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Old  
Boston Town,

Early in this Century ;

By an 1801-er,

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Hale, James W

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Old

# Boston Town,

Early in this Century ;

By an 1801-er.

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*To my Readers (if any) :*

The following letters were written in 1880, and it was thought would be printed about the time of the Great Jamboree, celebrating the 250th anniversary of the settlement of Boston.

But they were *not* published, because, well, because they were not, that's all.

Hoping that the contents may afford to many a pleasant half hour's reading,

I remain, in good health,

Yours very truly,

A BOSTON BOY OF 1801.



LETTERS ABOUT  
OLD BOSTON TOWN,  
EARLY IN THIS CENTURY.

**By an 1801er.**

*(Copyright secured by Author, September, 1880.)*

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OUT-OF-TOWN, *July*, 1880.

*My young friend :*

It is quite possible that at times my dates may get somewhat mixed, as I have never seen Shurtleff's History of Boston, nor that of any other person; have no memoranda to assist me, and am obliged to rely exclusively upon my memory for all I may indite. And it is no trifle for a fellow to force his hind sight back seventy of seventy-five years; if you think otherwise, just try it. Hope you will have a chance.

I have no very distinct recollection of any facts prior to 1805. At that time was sent to school to Miss Betsey Holland, daughter of Captain John Holland, who lived in Oliver street, some hundred and fifty feet from Milk street. It is impossible to tell what school books were inflicted upon me, but it is well remembered that I became quite an ex-

pert at hemming crash towels. Opposite to Captain Holland was a large double house—one of the finest then in town. One-half was occupied by Isaac Winstow, a Long Wharf merchant, the other by Alexander Young, one of the proprietors of the *Palladium* newspaper, and father of the late Rev. Dr. Alex. Young.

Fort Hill was then beginning to be a fashionable place of residence, and many fine three or four story brick houses were being erected there. Among the residents were Zebedee Cook, a merchant and most elegant gentleman, and John Brooks, husband of Mrs. Mary A. Brooks, the poet, (*Maria del Occidente*). Their houses were on the north side of the circle, and were situated on the opposite corners of Hamilton street. Somebody told me there wasn't any Fort Hill now; well, there must have been several cart loads of dirt to carry away.

Not *on* Fort Hill, but at the junction of High street, and the head of Pearl street, there was built, in the first decade of the present century, the largest private residence probably then in Boston. It had a dome almost rivalling that on the State House. It was always called Harris' folly. Why it was thusly spoken of, cannot say; but suppose his bank account did not hold out as long as he expected when the building was commenced. Remember him distinctly, as a fine, portly, aristocratic looking gentleman, who was then, or before, a ship chandler on Purchase street. One of his sons was, several years afterwards, United States Marshal for Massachusetts.



Some of the finest old mansions in town were then in Pearl street. They were back from the street some seventy or eighty feet, with old chestnut trees and gardens in front, and occupied by some of Boston's best townsmen. Remember the names of none of the residents, except that of my kinsman, Gen. James Lovell, surveyor of the port.

But the iron heel of Commerce has long since crushed out these old homes, and many others in the old town and their sites, are they not marked by monumental tombstones of Quincy granite?

Not far from seventy-five years since, Col Thomas H. Perkins built a fine modern residence in Pearl street, in which his family resided several years. He afterwards made a gift of it as the first Asylum for the Blind, under the management of Dr. Samuel G. Howe. About the same time another elegant mansion of brick was constructed for and occupied by a Mr. Pratt, a wealthy merchant of the town.

At the corner of Federal and Milk streets was the old Mansion of Robert Treat Paine, with fine outlying grounds. And, nearly opposite, corner Milk and Congress streets, was an old residence, which was occupied by Julien, a French cook, and was then the only place in town where a party of *bon-vivants* could obtain a first-class dinner.

In 1805 there was but a single commercial establishment on Milk street, from the Old South to the water. This one was in a small wooden building then called a "ten-footer." This shanty was nearly

opposite to Oliver street, and was the only building on a triangular piece of ground called Liberty Square. The remainder of the lot was generally occupied by dilapidated trucks and wagons, old boxes, barrels, and rubbish generally.

The above mercantile concern was kept by a venerable old lady called Aunty Spaulding, whose stock in trade consisted of needles, pins, tape, marbles, tops, molasses candy, green apples, and other like necessities for small children; at any rate, such condiments as school children always delight in. It is very likely that for every cent I spent with Aunty Spaulding, it cost my parents a dollar, for the benefit of good Dr. John Warren, then our domestic physician. By the way, *our* Dr. Warren was at least the great grandfather of the present race of Drs. Warren. He lived in a fine house in School street, two houses below Master Snelling's school-house. The house and its extensive yard and garden were afterward occupied by Thos. Niles as an extensive livery stable. Not the *house*.

At the corner of Milk and Batterymarch streets was an old wooden building occupied by Cotton & Marston, "house, ship and sign painters." Sometime afterwards, Mr. Cotton sold his interest to his partner, and established himself as a bookseller, I think, at the corner of Marlboro and Franklin streets; being the founder of the publishing house bearing his name.

Next to Cotton's paint shop was another small wooden building, occupied by Nath. Brewer,

glazier; and next to that was a three-story wooden house, in which my father lived, and in which I complimented the town of Boston, by allowing myself to be born in 1801. Several years ago the parlor of our old house was Hamblin's Oyster Saloon, and the room overhead, in which I first saw daylight, was a carpenter's shop. By-the-way, this Hamblin was the father of the brave General Hamblin, of the war of the rebellion, who died four or five years ago, a Seventh Regiment man.

On the opposite side of Batterymarch street, at the corner where Odiorne's nail store was built, there was a one-story wooden building standing on spiles, and the water coming under it at high tides; over the big double door of this building was the sign "Cataract Engine;" when the dock was filled up, the old Cataract House was removed to Milk street, nearly opposite to Pearl street. Immediately next to the old engine house were ways for building or repairing small vessels—don't remember which—but I *do* recollect that about 1805 there was a vessel on the ways, her bowsprit sticking out nearly across Batterymarch street, and almost reaching my mother's bedroom windows. From there, running towards the bend of that street, at Hamilton street, were lots of spars afloat, caulker's stages, &c., and standing over the water at the head of about what is now the west side of India street, was my father's sail loft, which was afterwards burned. The end of Batterymarch street was called Tilden's Wharf.

Some two years afterwards when all this dock property had been filled up, and Broad and India streets had been built, (1806 and 1807), the footway from Long Wharf to India street was a wooden bridge about four feet wide, with a wooden railing. It was here that the New York packet schooners made their headquarters. They all hailed from some place on Cape Cod, and the number of Halletts, Bearses, Scudders, Bakers, Crockers, Nickinses, Chases, and most of the other names in the Cape Cod directory was very great, who used to congregate by the score in the stores on India street. My impression is that the old foot bridge was doing duty in 1825, perhaps later. At low tides people would have to stoop to enable them to pass under the bowsprits of the schooners.

Before Quincy market was built, the only market house in town was in old Faneuil Hall. Boylston market was then *non est*. Almost any morning might be seen Col. Thos. H. Perkins, Harrison Gray Otis, William (Billy) Gray, Ben. Bussey, Peter C. Brooks, Israel Thorndike and other wealthy towns folk, trudging homeward for their eight o'clock breakfast, with their market baskets containing their one o'clock dinner. Perhaps you can now discover your present millionaires doing the same thing. "If so, make a note on't" and let me know per telephone? No flowers.

