

## Trade Cards

**T**RADER CARDS, also called advertising cards, business cards, and shopkeepers' cards, were popular in England in the eighteenth century. America followed suit and previous to the Revolution, Henry Dawkins, James Smither and James Turner in Philadelphia, and Nathaniel Hurd in Boston, engraved many cards. Dawkins made some especially beautiful ones, notable for their elaborate Chippendale borders. George F. Dow reproduced many of these in two articles in *Old-Time New England* for April and July, 1936. The cards frequently displayed hanging signs or showed a symbol associated with the trade. Sometimes space was left on the card for description and prices of goods sold, and invariably the reverse was used for a bill of goods made out by hand.

Revere was especially adept in engraving advertising cards and bill-heads, and charges for them were often entered in his Day Books. He was especially fond of elaborate Chippendale borders and mantling, and evidently copied the designs of English cards. But few of Revere's cards have survived to the present day. Of a dozen or more which he is known to have engraved, only five are now to be found, four of them unique examples. All five are in the American Antiquarian Society collection. The five cards located are as follows.

Joshua Brackett. This is rather a bill-head than an advertising card, as it has, on the face, engraved lines for charges. At the top is an ornamental mantled frame with the bust of Cromwell. On ribbons above is the name "Joshua Brackett," and below "O. Cromwell's Head. School-Street," and underneath is the word "Boston." It is signed "P Revere sc." It measures  $6\frac{1}{4}$  inches high by  $3\frac{7}{8}$ , to the edge of the plate mark. (See Plate no. 54.)

Joshua Brackett for nearly twenty-five years was the proprietor of the well known Cromwell's Head Inn on School Street. His father, Anthony Brackett, had

established the Inn, and when he died in 1764 was succeeded by his widow. Upon her death in 1768, Joshua followed as inn-keeper. He was born in 1738, married Abigail Pond in 1763, and died in 1794 (see *Brackett Genealogy*, 1907, page 106). Revere in his Day Book charged Joshua Brackett for shoe and knee buckles in 1761, and made similar charges in 1762, 1763, 1781, and 1785. But there was no charge for engraving the bill-head. The plate was engraved before 1771, as that date appears in manuscript on a copy owned by Samuel A. Drake, seen by Goss, and mentioned in his *Paul Revere*, Volume 1, page 95. Joseph Callender, the Boston engraver, later engraved another version of the Cromwell's Head plate with the head of Cromwell facing to the front. It is reproduced in Alice Morse Earle's *Stage Coach and Tavern Days*, 1900, page 86, and there is another copy in the Bostonian Society which has a manuscript date of 1785.

William Breck. This Boston importer and merchant had a shop "at the Golden Key near the draw-Bridge." His business card, which is 7 inches high by  $5\frac{3}{8}$  wide to the edge of the plate mark, is set in a Chippendale frame with an elaborate mantling of flowers and leaves, and a large design of a key at the top. It is signed "P Revere sculp." Revere copied an English original for the frame and presumably his model was the trade card of Joseph Welch of London, hardware merchant. The Welch card is in the large collection of English trade cards owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. (See both cards Plate no. 55.) This frame served Revere as the model for the Breck card and also the William Jackson trade card.

Breck was a well known Boston merchant, who was born in 1745, married Margaret Thomas of Plymouth in 1771, settled at Claremont, New Hampshire, in 1794, and died in 1819 (see *Breck Genealogy*, 1889, page 39). He advertised his wares in the *Boston Gazette* of June 1, 1767, giving his location at the North End, near Hancock's Wharf. On the back of the American Antiquarian Society's copy of the print, William Breck signed a receipted bill, dated October 7, 1770. Revere did not enter in his Day Book the charge for engraving this print, but he did charge Breck eighteen shillings for three hundred prints under date of September 29, 1772. He also charged him two shillings, on March 25, 1774, for "a Print of Adams & Handcock," evidently the prints in the *Royal American Maga-*

zine of February and March, 1774, and for making a silver porringer in April, 1781.

Isaac Greenwood. The trade card of "Isaac Greenwood Ivory Turner Next door To Doctr John Clark's, at the North End Boston" is in plain script lettering, without ornamentation, and is signed "P Revere sculp." The measurements, to the outside of the border lines, are  $5\frac{3}{4}$  by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The card lists Greenwood's numerous items of turned work in ivory, wood, and metal, ending with "Makes Umberilloes." (See Plate no. 56.) In Revere's Day Book there are five charges against Isaac Greenwood, from 1762 to 1774, for minor kinds of engraving, such as "Engraving two Cane Heads," and payments on account. There is no charge entered for engraving a trade card.

