitions, although paraphrased, are borrowed substantially from Henry H. Saylor's Dictionary of Architecture, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1852

Care has been taken to insure that the information included is both accurate and concise. The Historical Commission would appreciate additional relevant material, such as old pictures of Somerville scenes, as well as notifications of any inaccurate oversights.

The best way to learn about architecture and local history is to observe it directly on foot. Once the clues of the city's history and building styles are given, a whole story unfolds. Doorways, roofs, and chimneys become signs of a former life of a region. Union Square, as a vital part of Somerville, has a story, which covers a long period.

We have organized a walking tour through the major streets of Union Square. The tour starts at the corner of Washington and Lake Streets, travel down Washington Street, through Union Square, down Bow Street, and ends at the connection of Bow Street and Somerville Avenue. Photographs have been kept to a minimum because they are meant simply to be used for identifying the proper building. We have included many historical illustrations in order to reveal the history hidden within the present context.

We hope that the descriptions of the various architectural styles will enable interested persons to conduct their own tours of other streets of Somerville.

UNION SQUARE WALKING TOUR

2. **#273 Washington Street**; c. 1865.
This is a simple mansard house, probably built before the more elaborate yellow one at #265 Washington Street. Now a two-family clapboard cottage, the original mass has been altered by porches on the front and additions to the rear.

3. **#269 Washington Street**; c. 1960.
This early simple bracketed house is probably the oldest on the block, and is in close to its original condition. The simple, spare, flat and symmetrical façade is accented only by brackets on the gable and porch roof.

4. **#265 Washington Street**; c. 1865-70.
The Flaherty residence is a more elaborate and sculptural example of the Second Empire style house found next door at the Funeral Home; both have a concave mansard roof and a bracketed cornice. The Colonial Revival entry with sidelights and fanlights was added much later, as were the side chimney and porch, with its rounded encased columns.

5. **#261 Washington Street**; c. 1870
The present Flaherty Funeral Home is a side- hall bay window mansard house with clapboard siding, slate shingles and Colonial Revival trim. The entrance, brick facing and wing on the left are more recent additions, which alter the original massing of the house.

6. **Parochial School**; c. 1890.
This three-story brick institutional building has a simple rectangular form pediment above the cornice line and brick pilasters that help support the tall structure. Generous windows with brownstone lintels are placed symmetrically.

7. **#2 Washington Street,** Rectory; c. 1870.

This high Victorian mansard-roofed house was built about the same time as St. Joseph's Church. A large house for its time, it is a good example of the later developments of the mansard style (after 1870): the silhouette of the house has changed to include bays, towers, and turrets, which break through the continuous cornice line and front plane of the façade.

8. **St. Joseph's Catholic Church**, Washington Street and Union Square; 1871-74.
Murphy, architect
St. Joseph's, the first Catholic Church in Somerville, is an excellent example of the high gothic style. The building that follows the traditional cathedral form with a high central nave, smaller, illuminated side aisles, and a tall, narrow steeple. The building is composed of granite, brick and wood painted white. The fine foundation and slate roof are well preserved evidence of the productivity of local quarries. Multiple lancet stained-glass windows and a large rose wheel window are typical of the style.

9. **#15 Union Square**; c. 1845.
This is apparently the first residence in Union Square, and the birthplace of the founder of Flaherty Funeral Home, Francis E. Flaherty, Sr.. A very early end gable Greek Revival style house, #15 Union Square still has its original brick foundation and rectangular shape, although the façade has been altered significantly over the years. The clapboard siding, corner pilasters and broken cornice line are all original details.

10. **Union Square Fire Station**; 1903-04.
Walter T. Littlefield, architect.
The form of this fire station, with its square bell tower, is derived from Italian Renaissance villas. Some details, such as the granite keystones, are reminiscent of Roman monuments. Many fire stations of this period are in same style. Although not unique architecturally, this building serves as a visual focal point in the eastern end of the Square. Of note is the special brick wall pattern, a "Flemish" bond with both light and dark colored bricks.

11. **Police Station**, #66-70 Union Square; 1932.
Greek columns, alternating concrete blocks at the corners, and the symmetry of the façade all indicate the Neo-classical Revival style, which many designers of municipal and bank buildings favored in the thirties.

