

## Clock Advertisements

Reverie's Day Book shows three charges against Simon Willard for prints to be placed in clocks, as follows:-

April 11, 1781 "M<sup>r</sup> Simon Willard D<sup>r</sup>/ To printing a number of sheets of/ Prints to go into time pieces 1-12-0."

June 14, 1781 "M<sup>r</sup> Simon Willard D<sup>r</sup>/ To printing 18 Sett of prints to/ go into time pieces 0-18-0."

July 3, 1781 "M<sup>r</sup> Simon Willard D<sup>r</sup>/ To printing 18 Sett of prints/ for your time pieces 0-18-0/ To Cash paid for Vermillion 0-3-0/ To 100 prints for your B<sup>r</sup> Aron for Watches 0-6-0."

All of these charges were made against Simon Willard. Simon was the second oldest of the Willard brothers who were clock-makers. Benjamin was born in 1743, Simon in 1753, Ephraim in 1755 and Aaron in 1757. Benjamin had a shop in <sup>Boston</sup> ~~Providence~~ and sold tall clocks in Roxbury as early as 1771. Simon spent most of his business life in Roxbury, and made ball clocks and wall clocks, mostly the latter. Ephraim lived at Medford during the eighteenth century and made comparatively few clocks. Aaron established his clock business in Boston, and later <sup>and in 1792 returned to Boston.</sup> moved to Roxbury. He made clocks on a large scale, employing many workmen.

Although all of the above entries for clock prints were charged against Simon Willard, no print with Revere's characteristic engraving has ever, to my knowledge, been found in a Simon Willard. In the 1790's he used a printed label, printed by Isaiah Thomas, Jr., advertising his various kinds of clocks, and giving directions as to operation.

All of the clock labels, surely engraved by Revere, carry the name of Aaron Willard and are found in Aaron Willard clocks. I have located more than <sup>size?</sup> twenty. The label is  $6\frac{1}{4}$  inches high by  $3\frac{3}{4}$  wide, to the edge of the engraving. It shows a Chippendale type of border of scroll work and flowers, with a shelf clock at the top, and with the engraved advertisement "Common House Clocks, Table Spring Clocks, and Time-peices, of different constructions made by Aaron Willard Boston," followed by "Directions for setting up the Clock." There are three varieties - the first with "Roxbury," a second with "Boston," and a third with "Boston" and a line inserted at the bottom "to make it go faster screw the pendulum up, slower screw down." The chronological

order of the three labels is not certain. All of the three labels are herewith reproduced. The engraving is in Revere's characteristic style, both in the border and in the lettering. The fact that no such labels are found in Simon Willard clocks, and all located are in Aaron Willard clocks, would lead to the belief that Simon was assuming the charge in the Day Book in behalf of his brother Aaron. This belief is heightened by the fact that the last Revere charge is for one hundred prints for "your Brother Aaron for Watches".

I have not attempted to list the owners of all clocks which still retain the engraved label. I have found over twenty and have a dozen photographs. The print is reproduced, <sup>in slightly reduced form,</sup> in Wallace Nutting's Clock Book, 1924, plate 112, and in his Furniture Treasury, 1928, vol. 2, no 3452.

As for the watch paper engraved for Aaron Willard, the Revere Day Book <sup>in July, 1781</sup> specifically charges Simon Willard with six shillings for 100 prints for "your B<sup>ro</sup> Aaron for Watches". The search for such

a watch paper has gone on for many years. In 1935 John M. Phillips of Yale University acquired such a paper from Francis H. Bigelow of Cambridge. He gave it in 1947 to Mark Bortman of Boston, and Mr. Bortman in turn presented it to the Antiquarian Society in 1948. The paper is circular in shape, to fit <sup>the back of</sup> a watch, and shows an angel blowing a horn at the top, a branch of a tree, a watch, Father Time, a rooster, and in the center the advertisement of "A. Wallard Watch & Clock Maker Boston." It is typically engraved in Revere's style and is unquestionably his work. It is reproduced herewith. The Bortman copy shows only the outside ornamental border line, but another copy recently acquired by the Antiquarian Society shows also an outside plain border line. The diameter of the label is  $1\frac{7}{8}$  inches, to the plain border line. The two copies owned by the Antiquarian Society are the only ones located.

May 29, 1929

Mr. W. G. A. Turner,  
Malden, Mass.

Dear Mr. Turner:

I was much pleased with your letter regarding Willard clocks and Revere advertisements. I was glad to know that it was Mr. A. L. Gooch of Wakefield who owns the clock in which is obviously a Revere print. Mr. J. C. Harvey, 660 Beacon St., Boston, also owns a tall clock with identically the same print, as I carefully compared his copy with that reproduced in Nutting's book. I am returning the Gooch photostat.

The Metropolitan Museum correspondence is interesting and I am naturally glad to know of Mr. Halsey's copy of the print. I think that there are two copies of this print in Providence collections, although as yet I have not learned whether they are identical with the two mentioned above. I am returning the Metropolitan Museum correspondence.

I copied all the Willard references in Paul Revere's Journal some fifteen years ago when these manuscripts were owned by Edward Revere. Our collection of Revere prints contains 49 out of the 54 known existing, therefore the clock print is one of the few which we lack. I have never seen or heard of any prints made by Revere for watches. I shall look forward with much interest to the receipt of the label from Mr. Condon and am really much indebted to you for your kindness in having him send it to us. For many years I have been working on a list of Revere's engravings, and have accumulated much information, if I could only get it ready for printing.

Needless to say, we were much pleased to have a photostat copy of "The Workingman's Friend", strictly a new item for our collection.

Yours very truly,

CSB.N

Librarian.

WORCESTER ART MUSEUM  
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS, U.S.A.

October 5, 1938

Mr. Clarence S. Brigham  
American Antiquarian Society  
Worcester, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Brigham:

I've just received a note from Mrs. Yves Henry Buhler, Assistant in Charge of Silver at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which is evidently in answer to the Antiquarian Society's request for information concerning labels made for Aaron Willard by Revere. She writes:

"Our Transcript last Saturday reported that someone in your establishment was looking for Willard watch-papers. It seems to me that John Phillips and I found one at the Dedham Historical Society between a couple of papers in an old watch and I send this word along in case you haven't heard of it."

I hope this may be of some help in your search.

Sincerely yours,

*Louisa Dussan*

*Phillips work me about this in 1936*

15. Transcripts  
**Paul Revere's**  
**Clock Labels**

*only 1938*

Paul Revere is known to have made 100 prints, or labels for Aaron Willard for watches. He charged Simon for these. None of them seem to have yet been found, or at least definitely traced. In 1781 Revere engraved and printed "a number of sheets of prints to go into time pieces" which may presumably have been some form of early Willard label. The American Antiquarian Society at Worcester is seeking documentary or definite information about such labels, and also about printed notices in any Willard clock previous to 1800.

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*Common House Clocks, Table  
Spring Clocks, and Time-pieces,  
of different constructions made by*

*Aaron Willard*

B O S T O N .

*DIRECTIONS for setting up the CLOCK.*

First plumb up the case in the place where it is to stand, and secure it; then put the Clock in the case, and hang on the pendulum and weights, observing that the heaviest weight be put on the pulley marked S. Wind up the lines on the barrels, taking care that they run regularly in the grooves, then put the pendulum in motion.

*to make it go faster screw the pendulum up, slower screw down.*