Isaac Greenwood, Jr., born at Cambridge in 1730, married Mary P'ams in 1757, and died in 1803, carried on the business of mathematical instrument maker, ivory turner, and importer of hardware. After the Revolution he conducted the business of a dentist, making artificial teeth, and specialized in the making of umbrellas. There is a long account of him in Isaac J. Greenwood's *Greenwood Family*, 1934, pages 68-78, where the trade card is reproduced at page 74, and in Bernard W. Weinberger's *Introduction to History of Dentistry*, 1948, Volume 2, pages 119-134, where the card is reproduced at page 127. In the *Boston Gazette* of May 20, 1771, he advertised his manufacture of "umbrilloes," which was continued for several weeks. He also advertised in the *Boston Gazette* for May 29, 1769, August 10, 1772, and May 10, 1773. It was presumably in 1771 that his trade card was engraved by Revere. The card was at one time owned by the late Hollis French and was presented by him to the American Antiquarian Society in November, 1937.

William Jackson. The trade card of William Jackson, importer and merchant, is an artistic design set in a Chippendale frame. The lettering begins "William Jackson at the Brazen Head, next ye Town House Boston." At the top is an imaginary bust, on a pedestal, assumedly portraying a brazen, or brass, head. Although unsigned it is surely Revere's engraving. In fact, the card is identical in design with that of William Breck, except for the top ornament and the lettering. The measurements, to the plate lines, are  $6\frac{7}{8}$  by  $5\frac{3}{4}$  inches. The advertising

describes imports from England of cloths, linens, calicoes, and silks, as well as hardware of various kinds. On the back of the American Antiquarian Society copy is a receipt for £44, signed William Jackson and dated August 28, 1773. He advertised in the *Boston Evening Post* of October 17, 1768, that he "is just arrived . . . from London," and in the same paper of January 16, 1769, he printed a long description of his importations. Presumably the card was engraved in 1769. J. Tracy Wiggin of Attleborough found in 1957 a copy of this card with a receipt, dated October 16, 1769, on the back. It went to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association of Deerfield in 1959. (See Plate no. 56.)

William Jackson was a prominent and consistent Tory. As early as 1770 he continued to import British goods contrary to the sentiments of the majority of Boston merchants. The Sons of Liberty issued a broadside asking patriots not to buy from William Jackson (see Justin Winsor's *Narrative and Critical History of America*, Volume 6, page 80). He was one of the Addressers of Hutchinson in 1774 and of Gage in 1774 and 1775. With other Loyalists he purchased a large brig, filled it with imported goods, and set sail for Halifax in April, 1776. But the vessel was captured by a privateer and sent into Beverly. Jackson made his way finally to Boston where he was cast into jail, and there remained for one hundred and twenty-six days (see Albert Matthews, *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, 1906, Volume 8, page 99, and E. A. Jones's *Loyalists of Massachusetts*, 1930, page 178). He remained for a time in Boston, where he suffered several indignities, but after he was named in the banishment act of October 16, 1778, he left for England on a British ship. He is last recorded in the *Columbian Centinel* of March 28, 1810, as having died in England, aged seventy-nine.

Joseph Webb. The most elaborate of Revere's trade cards, in a Chippendale frame, with all kinds of utensils hung on the mantling—skillets, pots, kettles, pans, fire-backs, andirons, mortars, dividers, sash weights, and flat-irons. The card is headed "To be Sold by Joseph Webb at His Store near Olivers Dock Boston" and is signed "Paul Revere Sculp." The interior of the frame is filled with the names of the wares to be sold. The measurements, to the edge of the plate mark,

are  $7\frac{1}{8}$  by  $5\frac{7}{8}$  inches. The mantled frame is almost identical with that used for the Saint Peter's Lodge notification. (See Plate no. 54.)

Revere in his Day Book enters the charge for this trade card, under date of September 28, 1765, as follows: "Mr Joseph Webb Dr settled/ To Engraving a Copper Plate for Advertisements 3-0-0/ To 150 Advertisements Printing at 4-1 pr Hdd 0-7-0."