12. **Stone Building** (or Barristers Hall) #57-61 Union Square; 1891.
Built as the main office in Somerville Savings Bank by its treasurer, Jonathon Stone, this building is brick with granite lintels and foundation, and a steel interior structure. By the late 19th century, commercial blocks were built with detailed surface decoration on the first floor, leaving the upper stories relatively plain. Recent renovations have obscured its true age and original façade.

13. **Union Square Hotel**, #45-50 Union Square; c. 1870's.
This brick, bearing wall building is similar too much of the early 19th century commercial architecture in Boston. Though it is one of the oldest buildings in

Union Square, it survives with changes only at the ground level. Granite lintels, a gently sloping slate roof, and star shaped tie bolts detail the simple and handsome façade.

14. **#21-29 Union Square**; c. 1935.
A three-story wooden commercial block building with a delightful mixture of Italianate, Mansard, and Gothic styles once occupied this important position in the Square, until it burned down in the thirties. At that time the existing one-story concrete commercial building with Egyptian Revival surface treatment was erected, reflecting the more limited resources of the Depression era.

15. **Eberle Building**, #31-34 Union Square; c. 1884.
Constructed soon after the Hill building across the street, this brick building was financed by Philip Eberle, a shoe merchant. The building is a modest Queen Anne style commercial block whose large regular openings present an unusually light façade. An interesting brick pattern is found at the cornice line, and the wooden window trim is carved in the same pattern as the brownstone lintels on the Hill building. The third floor has a hall, which was originally used for community social gatherings, holding up to 800 people. The mansard style wooden house on the right was Eberle's original residence.

16. **St. Thomas Episcopal Church**, #300 Somerville Avenue; 1870, addition 1907-13.
A fine example of modest wooden Greek Revival, this church originally had board and batten siding and a steeple on the right side. The entrance to a private day-care has significantly altered its street appearance, but the interior nave with its exposed wooden trusses and Gothic, diamond pattern windows remains intact.

17. **Hill Building**, #38 Union Square; 1874.
A brick Queen Anne commercial block built by Ira Hill, a local builder and real estate developer. Originally boasting paneled brick chimneys and cornice details, and a mansard roof, the top two floors were removed in 1935 either to reduce heating bills and real estate taxes, or to avoid the threat of fire. Alternating brownstone and limestone blocks over the windows, and carved floral patterns on lintels, give some idea of the detailing the building once had, indicating a builder who once had a great deal of pride in his work.

18. **Somerville National Bank**, #15 Bow Street; c. 1915.
Another Neo-Classical Revival building of the early 20th century, this was built as a symbol of financial security by the Somerville National Bank. The original roof pediment on the front is still visible, although the lower portion of the façade has been "modernized" to include more windows.

19. **Prospect Hill Congregational Church**; 1887.
This large church was founded by H.P. Hood, whose original dairy was situated in Somerville, and john North, owner of the North Packing and Provision Company, which later became Swifts. The church has characteristic features of H.H. Richardson's Romanesque style: rounded arches and semi-circular forms, a square tower, and contrasting kinds of masonry. The larger masses of the building are described by rough-

cut (or "rusticated") granite, especially at the ground level. The stone arches, lintels, sills and transoms are also rusticated. The stained glass leaded windows are deeply set. Interesting formal relationships are developed with materials, such as the rusticated granite turrets which run up the square bell tower and appear as undulations in the tower's pyramidal roof. The central nave, situated on the second floor, has a mahogany trussed ceiling and a circular arrangement of bays. The architect McKay designed a number of other buildings in Boston outlying towns, including the Romanesque Immanuel Baptist Church in Cambridge.

20. **#18 Sanborn Avenue**; c. 1890.
In the 1880's the "flat" became a fashionable suburban housing form, often with the apartments arranged in three horizontal layers in what is known as a three-decker. This particular double three-decker was built in an elaborate Renaissance style because of its proximity to the Square. The expansive round bays and fine box windows on Walnut Street side are embellishments on a building type, which was used extensively throughout Somerville. The triple-decker became a standard housing form which was largely responsible for the high residential density if the city.