The dealers in the market house occupied the whole of the first floor of Faneuil Hall, and they

used the cellars for the storage of salted meats, fish, and other barreled stuff. The large room on the floor above was never used except for political meetings and big dinners. The upper floor contained all the armories which were then required for the military companies of the town. It seems as if I can almost recollect the location of each armory nearly 70 years ago. On the left of the entrance was the armory of the Winslow Blues; (isn't Simpson, their old fifer, still buzzing around?) then the Boston Light Infantry, Capt. Henry Sargent; next the Independent Fusileers, and in the upper corner, the Soul of Soldiery, composed of the non-commissioned officers of militia companies. On the right was the Washington Light Infantry, composed of Democrats, next the New England Guards (when first organized) then armorers' rooms; Ancient and Honorables and the Cadets in the upper right hand corner. The latter was commanded by Col. Thos. F. Apthorp, a most soldierly looking gentleman. When the Rifle Rangers first started, that corps also had an armory here. There were also two artillery companies in town seventy years ago; one had its "gun house" at the bottom of the Common, the other on Fort Hill.

Will write something more about sogering when an opportunity offers. Till when, yours truly,

OXYGEN-AIRIAN.

OUT-OF-TOWN, *July,**My young friend:*

You will please bear in mind that I have lived in Boston for the last forty-five years, during those years have not slept in your town a dozen times. Hence the names of many of the streets are entirely unknown to me, for at the time I have been writing about, and propose to continue to do so, the town of Boston was not as large by one hundred acres, as the Central Park in New York. I am told that by filling in the Mill Pond, Back Bay, and other places, Boston is now at least 350 acres larger than the New York park. So you must not criticize my geography too closely, nor my dates, for as you were told before, I have nothing but my memory to guide me. My nurse is now living in Boston, bright as a dollar. She is several years my senior, but if I had her memory I could indite more interesting letters.

About where the western entrance of Quincy Market now is, there used to be lying in dock (say in 1810), two old hulks, which were roofed over, and from which vessels the inhabitants obtained their chief supply of oysters. The oyster boats used to sail up the harbor to these hulks, and deposit their cargoes, from whence they were distributed to the smaller dealers. You got on board over a narrow foot-bridge, and several small tables were standing ready, with a tin pepper and salt box thereon, and wayfarers would be accommo-

dated with a dozen raw on the shell, and a two tined steel fork to pick them up with. But Father took never would allow his customers to dress his "ysters" with lemon juice, or any such thing. "Nothing but salt and pepper onto this," he used to say.

In the immediate neighborhood of these oyster arms, there was a narrow, crooked lane leading into Ann street. It was hardly wide enough for two vehicles to pass each other, and had no sidewalks nor any name that can be now recollected. Perhaps it has since been widened, straightened and christened. In a corner or curve of this lane was an old tavern called the Roebuck, not a very respectable place of resort seventy years ago. About that time a murder was committed in this tavern by some Danish or Swedish sailors. While writing, the names of two of them occur to me, John P. Rog and Nils Peterson. These men and two others were hanged at the same time on the left hand side of Roxbury Neck, a little beyond the road leading to South Boston bridge. I don't recollect any particulars about the murder, but remember at the hanging there were people selling "pairs of verses" about the whole affair. Only two lines of these "verses" stick to me:

"And, oh, the cruel murderers! it was a dreadful sin,  
The one he took a loggerhead, another a rolling pin."

About seventy years ago two pirates were sentenced to be hung at South Boston. Sam Tully was hung, his companion was reprieved on the



gallows. His name was Dalton, and he was afterwards a Baptist or Methodist preacher.

What is now North street, was, in 1805, called Fore street, afterwards changed to Ann street, as far down as North Square, thence to its termination, it was Fish street. Its original name of Fore street was probably adopted because it was the marginal street, the water from the harbor coming up at high tides to within one hundred feet of Fore street, as the writer can testify, having been in swimming at least hundreds of times within forty yards of No. 45 Ann street. Back street was so called for a similar reason, as the water of Mill Pond formerly came up to the yards of the houses on Back Street. The Baptist Meeting houses of Doctors Baldwin and Stillman were situated on this street for the convenience of having the baptistry over the water. Have seen several persons baptized in Mill Pond. Middle street was between Fore and Back streets. These three streets were the only direct thoroughfares from the extreme north end to the other parts of the town.

Many sailor boarding houses were situated in North Square and Fish street; hence Ann street was largely filled with slop-shops, as sailors' clothing stores were called, with cheap hat stores and small wares for seamen's use. The centre of the hardware trade was in Dock Square and in adjoining Union street. There were John Odin, Stephen Fairbanks, Homes & Homer, B. B. Osgood, Henry Loring, and others. An old playmate of the writer



was, in 1815, a boy in one of these stores, but he got tired of hammering on brass kettles, and for the last forty years has supplied your folks with a better class of music.

In the latter part of the past century, there was a shipyard near Battery Wharf. It was called Hartt's Yard. At this yard the old frigate Constitution was built, and the father of this deponent, being a nautical tailor, cut, fitted and made the first suit (of sails) that Old Ironsides ever wore. We had no navy yards then, and all work for Government was done by private hands.

Seventy years ago, it was a frequent practice of schoolboys to spend their Saturday afternoons on an island in the harbor. We provided ourselves with a pot, frying pan, and other things requisite for a chowder and a fry, and taking a boat at Winisimit Ferry, would pull to the island, land our traps, then go and catch some fish, and return to the island and prepare the festival. Drift wood along shore furnished fuel, and after our sumptuous repast, we would have a good swim, there not being a house or resident on the island (except a man who tended a flock of sheep), and then we would pull our boat for home. If you look at that island now, you will see East Boston.

Seventy-five years ago, the only bridges leading to and from Boston, were Charlestown Bridge and Cambridge Bridge, leading to Old Cambridge. Cragie's Bridge, to Cambridgeport, was built some few years afterwards, and Warren Bridge and the Milldam still later. Roxbury Neck was

the only land connecting the town with the mainland, and many times has the writer hereof waded across Roxbury Neck, when the tide had risen ten or twelve inches over the road.

At this time, Cornhill commenced at the Old South, and extended to Dock Square. From the Old South to Summer and Winter streets, it was Marlborough street; thence to Boylston street, it was Newberry street; continuing up it was Orange street for half a mile, then Washington street to Roxbury street and the line. It is much more convenient to call it Washington street, right straight along.

So with Tremont street. That name went from Court street to Park street; thence it was Common street up to Boylston street; thence Pleasant Street till it twisted round into Orange street. On the south side of Charles street, at foot of the Common, were four ropewalks, standing on spiles; they were burned down. The tide used to flow over Charles street into the lower part of the Common, and the grass growing in the swamp there was regular sedge, or salt water grass.

Yours truly,

OXYGEN-AIRIAN.

OUT-OF-TOWN, *July*, 1880.

*My young friend :*

Seventy-five years ago, there was a large, old fashioned brick building, standing on the corner of Milk and Oliver streets. It was occupied by Mr. Doyle, an artist of much ability, and very scientific. He had quite a fine collection of curiosities, and much wax-work of his own skill. His place was called either Doyle's Museum, or the Boston Museum. It was partially or wholly destroyed by fire, between 1806 and 1810; and at that fire, a boy named Will Homer, fell out of a window and was killed. He was a twin of James L. Homer, afterwards of the *Boston Gazette*.