Joseph Webb, Jr., merchant and ship-chandler, was born in Boston, October 28, 1734, son of Joseph and Abigail Webb, and married in November, 1759, Penelope Phillips of Marshfield. In 1760 his shop, which was at the lower end of Water Street, suffered in the fire which destroyed much of the Boston business section. He began business again in Long Lane, later Federal Street, where he also had his residence, erected in 1767. In 1765 his place of business was at the head of Oliver's Dock. He was one of the leaders in colonial resistance, with Warren, Revere, and Otis. He was prominent as a Mason, being Master of Saint Andrew's Lodge in 1765-66, and Grand Marshal in 1769; and he was Grand Master of Massachusetts Grand Lodge from 1777 until his death, on April 26, 1787 (see sketch in Oliver A. Roberts's *History of Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company*, 1897, Volume 2, page 109).

The American Antiquarian Society has a receipted bill, signed by Joseph Webb, Jr., March 10, 1759, charging for kettles, pots, skillets, and other wares.

In Revere's Day Book there are many charges for engraving advertising cards and bill-heads for merchants, or for the sale of prints. But since no specimens of such cards have survived, there is no way of describing them, or proving that they were engraved. A list of such charges follows:

1762 August 18. "Mr. William Hichborn Dr/ To Cutting a Copper for hatt Prints 0-10-4/ To 100 Prints 0-2-8." Subsequent charges on October 28, 1763, for 200 "Hatt Prints," and on September 2, 1773, for 100 "Hatt Bills."

1764 June 14. "Mr Nathl Fosdike Dr/ to 100 Hatt Bills 0-2-8."

1764 June 14. "Mr Inceas Blake Dr/ To Cutting a Copper Plate 1-16-0/to 100 Prints."

1764 August 28. "Mr Nathaniel Baker Dr/ To Engraving a Copper plate for hatt bills 0-10-8/ To 100 Prints 0-2-8."

1765 May 7. "Mr Matthew Lindsey Dr/ To a Engraving a Copper Plate 0-6-0/  
To two Hudd Prints at 2/8 0-5-4."

1771 January 3. "Mr Samuel Hewes Dr/ To Engraving a Copper plate for  
sper'ceti Cans 3-10-0/ To two Hund. prints 0-9-4." On April 15, 1772, there was  
a charge for 350 Prints at 5 sh., 6d.

1773 January 1. "Mr William Boardman Dr/ To 200 Hatt Bills 0-6-0." Sub-  
sequent charges on September 2, 1773, for 100 "hatt bills," and on February 6, 1774,  
for 200 "Hatt Bills."

1773 May 10. "Mr Ezra Collins Dr/ To 100 Hatt Bills 0-2-4." Subsequent  
charges on October 25, 1773, for 100 "Hatt-Bills," on June 7, 1774, for 100 "Hatt  
Bills," and on March 20, 1775, for 100 "Hatt Bills."

1774 June 7. "Mr John Piemont Dr/ To two Hundred prints 0-8-0." It is not  
known whether this charge was for bill-heads, or for blank Masonic notifications.  
Piemont was a prominent Mason, and became an inn-keeper at Danvers in 1773. The  
charge of four shillings per hundred prints, however, is lower than Revere's usual  
charge for stock Masonic notifications.

1783 October 10. "William Boardman & Son Dr/ To Engraving a plate for Hatt  
Bills 0-15-0/ To printing 300 @ 4s. 0-12-0/ To printing 500 @ 4s 1-0-0." Dur-  
ing the years 1787 to 1797 Revere entered twenty-one charges against William Board-  
man & Sons for a total of 7897 hat bills.

1784 August 10. "Mr Abraham Adams Dr/ To Engraving two plates for hatt  
Bills 0-18-0/ To printing to hund Bills 0-6-8."

1786 March 13. "Benjm Warren Plimouth Dr/ To printing one hundred Com-  
pass Cards 0-18-0." He advertised in the *Plymouth Journal* of March 19, 1785, to  
sell seamen's and surveyor's instruments. There may be a copy at Yale. The E. C.  
Streeter Collection of Weights and Measures contains a compass card with Warren's  
name thereon.

1792 April 16. "Mr William Williams Dr/ To Engravg plate for hatt bills  
0-18-0/ To 2 hund prints 0-6-0." From June 24, 1792, to January 28, 1797,  
Revere entered twelve charges, amounting to £14-15-0, against William Williams  
for 8500 hat bills.

1792 April 16. "Mr Sarson Belcher Dr/ To Engravg a plate for hatt bill 0-15-0/  
To 150 prints 0-4-6."

1792 November 15. "Mr Charles Smith Dr/ To printing 200 hatt bills 0-6-0."  
Also charge of 6 sh. for 200 "hatt bills" on December 9, 1792, and 17 sh. 6d. for 500  
on January 24, 1793.

1794 December 9. "Mr Samuel Barry Dr/ To 310 hatt bills 0-12-0."