21. **Union Square Baptist Church**; 1895-96.
W. Hayes, architect; John A. Dodge, builder.
A Minneapolis architect designed this extraordinary church, which has elements of both the shingle and Romanesque styles. A square corner tower dominates the composition of circular forms. A lower cylindrical tower joins this square tower to the main hall, with its large, semi-circular stained glass windows. The use of brick for the lower story clapboards for the first floor, and shingles for the top level is characteristic of the Queen Anne style. (These details are obscured by new siding.)

22. **#8-10 Walnut Street**, formerly Somerville Journal Building; 1894.
Five large arched upper windows and two floor-to-ceiling display windows distinguish this two-story brick commercial building, originally built as the office and publishing house of the Somerville Journal. The building was designed to accommodate new printing equipment, especially the new linotype machine. Now used for artists' studios, the building has been occupied by a number of different commercial and civic operations over the years.

23. **#33-37 Bow Street**, "The Richmond"; 1892.
The use of pilasters, entablatures, arched openings, pediments and bold cornices suggests a Renaissance Revival influence in this four story store and tenement block, known as the Druit Block (after its builder, who also constructed the hotel at #58-68 Bow Street.) A tower with a concave hexagonal roof is placed at the corner, and each façade has several bay windows. Previous mixed-use row house buildings were divided into distinctly separate vertical units, with a single unit living above each shop. This particular tenement, however, with the flats in horizontal layers, a design which evolved to the type of apartment we know today.

24. **#26 Bow Street**; c. 1974-84.

This combined residence and doctor's office, one of six remaining form the 19th century "Doctors' Row", is an example of Stick Style architecture. Infill between the sticks is primarily beaded clapboards, with board and batten under the eaves. The front entrance has a transom supported by posts and finely detailed knee braces. Wide eaves are supported by brackets. The roof includes three gables and six dormers with scrollwork and vertical board and batten, and two corbelled and paneled chimneys. Interior or mahogany paneling, tile fireplaces and stained glass windows are all in original condition. The craftsmanship throughout is excellent.

25. **#30 Bow Street**; before 1874.
A Colonial Revival entry and a left window have been added to this vernacular end gable house; these additions reinforce the balance and proportion of the original structure.

26. **#34 Bow Street**; before 1874.
Originally a simple side hall cottage of the 1850's, this house has been altered several times by the addition of a cross gable, an ell, and an angled projecting wing. The entire building has been a fine shingle surface and Colonial Revival detail, and is an excellent example of a house, which has been remodeled with great sensitivity by several vernacular builders.

27. **#36 Bow Street**; before 1874.
Another of the "Doctors' Row" end gable cottages, this building's asymmetries seem the result of additions over time and cannot be attributed to a specific architectural style.

28. **#38-40 Bow Street**
Market Building; before 1928. This is a single story; six bay brick commercial building was formerly a fish market.

30. **#42 Bow Street**; before 1874.
This simple three-story bracketed mansard house is distinguished by a full height tower on the left which until recently had a pointed conical roof. This is a side-hall mansard, formerly sided with shingles.

31. **#46 Bow Street**, before 1874.
This building has an amusing, eclectic assemblage of the late 19th century architectural details. This basic plan is of an end gable bracketed cottage, now obscured by the addition of a rounded bay window on the first floor left side, gabled dormers, and a large square bay on the right which leans heavily over the entrance and is supported by posts and braces. A circular-rose shaped stained glass window peers from the bay. The roof of this bay resembles a pyramid, and is built in these distinct sections. The left, rounded bay is built of Federal pilasters, narrow windows, and an entablature. Above it sits a porch with a domed roof, surrounded and supported by finely turned woodwork. There are several stained glass windows behind this porch and in the entrance hall.

32. **First United Methodist Church**; 1858-74.

This large brick church defines the edge of Carr Square at the curve of Bow Street. The pointed arches and monochrome appearance indicate early Gothic Revival style. The lower window arches are segmental and pointed, and the upper lancet in form, the windows are leaded diamond-shaped stained glass. A low horizontal base, windowsills, and small roof buttresses are all in granite, and there is some brick. Though begun at the end of the Early Gothic Revival period, it was finished in 1874, when most urban churches, the building continues to be actively used by community organization.

