

## HANCOCK COMMON

The town of Holden was founded in 1741, and is named after Samuel Holden (1675-1740), who was a former governor of the Bank of England, despite having never visited the town. Upon his death, a portion of his estate was used to help build the Holden Chapel at Harvard University.

This parcel of land, on which the First Congregational Church and Town Hall stand, was given to Holden by Gov. John Hancock on June 25, 1789 “for and in consideration of the sum of 5 schillings...” for the building of a public meeting house. At the time of the gift, Holden was planning to replace the original Meeting House (located on the site of the current Damon House) on the opposite corner of Highland Street & Main Street.

On September 12, 1931, the Holden Woman’s Club sponsored the initial planting of a living Christmas tree on Hancock Common. On Memorial Day, 1935, opposite the First Congregational Church a tree was planted in memory of the five Holden boys who died during World War I, with a tablet in front of it bearing their names and dates of death.

