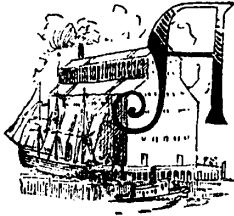


East Boston (Noddle's Island).

MAVERICK. — BATTLE-DAYS. — YANKEE CLIPPERS. — BREED'S ISLAND.



A MILE and a half north of South Boston, across the inner harbor (at whose western end rise the wharves and hills of Boston), is the Island Ward of East Boston, covering more than a square mile, and connected with the city by three steam-ferris, and with the mainland on the north by several bridges. This locality was for over two centuries known as Noddle's Island, from William Noddle, who was probably sent out by Brereton, and settled upon it in 1629, before Boston was founded. This pioneer was a bachelor, and the name is extinct. Sir William Brereton received an early grant of it; but the first conspicuous settler was Samuel Maverick, Gent., who erected a small fortified mansion, with artillery to defend it, and was in comfortable possession and authority long before Winthrop's fleet entered the Bay. The Puritans, coming later, allowed Maverick to remain here, on payment yearly of "a fatt weather, a fatt hogg, or XLs. in money;" although it is most likely that he was an adherent of the Gorges government, together with Walford, Blackstone, and Morton. He certainly lived under the stigmas of being an Episcopalian and a Royalist, and met with annoying persecutions from the Boston authorities. Maverick was the first New-England slaveholder, when Capt. Pierce brought negroes hither from the Tortugas, in 1638, and sold them in Boston. In 1645, after La Tour's terrible enemy, D'Aulnay, had stormed the fort at St. John, and sailed away with his plate and treasures, leaving Madame La Tour dead of a broken heart, the unhappy chieftain came to Maverick's little castle, where he spent the dreary winter. Not long afterwards the godly brethren of Boston made new encroachments on the rights of their prelatial neighbor, and he found himself forced to depart from the fair island-home. Some years later he died at New Amsterdam.

During their time of suffering from persecution, about 1660-70, the Baptists of Boston used to meet here, under the title of "The Church of Jesus Christ worshipping at Noddle's Island in New England." The poor fellows labored under all sorts of disadvantages in town; but in this insular sanctuary their worship was undisturbed, until the slow liberalization of Massachusetts gave them opportunity to enter Boston as accepted Christian brethren. A century later the comfortable Williams mansion was the pride

of the island; and Putnam, Knox, Lincoln, and the clergy of Boston made frequent visits here. The house was graced by six comely daughters, whose harpsichord was the forerunner of musical Boston; and the hills on the island gave pasturage to 43 horses and 223 cattle. After this house was burned, in the skirmish of 1775, Washington gave Mr. Williams one of the Continental barracks at Cambridge, which he moved down to the island, and remodelled into a new mansion. During the siege of Boston a score of young ladies left the beleaguered town, and took refuge on Noddle's Island, perhaps in this well-known house of Williams. One of these was especially dear to William Tudor, the judge-advocate-general of the American army; and he used to visit her frequently, passing from Cambridge to Chelsea, where he undressed, and tied his clothing in a bundle, fastened upon his head; after which he swam to the island, resumed his garments, and called upon the fair lady. The result of these Hellespontic wooings was a happy marriage, whence came three sons and two daughters, in later days patricians of the good Commonwealth.

Passing abruptly from love to war, we find that on this same island was fought the second battle of the Revolution, and the first in which the American artillery was used. On May 27, 1775, Gen. John Stark and 300 men were sent to clear out the live stock on Noddle's Island; and after they had driven 400 sheep inland from Breed's Island, they engaged the British marines on Noddle's, but were driven back when large re-enforcements of regulars crossed from Boston. In the mean time Gen. Gage sent a schooner armed with sixteen small guns, and eleven barges full of marines, up Chelsea Creek, to cut off the raiders; while Putnam came to their relief with 300 men and two guns. The fight lasted all night; but, although fresh troops poured over from Boston, the Americans forced the crew of the schooner to abandon her and flee, and drove back the other vessels. They took the artillery from the captured vessel, and then burnt her, and retired to the mainland, having inflicted severe loss on the British forces. Lord Percy was immensely disgusted at this affair, and wrote home to his father: "The rebels have lately amused themselves with burning the houses on an island just under the admiral's nose; and a schooner, with four carriage-guns and some swivels, which he sent to drive them off, unfortunately got ashore, and the rebels burned her." Philip Freneau, the poet of the Revolution, makes Gen. Gage speak thus, at this time, referring to the partial famine caused by the American raids on the islands:—

"Three weeks, ye gods! nay, three long years it seems,
 Since *roast beef* I have touched, except in dreams.
 In sleep, choice dishes to my view repair:
 Waking, I gape, and champ the empty air.