33**. #39-49 Bow Street**, Apartment Block; Before 1900.
This fine apartment block is built in a crescent shape to conform the curve of the street, in a variant of the Queen Anne style known as paneled brick. The building has granite sills and lintels, and granite keystones in the entrance arches. The brick become decorative between the second and third stories, where it forms an interesting checkered pattern, projecting from the building surface by several inches. The shutters are 20th century additions, and never would have appeared on a building of this type. The form of the building is similar in style, density and urban character to many commercial blocks built during the same period.

34. **#50 Bow Street**, Somerville Police Station; 1874.
One of the first projects of the newly chartered city of Somerville was to erect this police station. The entrance arch and the use of contrasting colors (red brick and light granite) indicate a high Victorian Gothic style. Paired windows with segmental arched lintels having some carved detail, string coursed granite sills on the second floor, and the now removed mansard roof are features of a style which began in this area with Harvard's Memorial Hall.

35. **#56 Bow Street**; c. 1860.
#56 Bow Street is an excellent example of a modest side-hall and gable cottage with some Italianate detail. This vernacular building made two concessions to current architectural fashion: the side overhang and the pitch of roof, and the round gable window, both of which are Italianate manner. The entire porch with its second story projection is a later addition.

36. **#58-68 Bow Street**; before 1900.
This fine four-story apartment house, built as a hotel by Mr. Druit, fills the triangular site at which Bow St. branches from Somerville Ave. Large facades on these two streets are characterized by small cornices set between shingles and clapboards, and by large cornices extending from the flat roof. The surfaces of the facades are broken at various intervals by full-height bays. Al windows have complete entablatures above them, and the third floor windows each have a pediment, suggesting that they have been influenced by High Renaissance styles of Italian city palaces. Painted in colors that are highly appropriate to the style, this structure provides a striking portal to the Bow St. District.

37&38. **#59-61; 63; 73-75; 77 Bow Street**; all by 1884.
It is interesting to look at these four houses as variations on the same theme; the basic two-family house is an end gable, side-hall cottage with brick foundation, a form found

throughout Somerville. The overall dimension and slope of each roof varies, and each house has a different variety of a window bay. #77 Bow St. is embellished with a half-mansard roof and rounded turret; #63 has Queen Anne windows and a finely detailed eave board.

39. **#69 Bow Street**; c. 1920.
Those who are familiar with the weathervane have very sharp eyes. It is placed atop a small gas station, which may have been one of the first to be built in Somerville.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Keeping an older building in good shape not only provides the owner and his or her immediate neighbors with a source of pleasure, but also strongly reinforces the fragile network of townscape. All of the buildings along a single street are bound up with one another, and every building has a responsibility not to upset the texture and integrity of the neighborhood. Any work done on a building should be done with an awareness of the visual effect it will have on the entire streetscape.

A building preserved or renovated should retain the elements of the style in which it was built. It is possible to recreate many building features that have been destroyed because the skill of early craftsmen and the richness of their work cannot be replaced. The best way to preserve the character while repairing an older building is to replace older materials with new materials of the same kind. Surprisingly, this is seldom as costly as one would think; the price of painting a house over a 25-year period is roughly the same as installing non-wood siding for the same amount of time.

The results of these investments last far beyond the present time. They provide a resource for the future, which, by establishing continuity with the past and its people, offers a richness that is invaluable and irreplaceable.

It is beyond the scope of this pamphlet to make more detailed suggestions as to how to maintain older buildings; but the following sources on this subject are strongly recommended:

Beacon Hill Civic Association, **Beacon Hill Architectural Handbook**- Guides for Preservation and Modification, Boston, 1975 (227-1922)

Brookline Planning Department, Vision Inc., **Fixing Up Older Houses**- Handbook of Exterior Renovations, Brookline, March, 1975 (333 Washington St., Brookline, Mass.02146)

Greater Portland Landmarks, Inc. Advisory Service, **Some Notes on Living with Old Houses**, Revised, Portland, 1974.

*Stephens, George, **Remodeling Old Houses**, Without Destroying their Character; illustrations by the author, New York, 1972. ($3.95) (Available in many Boston area bookstores)

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4.Somerville Citizen, **Semi- Centennial Programme** of Semi- Centennial Celebration of Somerville; March 3, 1892.

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