Mr. Doyle afterwards had his museum in a large three-story building, between the jail and the school house in School street. The front of the building was about on a line with the east wall of the Stone Chapel burying ground. The entrance was through a lane running alongside the north wall from Tremont street. Don't remember whether Doyle died, or sold out; but his curiosities were removed to Scollay's building, and the New England Museum was there opened by Mr. Greenwood. He was a dentist, formerly lived in Sudbury street, and was father of Rev. Dr. Greenwood, successor to Dr. James Freeman minister of the Stone Chapel. Doyle had a daughter Margaret, whose beautiful miniatures on ivory may be found in many of the old Boston families.

In course of time, Greenwood sold his concern to David and Moses Kimball, who then established the Boston Museum in Tremont street. The rear of it is not a hundred feet from Doyle's old place.

Writing of fires, reminds me that boys in those days were an important element in the Volunteer Fire Department. It was by law, decreed that every house-keeper should have in a convenient and conspicuous place, two leathern fire-buckets, with his name painted thereon. The most "conv. and conspic." place would be the front entry; hence, on entering the front door of a residence, rich or poor, the first things that struck the eye, were the fire buckets. Each bucket contained a long canvas bag, suitable for removing clothing, books and small valuables, and also a bed-key, for unscrewing bedsteads.

It was the duty of the householder, on hearing the ringing of the fire bells, to carry his buckets to the place of the fire. Two lines would then be formed from each engine to the nearest pumps. The men and big boys would pass the full buckets to the engine, and the "young 'uns," like me, pass up the empty buckets to the pump. Oh, how my ambitious little heart used to beat at the thought that some day or other I should take my place in the full bucket line! After a fire was extinguished, the buckets would be ranged alongside the nearest fences, and their owners would take them home, and polish them off to be ready for the next alarm.

Excuse me, my friend, for here indulging in a little personal feeling. My first love was the Old

Cataract, and I stuck to her till I was nine years old, when my father moved "down to the North-end." Then my affections were transferred to the little Extinguisher, about the size of a lawn sprinkler of the present day. She was housed on the draw-bridge over Mill Creek, in Ann street. But she *would* throw water! It went up like a skyrocket. In her service I was promoted to the full-bucket line, when I was twelve years old. Happy days! *Vale.*

OXYGEN-AIRIAN.

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OUT-OF-TOWN, *July*, 1880.

*My young friend:*

With the thermometer at 95°, you can hardly expect me to remember the date when certain capitalists of Boston formed what would now be called a syndicate, but which they called "The Forty Associates." Some wicked people (who probably couldn't get into the ring) called them The Forty—something else. The object of the Association was the purchase and improvement of real estate. Its managing man was a shrewd, smart, lively little person, Amos Cotting. The property between Court street and (old) Cornhill was purchased, and a wide street cut through, from Scolay's Building leading to Dock Square. It was first called Market street, but after Quincy Market was built, and a street alongside of it was christened North Market street, the name of the former was changed to New Cornhill. Is that its name now?

The buildings on each side were very substantial, uniformly four stories, brick. The only one among the first occupants, whose name is now remembered by me, was James A. Dickson, formerly the comedian, Dickenson, of the Federal Street Theatre. He started an elegant music store on New Cornhill, at the corner of Dorset's Alley. The other stores were soon filled up, principally by dealers in dry goods and furniture. The Association made several other improvements, particulars of which are forgotten.

Pemberton's Hill was, doubtless, a part of Beacon Hill. Why called Pemberton, probably some of the historians of Boston have told. At the corner of Tremont street, there was a princely mansion, owned by Gardiner Greene. The grounds must have occupied several acres, extending to Howard street, and I don't know how far up the hill. The owner was very liberal in allowing visitors to look over the grounds, graperies, greenhouses, &c., &c. If I am not mistaken, Lord Lyndhurst, and Copley, the great painter, were born here.

On Tremont street, between Greene's place and Beacon street, were three or four splendid residences, which were on the slope of the hill, set back one hundred feet from the street, with fine gardens and lawns in front. Only remember the name of one resident; it was Lieut.-Gov. William Phillips, under Gov. Caleb Strong. He was also one of the deacons of the Old South. His house was opposite the Stone Chapel burying ground.

Common street commenced at Park street, and terminated at Boylston street; then it was Pleasant street till it reached Orange street. Opposite the Common, beginning at Winter street, was a long row of buildings called Collonade Row. Nearly opposite Park Street Church, was a large family mansion, with extensive grounds. This was, about seventy years ago, converted into a place of amusement, and called Washington Garden. Open-air concerts, ice cream, lemonade (with sticks), and flirtations were the chief amusements.

It has been previously stated that, seventy-five years ago, Mrs. Spaulding's candy shop was the only commercial establishment in Milk street. Now, be it known, that seventy years ago, there was *not a single store of any kind* in either Tremont, School, Common, Boylston, West, Winter, Summer, Atkinson, Berry streets or Franklin Square. Franklin Square was filled with elegant residences, occupied by such townspeople as Thomas Wigglesworth, Joseph P. and Josiah Bradleer, and others of like position in life.

The old Court House was in Court street, about where is now Court Square. It was a substantial brick structure, two stories high, and its front came out to the sidewalk. On the lower floor were offices for the sheriff, constables and clerks, and the court room was on the floor above. Sheriff Sumner occupied a brick house which stood where Adams' Express office now is. Shubael Bell was then jailer, was afterwards appointed sheriff, and occupied the above house. In the rear was the



jail, a three-story stone or brick building, thoroughly whitewashed both outside and inside. It had corridors outside on the second and third stories, which were used by visitors going there to see their friends who were *confined for debt*. The writer was never inside, but he once looked in at the grated window, being held up by his father, who called to carry some provisions for an impecunious friend.

Between the jail and the school house on School street was Doyle's Museum. All these old buildings must have been torn down somewhere between 1820 and 1825, to make room for the New Court House and City Hall, for Boston was a city at the latter date.

Three-quarters of a century ago, there were only four public schools in Boston for teaching English and writing, and the Latin school. The North End School was in Middle street, somewhere near Richmond street, and was under command of Master Johnny Tileston; the South End School, corner of West and Common streets, under Masters Payson and Webb; that in School street, which stood where the City Hall now is, was disciplined (yes, indeed, it was!) by Masters Jones, Snelling and Haskell; and the school at the corner of Sudbury street and Chardon's Lane was managed by Masters Holt and Mulliken. Each of these teachers had an assistant, who was called the "usher." The writer was only personally acquainted with two ushers. One was always called Little Billy, a younger brother of Master



Snelling, and "Tooter Hart," who was usher to Master Mulliken. The only duty these ushers ever performed for me was to announce my name very loudly to the master, whenever they thought his special attentions were required for my benefit (which was not seldom). Usher Hart got his nickname from the boys because he used to "toot" on a clarionette with the band when there was a military parade.

The Latin school house was on the site of the lower portion of the Parker House, in School street. Its head was Master Bigelow, father of John P. Bigelow, once mayor of the city, and an old friend of mine. At the lower end of the Latin school house was a lane leading up to the rear of the Province House, where were the stables of the *greatest* truck proprietor of those days, Mr. Zeph Spurr, weight 360 lbs.