Come, let us plan some object, ere we sleep,
And drink destruction to the rebel sheep.
On neighboring isles uncounted cattle stray,
Fat beeves and swine, — an ill-defended prey :
These are fit visions for my noon-day dish."

In 1780 there were many sick men on the French fleet in the harbor, and barracks were erected on the island for hospitals. The poor fellows christened their gloomy quarters *L'Ile de France*; but small comfort did they find in that, with dead soldiers being borne to the burying-ground every hour. The mortality was serious, and many a good Gaulish veteran was laid to his eternal rest on the hills of Noddle's Island. After the British forces evacuated Boston the island was strongly fortified.

The same works were renewed and strengthened in 1812, under the name of Fort Strong, having been re-erected by various patriotic societies, and guilds of tradesmen and mechanics, each of which marched to the place on their appointed days. After the removal of the barracks in 1833, the walls of the fort were allowed to waste away. In 1819 Lieuts. White and Finch of the United-States Navy fought a duel here; and the former was killed, according to the code of honor.

The growth of the city of East Boston on these historic pastures of Noddle's Island has been at once rapid and solid. In 1833 there were 8 inhabitants here; in 1835, 600; in 1847, 6,500; in 1880, close upon 30,000. The island is now covered with paved streets, bordered by a surprising number of trees, and the houses of a great industrial and maritime community. The population of the island is about equal to that of Mobile, Savannah, Memphis, Trenton, Utica, or Wheeling.

Some of the finest ships that ever sailed were constructed here by Donald McKay, vessels beautifully finished and furnished, and built for great speed. The *Flying Cloud*, 1,700 tons, made the passage to San Francisco in 89 days, being the quickest ever known. The *Sovereign of the Seas*, 2,400 tons, was the longest and sharpest clipper ever built, and once made a run of 430 geographical miles in 24 hours. She earned \$200,000 in less than a year. The *Empress of the Seas* held high rank among the famous clippers of the same epoch. The *Great Republic* was the largest wooden sailing-ship ever built. Her 4,556 tons included 1,500,000 feet of hard pine, 336 tons of iron, and an immense amount of white oak. She sometimes made 19 knots an hour, under full sail; and went from New York to San Francisco in 91 days. Between 1848 and 1858 more than 170 vessels were built at East Boston; of which 99 exceeded 1,000 tons each, and 9 were above 2,000 tons. These were the famous racers, which swept around Cape Horn, and up through the South Seas, crowded with the Argonauts in search of El Dorado. Others belonged to the Liverpool packet-line, and

made regular trips across the Atlantic for many years, exciting the keen and jealous admiration of our British cousins.

The Atlantic Works, on this island, have built iron steamships for Russia, Egypt, Paraguay, China, and the East Indies: the monitors *Nantucket* and *Casco*; the turrets of several other iron-clads; the engines for many American frigates; and entire fleets of ferry-boats and tugs. Other neighboring shipyards and works have done their share in creating that famous American marine which once was the wonder of all maritime nations.

Extensive and well-matured plans are in process of elaboration, by which the broad flats to the eastward will be converted into docks of the first magnitude, capable of accommodating the largest ocean-steamships, and easily approached from the deep-water channels. What with the great wharves of the Cunard and other lines; the elevators, ship-yards, and marginal railways; and the Grand-Junction wharves, East Boston is the most important part of the Puritan city, in a commercial point of view.

Breed's Island, north-east of East Boston, was first known as *Susanna Island*, in honor of the daughter of Sir William Brereton, to whom it was granted (in 1628) by John Gorges. The Puritans found the practical name of *Hog Island* more to their taste, and thus it remained for more than a century. Late in the last century it was named *Belle Isle* by Russell, who owned it; but the old name clung tenaciously, and is still sometimes heard. In 1687 Judge Sewall, in the presence of numerous chosen witnesses, took possession of Hog Island, by the ancient rite of "taking Livery and seised of the Iland by Turf and Twigg and the House." Here he built a wharf and planted various kinds of trees, and kept a large flock of sheep. He held the domain for many years, making divers improvements, and deriving a fair revenue therefrom. About the year 1800 the island was bought by John Breed, a wealthy English gentleman, who had been well-nigh heart-broken by the death of his betrothed bride, near the time appointed for the wedding, and afterwards sought only to bury himself from the world. Here he had a rich hay-farm, with a score of workmen, an overseer, and a house-keeper. He built the house whose remains are now visible on the south slope of the hill,—a singular stone structure, 200 feet long and one story high, with terraced gardens in front of it, and nurseries in which nectarines, apricots, and other fruits were cultivated. But in time death carried off this peaceful agricultural hermit, and his domain passed to other uses. It is now being rapidly taken up as a seaside settlement; and upon the long and lofty ridge many pretty cottages have already been erected, each with its view of sea or harbor, or rugged hills of Essex.