Writing of Chardon's Lane reminds me that seventy years ago there was a "causeway," which started from about that lane, or Pitt's Lane, and enclosed the Mill Pond, the other end being at Prince street. It was built of rough granite blocks, and was seven or eight feet broad. There was probably a sluice gate somewhere in it, but I was too young to inquire about it. The only practical use it was ever put to, of my own knowledge, was that of the regular Saturday afternoon battle ground between the North and South-enders. Whew! it's too hot to think about those terrific combats.

Truly yours,

OXYGEN-AIRIAN.

OUT-OF-TOWN, *July*, 1830.

*My young friend:*

I was obliged to chop off one of my late letters rather suddenly. Was writing about the military companies, and the organization of the N. E. Guards and the Rifle Rangers. There was also an artillery company started early in the war of 1812, composed exclusively of persons who were, or had been, sailors. It was called the Sea Fencibles, and was commanded by Capt Winston Lewis, who was a ship chandler in the lower end of State street. The "gun-house" of the Fencibles was at the bottom of the Common, near the burying ground.

There was not much soldiering in those days; there was a pretty general turn out of uniformed companies on Nigger 'Lecture and Fourth of July, and the Ancient and Honorable was out its once in a year on Artillery Election Day. The various uniformed companies each celebrated its anniversary. The Governor was escorted to Cambridge on Commencement Day by a company of cavalry, before the Lancers was organized. The company was also reinforced by a numerous body of truckmen, with their long white frocks; and I should not wonder if this led to the formation of the Lancers, as the first, or an early, commander of that fine corps, was a stalwart leader of the truckmen's guild. Is good natured Peter Dunbar now in your midst?

The New England Guards made a very hasty parade one Sunday morning in 1813. By some means or other, news was received in Boston that the Constitution was being chased by a British seventy-four. By private signal or notice the N. E. G. mustered some seventy or eighty men at the armory at about 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning, and with a drum and fife started on their march towards the British seventy-four. How our brave boys were going to attack the big ship, never entered the mind of this deponent. He only knows that the martial spirit pervaded his manly breast, and for the time being, he became an honorary member of the N. E. G., acting in the double capacity of powder-monkey and tincup-bearer. On the arrival of the company at the Navy Yard, Charlestown, Capt. Sullivan was informed by Com. Bainbridge that the Constitution had run safely into Marblehead. The company returned home just as meetings were dismissed. The N. E. G. also served several days in throwing up the intrenchments at Dorchester Heights. Suppose other military companies were also drafted for similar purposes at Deer Island, but I only know personally of the doings of *our* company, of which my only brother was an original member.

There was also another great parade about seventy years ago, composed of a large number of the substantial towns folk, who used to assemble on the Common once or oftener in a year, to assist at certain Indian rites, called the Feast of Squantum. The writer frequently expressed a desire to

participate in what was going on, and was assured that Squantum was no place for little boys. The cavalcade was mounted on the best horses the town could produce; riders with long suwarrow or white-top boots, made a gallant show when they crossed South Boston bridge. Was never out of bed when they got back. The reflection of maturer years leads me to believe that it was quite possible for those gay cavaliers to celebrate the Indian festival, *a la* Mammoth Cod Association of a later day. We know about *that* honored institution!

Am not certain whether anything in these letters has referred to newspapers, seventy years ago. Well, at a venture, and risk of repetition: at that time there was *no daily paper* published in Boston; altho' a paper was issued every day. The *Boston Gazette* was published on Mondays and Thursdays by Beals & Homer; the *Palladium* on Tuesdays and Fridays, by Young & Mimes; and the *Columbian Centinel* by Major Ben. Russel, on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Some years afterwards the *American Traveller* was published on Tuesdays and Fridays by Badger & Porter, and was devoted to matters more specially interesting to travellers, but having no commercial character whatever. Mr. Willard Badger had been the keeper of a private school in Dorsett's Alley. The first dailies were the *Daily Advertiser*, morning, about 1813, and *Transcript*, evening, after that date, the latter being about 9 x 12. Well, it has earned its success and present size. Dear old Lynde Walter, H. W. Dutton and Wentworth, put their whole souls in it.

The *Galaxy*, weekly, was started by J. T. Buckingham, either during, or shortly after the war of 1812. The *Post* and *Statesman* still later. After 1820 newspapers sprouted rapidly in Boston, which "continues even unto the present day." The old Boston *Recorder* was, however, published by Nathaniel Willis (father of N. P. W.) more than 70 years ago.

It may seem strange to the present aristocratic residents of Beacon Hill, to be told that 70 years since a portion of the hill between Cambridge and Beacon streets, was called "Nigger Hill," and there lived, generally in squalor, nearly all the colored people of the town; such as chimney-sweeps, scavengers, waiters, &c. There were many very low white women who lived on the "Hill," and the nigger dance houses were the resort of the worst kind of people. There was a similar place at North-end, visited by sailors and peopled by the lowest grade of women. It would not have been considered proper, seventy years ago, to put the name of Tin-pot Alley in print, or speak it to ears polite.

Having no hand-book, or memoranda to guide me, cannot give the date when the Exchange Coffee House was built. It must have been commenced about 1808 or 1810; and from its great size, probably three or four years were required in its construction. It was at least one hundred feet square, possibly more, with a front on Congress street, and a rear entrance on Devonshire street, which was then only a narrow lane. The

most imposing entrance, however, faced the opening upon State street. It had an elegant portico, and the ascent to the main floor was up a double flight of long stone steps. The building was five or six stories high, and surmounted by a dome over the large centre room which was used as an Exchange. This was the first building ever erected in Boston, expressly for a public house. All the taverns which will be noticed hereafter by me, were originally private dwelling houses previous to the commencement of this century.

The Old Province House was the only exception. That was the Governor's residence in colonial times, and was kept by Mr. Benjamin Crombie as a tavern, or rather as a large public boarding house about seventy years since. In my boyish days, the whole terraced front garden was open to Marlborough street, with fine old trees around it. Later the block of brick stores was built on Marlborough street, and the entrance to the Province House, which stood at least one hundred feet from the street, was through an archway, four or five feet wide, running under the stores.

Yours, most truly,

OXYGEN-AIRIAN.

OUT-OF-TOWN, *July*, 1880.

*My young friend :*

In previous letters the Mill Pond and Mill Creek have been mentioned. It is well to state that the Old Mill was situated at the head of the Mill Pond, about one hundred feet west of Hanover street, just opposite Centre street. It was a large, wooden, yellow-painted grist mill; and was in operation as late as 1808; how much later, do not know. After the water had been used in the mill, it ran out through Mill Creek to the harbor. The creek was twenty-five or thirty feet wide, and was arched over for Hanover street to cross it; thence it was open to Ann street, where there was a draw-bridge, which was never opened, as vessels never came above Ann street. They probably went from the harbor to the mill through this creek, during the latter part of the past century. All the back yards emptied into the creek, which was rinsed out by the tide twice in twenty-four hours; and yet it was not a savory place.

The New South Church was, in 1806 an old fashioned, yellow painted wooden building on Summer street, near High street. John Thornton Kirkland was the pastor, and my first listening to a sermon was in the above year, when Dr. K. preached. He often held me on his knees when he visited our house, and when I saw him in the pulpit, am told that I greeted him with "please come down and see me doctor, and let me see your new silk



down." When, several years afterwards, my parents occupied a pew in the Old South, Dr. Eckley was so severe in his demeanor that he was enough to frighten any but a very brave person. I remember that about seventy years ago, or about the time that dear, good Joshua Huntington was about to be settled, Deacons Salisbury and Phillips, and Messrs. Charles Sprague, Armstrong, Callender and others, succeeded in having the old wooden painted pulpit removed, and an elegant circular mahogany one erected, very much to the disgust of Dr. Eckley. The doctor had an impediment in his speech, or, rather, a hesitating way of speaking, and the first Sunday he was in the new pulpit he remarked, in the long prayer, (by way of improvement) that "he hoped the Lord would soften the hearts of the congregation, and not keep them as HARD as the ma-hog-a-ny which they had introduced into His house." He was frightful, and his wig nearly came off in his wrath.

Doctors Eckley, Eliot and Baldwin all wore stiff, curled, powdered wigs; Doctors Stillman and Murray had wigs of natural hair, the former dark brown, the latter almost red. Dr. Kirkland wore no wig, nor did Dr. Lathrop, to the best of my recollection and belief. Nor did Dr. Channing.

Dr. Samuel Stillman and Dr. Thomas Baldwin were the only Baptist ministers in Boston seventy-five years ago. Their meeting houses, as before stated, were in Back street, for the convenience of using the Mill Pond for baptising persons. Dr. Sharpe's house, built later on Charles street, was



on the edge of running salt water, for like reason. Dr. Lathrop preached in Middle street, somewhere about opposite Richmond street; Parson John Murray, Universalist, had his place of worship also in Middle street, near Bennett; he died about 1810. Dr. Eliot's meeting house was also in Middle street, farther down to north-end corner of (?) street.

At that time there were three Episcopal churches in town: Christ Church, Salem street, Rev. Asa Eaton; Trinity Church, in Summer street, Rev. Dr. J. S. J. Gardiner, and the Stone Chapel, (King's) Rev. James Freeman. The latter was, however, Unitarian, but using a printed form of service. There were two Methodist meeting houses, one in Bromfield Lane, the other in Methodist Alley, at the north end. Dr. Channing's new meeting house in Federal street, corner Berry street, was then being built. There was also a Quaker meeting house in Congress street, nearly opposite Lindall's Lane. The only Romish church, Drs. Cheverus and Matignon, Franklin square; Dr. Buckminster's, in Brattle Square, and Dr. William Emerson's in Corn Hill. The latter was a wooden building and was torn down to make room for the brick block, since called Joy's Building, opposite the south head of State street. If there were any more churches then I have forgotten them.

Am not quite sure about Dr. Holley's church in Hollis street, and Dr. Lowell's in (or near) Cambridge street, but believe they were not built

much before 1810. The same about Dr. Griffin's, Park street. It is so long ago that it can hardly be expected for me to remember dates so far off with absolute certainty.

One thing I *am* sure of, that seventy-two years ago there was not a single Irish servant girl in Boston; no, not one. All the "help" was native-born American; help, indeed, of the best quality; wages, one dollar a week. The recollection of this blissful condition of domestic life is one of the greatest comforts of my old age. Happy, happy days!

The regular congregation at the Roman Catholic church consisted entirely of French, Spanish and Italian families; not more than one hundred attendants in all, besides stranger visitors, who were attracted by the music or by the peculiar services. Between 1805 and 1810 I must have attended that church fifty times in company with an old female servant, who was a Romanist, although born in Connecticut. Have dwelt on this point somewhat, because I wish to impress on your mind that, strange as it may appear to you now, Boston was really an American town in the early part of the present century. And not Democratic neither.

Whether there was in ancient days a regular regimental organization of the military, the writer does not know. He never heard of anything but companies. Those uniformed, up to 1812, were the Cadets, then, as now, called the Governor's Life Guard; the Winslow Blues, the Independent Fusileers, the Boston Light Infantry the Wash-

ington Light Infantry (composed mainly of Democrats), and the Ancient and Honorable. Of course everybody knows that this is not really a military company composed of enlisted members. In former years, when the Ancients paraded once a year on artillery election day, each soldier wore the peculiar uniform of the company to which he belonged, and field officers wore the uniform and badges of their rank. So it was not unlikely that a Major-General would be seen shouldering his musket alongside of a Lieutenant of Cavalry, and the commanding officer might be the Major of Artillery. The same system, no doubt, prevails now, but the parade was much more picturesque when there was such a mixture of uniforms and colors than now, when all are dressed alike, and you can't distinguish a general from a lieutenant. There were some un-uniformed militia who met on the corners of the streets about twice a year for roll-call; they had no armories, and each man kept his accoutrements at home.

The New England Guards was organized in consequence of the war, soon after its commencement in 1812. George Sullivan, a distinguished lawyer, was its first captain; James Dalton, first sergeant. Mr. Dalton, Jeff. Richardson, Joseph West, Eben Thayer, and possibly one or two others, were the only persons living three or four years ago who were members of the original organization. The old uniform was very simple; a single-breasted blue coat, with gilt buttons, black trowsers, round black hat (stove-pipe), with a black

leather cockade on left side, no plume or pompon. The Rifle Rangers, which was started some time after the N. E. G., had the same style of uniform as nearly as possible, excepting that the cockade was worn on the front of the hat.

Yours truly,

OXYGEN-AIRIAN.

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OUT OF-TOWN, *July*, 1880.

*My young friend :*

In 1810, the Boston Post Office was in the old Exchange Coffee House, then kept by David Barnum. This building was burned down about 1818, and Barnum then went to Baltimore and established Barnum's there. Sam Topliff had his Reading Room in the old Exchange. In consequence of the fire, the Post Office and Reading Room were both removed to the ground floor of a row of stores, situated at the corner of Congress and Water streets. The room occupied by the Post Office was about fifty feet square ; then a space of about fifty feet for the convenience of boxholders, and the Reading Room requiring about another fifty feet, towards Liberty Square.

Aaron Hill was postmaster, but I never heard of anybody who knew him personally, except his clerks. The business factotum was Leonard Holmes, and he had an assistant, David Childs, who attended the boxes, and about four or five younger clerks to do the rest of the work. The

Southern and Eastern mails were taken to and from the Post Office by the stages, which carried them in the baggage rack behind the stage. Any one mail could be carried in an ordinary hand-cart. After a while, Post Office and Reading Room were removed to the old State House, occupying the whole of the first floor. The Post Office being on the Cornhill end, and Topliff's room facing down State street. Here they were when the writer left Boston, as a residence, nearly fifty years ago. This was before Nath Greene was postmaster.

Everybody must know why the old burial-ground between the Tremont House and Park Street Church is called the "Granary." But everybody *don't* know that in the old Granary building, the first suit of sails for the old frigate "Constitution" was made by my father. Reason—because his sail-loft was not large enough to spread the sails in, and Charles Bulfinch, who was his old friend and "Cheerman of the Se-lectmen," gave him permission to use the Granary building.

This reminds me that I have a little real estate behind the Granary walls, and have a right therefore to be disgusted with a very common council which authorized the desecration of my property, by the cutting down of those hundred and fifty year old elm trees, to make way for a railway track. It is safe to guess that not three members of that common council were Boston born boys; only foreigners could have perpetrated such an outrage. The next thing you may expect within twenty years will be the levelling of Copp's and Beacon Hills.

It would only involve the destruction of the old North Church and of the State House which would then be an hundred years old. What's that to men whose grandfathers even were not Bostonians?

During the war of 1812, there was an old vessel fitted up as a prison ship ; she was moored in the mill-pond, alongside a new street which had been made, leading from Hanover street to Charlestown Bridge. The vessel lay within ten feet of the wharf, and a dozen prisoners might have been seen any day, on their way to Faneuil Hall, to get provisions for the day. These fellows fared a good deal better than our poor boys did at Dartmoor prison.

I remember seeing Commodore Hull march up State street with Capt. Dacres having his arm, after the capture of the "Guerriere" by the "Constitution." And, in company with many others, saw, from one of the islands in the harbor, the fight between the "Chesapeake" and "Shannon." Two days before, saw poor Lawrence in State street.

"From grave to gay, is often but a step." Seventy-five years ago there was but one theatre in Boston. That was called "The Theatre," and was at the corner of Federal street and Franklin Square. Its proprietor and manager was Snelling Powell. He was not a play actor, but his wife was, and a magnificent lady she was too. Powell's residence was in Theatre Alley, and was connected with the rear of the theatre.

The writer hereof was taken to the theatre for the first time about seventy-three years ago. The regular company consisted of Mrs. Powell, Mr. and Mrs. Duff, Mr. and Mrs. Darley, Mr. and Mrs. Entwistle, Mr. Bernard, Mr. Dickenson, (later Jas. A. Dickson) and some minor actors. The first play I ever saw was the *Forty Thieves*, with all the above names in the cast except Mr. and Mrs. Duff. George Barrett here found his lovely wife in Miss Henry.

About this time saw George Frederick Cooke in the characters of Sir Archy, Sir Pertinax, and others. He was followed by Thomas Cooper, the great American. At that time the call-boy of the theatre, who was a protégé of my father, was an inmate of our family and my playmate. He afterwards went to New York, and was one of her most distinguished clergymen. Now retired, and uniformly designated "venerable."

The Tremont Theatre was not built until many years afterwards. After William Pelby didn't succeed in his management, he induced some of his friends to build a theatre for him, somewhere down on the Mill-pond lands; believe it was called the Warren Theatre. If so, why?

In 1805 the number of book-sellers and publishers, was quite small, compared to the present army. First came Manning & Loring, Cornhill and Spring Lane; Munroe & Francis, Cornhill and Water street; Lincoln & Edmands, Cornhill, two doors below Court street, and Caleb Bingham, whose store was demolished to make room for



New Cornhill. Caleb Bingham was a very handsome gentleman; he and Col. Apthorp were considered two of the finest looking men in town, and both were thought to resemble Gen. Washington in features.

Samuel T. Armstrong was an apprentice to Manning & Loring, and when his time was out he started a printing office and bookstore at No. 50 Cornhill. About that time he was captain of the Warren Phalanx, a uniformed infantry company of Charlestown. In later years Crocker & Brewster, both apprentices to Mr. Armstrong, became his successors. Lincoln & Edmands' business was mostly in publishing Baptist books, and also a Baptist monthly magazine. Cummings & Hilliard also had a bookstore up near the Old South, their trade was generally in school books, and they supplied largely the text books for Cambridge College. Mr. Cummings was the author of a school geography (?) Joseph West also kept a bookstore in Cornhill, and afterwards formed a partnership with Lemuel Blake, as West & Blake, and later as West, Blake & Richardson.

Josiah and Benjamin Loring were brothers, but were not in business together. They, and Andrew J. Allen all had stores in State street, and were manufacturers of blank books for banks, insurance companies and merchants. They also sold general stationery, charts, sextants and other articles used by sea-faring men. Josiah Loring was the first person in the United States who used the ruling machine for blank books; believe he was the in-



ventor of it. Oliver C. Greenleaf, a polished gentleman and bachelor kept a general stationery store, with fancy goods, in Court street, near Cornhill.

Those were the days when Boston was governed by Boston born men; the above named gentlemen, and such as they, with the Bryants, Otis', Perkins' and the like, formed the Boards of Selectmen (before 1825). *They* never would have voted to have those old elms cut down. It makes me sad to think of the desecration. So, melancholy-ly,

OXYGEN-AIRIAN.

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OUT-OF-TOWN, *July*, 1880.

*My young friend :*

It is rather a high temperature to write, or even think about dancing, but I jot down the first thing which comes to my mind. Seventy-five years since, there was but a single room in Boston in which great dinners, balls, and concerts could be given. This was Concert Hall, on the corner of Hanover and Court streets. For many years it was kept by a man named Eaton, and, with the exception of the official dinners and meetings at Faneuil Hall, it was the only place for flower shows, dancing parties, ventriloquists, and other kinds of shows. There were a couple of dancing masters at that time, who had but small accommodations for other than small classes in their parlors; and there are doubtless several grandmothers in Boston to-day who re-

member with pleasure the good times they used to have at the sociables in Concert Hall, under George Shaffer and Master Turner.

From seventy to seventy-five years since, the principal taverns in Boston were Earle's Coffee House, in Hanover street, on premises now part of the American House; the Eastern Stage Office, No. 45 Ann street, and Patterson's, in Elm street. The first was the stopping place of the Southern mail coaches, that is, the stages to Worcester, Springfield, Hartford, New Haven and New York; all the stages for Newburyport, Portsmouth and Portland had their headquarters at 45 Ann street (better known to everybody then as Davenport's, Hale's or Wilde's, "under the arch"), and the Salem, Watertown, Medford, Plymouth, and some other lines of stages, stopped at and started from Enoch Patterson's.

The stable accommodations at all these places were very extensive, sufficiently so to accommodate several hundred horses and vehicles; for many persons would travel to town in their own chaises, or carriages; and leaving those vehicles at the stable, would take up their own quarters with friends in town. There was then a daily line of stages to and from Haverhill, driven on alternate days by their owners, Hiram Plummer and Samuel Prime, both wealthy and much esteemed gentlemen. The headquarters of the Haverhill stages were 45 Ann street.

This famous (in those days) old tavern was, at the commencement of this century, the family resi-

dence of the Codmans. The house stood back from Ann street some hundred feet, with a fine garden in front, extending to the street, and overlooking the harbor, there not being a single building between the house and the water. About 1802 or 1803, the front of the garden was covered by two three-story brick buildings, a wide archway in the centre being left for stages to drive around the house to the extensive stables on Centre street. This house was first kept as a tavern by Captain Palmer (a daughter of whom now lives in Boston), who was succeeded by Davenport (father of E. L. D., the actor), Hale, Davenport (again), and the brothers Ephraim and Solomon Wildes. Don't know their successors, until the whole was swept away.

There are many yet living who remember with pleasure some of the old drivers of stages in the olden time. They were always good, substantial American men, and were fully the equals of those who rode behind them. If any should recall the names of Aleck Brown, Sam. and Jo. Robinson, Jack Mendum, William and James Potter, or Willis Barnaby, they will thank me for bringing them to mind. The latter gentleman is the only person I ever heard who had literally "looked into his own heart," or rather at it. An internal disease required that an incision should be made over his heart, and by placing a looking glass before it, he could see the beatings of that organ.

Nearly all the other taverns in town were more specially for the accommodation of market people who brought in vegetables, poultry, fruit, eggs,

butter, &c., &c. These all had extensive stable room and sheds, and the principal one, the Dock Square Tavern, had a yard which ran through to Elm street, and could "put up" hundreds of horses and wagons. Before the Tremont House was built, this old tavern was kept for many years by Simeon Boyden, who afterwards went to New York and opened the Astor House. Asher Davenport kept it in 1816.

The Indian Queen Tavern was in Bromfield's Lane, probably where the Bromfield House now is. The Sun Tavern was at the end of Battery-march street corner of Hamilton street. The Lion Tavern and the Lamb were both in Newberry street, between Winter and Boylston streets, same side. The Green Dragon was in a street or lane opposite Union street (Friend street?) This was not so much of an inn, as a chop-house or club-house. One or two masonic lodges met here before the Hall was built in Ann street, just out of Union street.

It was probably between sixty and seventy years since, that the Commercial Coffee House was built, foot of Milk street, and afterwards the Marlboro' was opened. This is the first public house in Boston which was christened "Hotel" from the start. When steamboats first began to run on the Sound, between New York and Providence, it was from the Marlboro' Hotel that the stages started with the passengers for the steamboats. And it was quite a pleasant sight of a morning to see twelve to fifteen stages in a line, driving out over Roxbury

Neck. When the Providence railroad was built the stage people were not at all alarmed, and for a long time kept their stages going, threatening to kill the railroad!

Somewhere about 1813 my father purchased a small farm in Bradford, on the Merrimac River, and one day he had some urgent business in Boston, so he started early on a Summer morning, in his "one-horse shay," a genuine Raynor, and drove to Reading for breakfast, thence to Boston, where he was engaged in business several hours. Returning, he gave his horse a rest and feed at Andover, and arrived home early in the evening. The whole county of Essex rung with the news that Ben. H. had gone from Bradford to Boston and back *in one day*. Well, fifty-six miles a day for a horse is pretty good work; but now dozens of people breakfast in Haverhill and Bradford, attend to their daily business in Boston, and return home to dinner.

This paragraph has nothing particular to do with old Boston, but writing about stages reminds me that about 1818, my father resided in Hanover street, in the mansion owned by John Coffin Jones. Lyman Beecher's meeting house was built on the site of the house. Directly opposite lived our then family doctor. One day the writer happened to be standing in the street, and the New York mail stage came rushing down at a furious rate. In the opposite gutter was a little shaver in petticoats, who had strayed like a lost lamb from the opposite yard and was studiously investigating the contents

of said gutter. Just before the stage reached the child, the writer rushed across, picked him up and slung him over the fence. Perhaps it was not of much consequence at the time, but if that child had been killed Nath. B. Shurtleff would never have been Mayor of Boston.

The steps of the Exchange Coffee House were much used by James Wilson, the town crier, to announce the auction sales of Whitwell & Bond, Thomas K. Jones & Co., David Hale (afterwards of *N. Y. Journal Commerce*), and other auctioneers, who did chiefly congregate in Kilby street, near State. Jimmy was a great humorist, and altho' he made his living by crying, he was always in a most jovial mood. He generally closed the formal announcement of an auction by some quizzical remark to a bystander, for he knew everybody, and was on familiar terms with all sorts and conditions of men.

Jimmy Wilson was often at his post about nine o'clock in the evening, ringing his bell loudly for several minutes to collect a large crowd, and then announcing a lost child, or a lost pocket-book. His account of the agony of bereaved parents would be heart-rending, when he would suddenly explode a joke which would start the crowd off, roaring.

In the stage coach days of seventy odd years ago, it was the custom for travelers to leave their names on a call book at the stage office, and the coaches would often be an hour going from street to street picking up passengers, returning to stage

office in time to start punctually at the hour. On the arrival of the stages in town, probably half the passengers would stop at the stage house; others who desired it would be carried to any part of the town. Boston was then not so "sizeable" as now, the number of inhabitants in 1810 being only about 35,000.

Yours, very truly,

OXYGEN-AIRIAN.

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OUT-OF-TOWN, *July*, 1880.

*My young friend:*

There were very few gentlemen in Boston, who, seventy years ago, would think it was possible for them to wear other than an English hat. There were three or four prominent hatters who made it a specialty to import hats ordered by their regular customers. One was Colonel Daniel Messenger, whose store was in Newberry street, corner of Sheafes' lane, somewhere near where Chickering's piano factory now is; and another was William Barry, who had a store in the old State House. There was also a hatter who had not quite so stylish customers; his name was Sturgis; kept at the corner of Ann and Centre streets. He was father of Captain Josiah Sturgis, for many years in command of revenue cutters; and whose extensive epaulettes and muchness of gold lace must be yet remembered by many. His sister Lucy was married to Joshua Bates, of Baring Bros., London, and their daughter Elizabeth became the



wife of the Dutch minister to England, Mynheer Van Der Weyer.

This hat business came to my mind to day while thinking over something which my father told me when I was a little boy, in order to impress upon my mind that "it always paid well to be polite." He and Harrison Gray Otis were strong political friends, and were in the habit of speaking very plainly to each other. One day while walking together, father said, "Brother Otis, why is it that your name is in the mouth of everybody as being such a fine man, such a perfect gentleman, such a good man, &c.? Now please tell me what have you ever done to entitle you to be so bepraised?" "The thing is very simple, Brother Ben; go up to Col. Messinger's and you will see by his books, that every year he orders four hats for me, and only one for you; *I* bow to everybody I meet, and *you don't*; hence I wear out four times as many hats as you do" Mr. Otis made a satisfactory Mayor some twenty years afterward, probably counterbalancing his suavity of manner, against the energy and business push of his predecessor, Josiah Quincy.

The papers have said something about a grand celebration to be held in Boston next fall. Wonder if there will be a sufficient number of Boston born 1801-ers to fill an omnibus? My schoolmates at Muliiken's, seventy years ago, are all gone. The boys who sat with me at the head of the first class, have all left. Brad. Lincoln, Sam and Bob Stodder, Seth and David Barnes, (twins), Jas. Arrock,



Will Lienow ; all away ahead of me now. By the way, if the grandchildren of any of those boys call on you to inquire about me, please give them my address, and paternal blessing.

Oh, yes, there is one left, or was, in 1875, when this deponent last visted Boston, to assist at the centennial of Bunker Hill. This boy went into a Boston bank soon after leaving school, and never did anything else except to go out of it. I knew him, although he did not recognize me, not having seen me for sixty years. He greeted me as if he had been asked for a discount without collaterals, and hurried off very hastily, looking quite *wild*. He used to live in Back street ; now probably in Avenue de Commonwealth. I wended my way to my host, the Temple Club.

It may possibly interest some of your friends to know that two of their favorites in the theatrical profession were Boston boys. John Gilbert, for many years at Wallack's, New York, was a born North-ender, and when a boy of sixteen was smashing things generally (most boys do) in the crockery store of Atkins, opposite the Old South ; and at the same time, E. L. Davenport was a boy in a cloth house in Kilby street. The early friendship of the two boys, increased in strength until the death of the latter, as has been elsewhere stated. Mr. Asher Davenport, the father of E. L. D., kept the old tavern in Dock Square, about sixty-five years ago, long before Bayden, and it was at this house that the writer found that rare bird, a loving, kindly mother-in-law.

A little less than seventy years ago, my dear (?) step-mother thought it would improve my mind by putting me in charge of Saml. T. Armstrong, No. 50 Cornhill, to learn the printer's trade. To slightly paraphrase the language of the late lamented Isaac Watts, D. D., "her only care was to increase her store, and keep her only (step) son, myself, as far away from home as possible." Hence we became a printer's devil, and spent a good deal of time in learning it, by blacking shoes, splitting and carrying wood, lugging market basket, acting as a living aqueduct for getting clean water up, and dirty water down three flights of stairs. Nevertheless, in reading proof, the undersigned did master the whole of Scott's Family Bible ("in 6 vols. royal octavo, with marg. ref. and prac. observ."), as can be certified to by Uriel Crocker, or Osmyn Brewster. I wonder if they remember, as well as I do, the terrifically heavy bread which was doled out to all of us boys when we boarded with Mrs. ———, in Court street, at \$1.00 per week, per each victim. Of all the force which assisted at the first edition of Scott's Family Bible, &c., &c., none are above ground besides Uriel, Osmyn and yours truly. If any of our fellow sufferers had any of Mrs. ———'s heavy bread in them when they left here, there will be no resurrection of *their* bodies (creed notwithstanding), they being too heavily loaded.

About 1816 a strange feeling of uneasiness came over me, and nothing would do, but a voyage, "strange countries for to see." Hence, took

passage (in the fore-castle, at \$7 per month) in ship Suffolk, belonging to Ropes & Peckman. Knocked about several years in Europe, Asia, Africa and the West Indies, until 1826, when I bid farewell to the "sea, the sea, the open sea," professionally, with a handle to my name (not Mister), have since been working along shore, and it has been rumored that I have been of some service to my countrymen in sundry ways.

Now, stop that. I think I hear you say "what has this got to do with old Boston?" Echo answers through me, "nothing at all." But why did you ask me in your last note to tell you something about myself? It is your fault altogether; for since these sketches were commenced at your request, to furnish a biographical memorial to Old Mother Boston, you will notice how hard has been the endeavor to keep out of sight that ugly letter "I." It has been a constant struggle to have that egotistical vowel kept as much out of sight as possible. So cease your growling, and your apology will be accepted by

Yours, as ever,

OXYGEN-AIRIAN.

OUT-OF-TOWN, *August*, 1880.

*My young friend:*

Perhaps you will think that what is in this communication has very little to do with the autobiography of Boston in the olden time. If you do so speculate, guess, allow, believe or reckon, you are mistaken. *Firstly*, you will see how easily a great good was accomplished, and *Secondly*, you may have some suggestions to make to certain shipowners, merchants and others, who are to hold a convention in Boston in October, to discuss matters relative to the shipping interests of the country. It will be well if they can devise some plan to re-introduce the American flag to the ocean upon our own merchantmen, and perhaps they may be induced to try to do something to improve the breed, or rather to create a new brood of American sailors. Now, three-quarters of the officers of our ships are foreign born, as are nineteen-twentieths of the sailors which man our petty mercantile marine.

Somewhere about sixty years ago, (say fifty-seven), the good ship Canton Packet, owned by Thos. H. Perkins, left Central wharf, Boston, bound to China. Her commander was a gentleman of the old school, a first-class navigator, thorough-bred merchant and true Christian. His demeanor was so quiet that he might have been mistaken for a country parson. The first and third mates were regular sailors, every inch of them, not too arbi-

trary or severe, but seemingly having this idea constantly in their minds, "we must get all the work possible out of the boys; study navigation? pish!"

The second mate was much the youngest of all the officers; quiet and gentle in giving orders, and a great favorite with the men. A few days after leaving port, when everything had been made snug, the second mate informed the crew that it was the captain's wish that the men should not waste all their time, during their "watch below," in cards and other useless amusements. They might read, sing, play or mend clothes, but he didn't wish them to utterly waste their time in nonsense.

The crew was composed entirely of Americans; several Boston boys, the rest from adjacent towns and Cape Cod. All had been fairly educated, with two exceptions, an old salt named Jerry, and George, a mulatto. The captain proposed that a portion of every watch below should be devoted to study; that "'tween decks, forrard," should be the school-room, and that he would teach navigation, mathematics, lunar observations, &c. The suggestion was gratefully received by the crew; the captain gave his daily instructions (except on Sundays), in which he was constantly aided by the second mate, when his duties did not require him to be on deck. The ship went to Whampoa, Manila, to a port in Northern Europe, and returned to Boston after an absence of fifteen or eighteen months. At the end of the voyage, there was not one of that crew (with the exceptions mentioned) who could

not, in case of an emergency, have navigated that ship to any required port.

After the ship had been secured to the wharf (by the crew, not by stevedores,) and the crew were preparing to visit their families and friends, all hands were called aft, and were told that "as you boys loaded the ship, you can, if you choose, discharge her, receiving stevedore's wages." A very short consultation on the "fo'csle" settled the question in the affirmative. The boys went to their homes, or friends at night; took an early breakfast and in due time the ship was discharged. The next day, a variation of the formula was made, "boys the owner is going to have the ship hauled up for the present; her sails are to be unbent, rigging unrove, spars to be sent down, in fact we want the ship stripped, and as you have already rigged her on the voyage, you can do the job if you like and get rigger's wages." The job was taken; the ship hauled to a wharf at the North-end, and when the crew was paid off as seamen, stevedores and riggers, they were complimented very highly by the venerable owner. I don't believe such a case has been duplicated in any port of the United States, within the past fifty years.

*Every one of that crew* (exceptions noted) went out on his next voyage as an officer of a vessel. One of them took command of a brig.

The old ship, a few years ago, met the same fate as the fellow did at the Delaware whipping post—she died of too much whaling. The good captain, the first and third mates, and all the crew besides

those to be mentioned, have all finished their last voyages. The good assistant schoolmaster, having advanced in his profession to shipmaster and owner, has for many years been identified with the commercial interests, not only of Boston, but of the world. He is wealthy, a nautical inventor, a scholar, merchant and gentleman. To sum him up in three words, he is Robert Bennett Forbes.

Capt. Forbes, "old Jerry," and the writer hereof, are all which remain of the "Canton Packet" and her crew of 1823. "Old Jerry"\* was in the "Home" in Boston a short time since, doubtless provided for by the "second mate."

Now you see, my young friend, why you should have a talk with those Conventioners. It is all nonsense to build a vessel in Maine, fill her up with Scotch, Danes, Swedes, Lascars or Sandwich Islanders, with a captain having papers of naturalization, and then blow about encouraging American commerce.

That the Lord may move this people to encourage, not only the making of American vessels, but also the making of American sailors, this petitioner will ever pray, remaining, meanwhile,

Yours very truly,

OXYGEN-AIRIAN.

\* Capt. Jeremiah Tinkham died since the foregoing was written.—*Author*,



## APPENDIX.

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OUT-OF-TOWN, *September 14th*, 1883.

It may not much interest the readers of the preceding pages to be told the following story, but as it probably cannot be paralleled in the present century, I have concluded to write it out.

In 1817, or thereabouts, there were three apprentices in a printing establishment on Cornhill, Boston. The oldest one was 18 years of age, and was foreman of the printing office; the next, a few months younger, was at the head of the book-store connected with the establishment; the youngest was what is technically called "the Printer's Devil," and the writer hereof is that same.

This day (September 14th, 1883), the two seniors called on the junior, and they had a very pleasant chat about "old times." The seniors were partners in business sixty-five years; one is president of a banking institution in Boston; the other an active business man, a director in one of the leading railroads. Both are wealthy, and accompanied by two of their grandchildren have just taken a trip to the White Mountains, New York, and other places. The united ages of these three "fellow apprentices" is two hundred and fifty-four years and six months.

There, do you think that "re-union" can be duplicated in any part of the country? I don't.

THE AUTHOR.













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