

FOURTEENTH LETTER.

JOSEPH E. DEHAVEN—OLD SCHOOL BOOKS—OLD CLASS MATES—A
MAYSVILLE BOOK AND ITS AUTHOR—DR. MOORE—AN OLD REVOLU-
TIONARY SOLDIER.

BOSTON, September 2, 1883.

Dr. John P. Phister—My Young Friend: Your letter of the 28th of July was only received on the 28th ult.

I judge from your letter that some of my rambling notes must have gone astray. I have seen only a few in print, probably not more than a half dozen in all, and I am indebted for those to a friend of my daughter, Annie Gordon, whom we were fortunate enough to meet in our travels. You mention names I specially mentioned long ago. Of course my memory is not entirely accurate as to the personnel of the old town, I get crowded and confused, if I were not so before I made the effort.

I cannot write an introduction to a subject I never expected to see in print. That is a task which must be left to those who see merit enough in the babble of the old man to justify its preservation in print. You belong to the later generation and you might, by way of introduction, bring to the front much more interesting reading than I could. I regret that what I have written has not been put in more scholarly form. That is no fault of mine. I did the best my early training would justify. I have looked on the bright side and honestly aimed to offend no one. When a novel is founded on facts it is well. History always abounds in more or less lies the result of a defect of memory or a loss of authentic data.

I want to say something after awhile about William (Joseph) E. DeHaven, who was from Maysville and who was a creditable officer in the federal navy during the war. I met him ten years ago on the continent and traveled over the battle field of Waterloo with him. I think he had resigned then. I also want to say a word to a preacher who has criticised my idea that there was humor in the bible. I have read that book with care and I think I know where inspiration and humor can both be drawn from it.

Now my young friend one word more as to myself. It is wholly immaterial who I am, or what my identity is. It is sufficient for the mass of those who have waded through the vaporings of "O. B." that I was once a small part of the Maysville population and that I have a loving regard for those whom I knew in my youthful days. To you and to those who sit around your fireside I hope to make myself known in *propria persona*, and the little children shall come around my knees whilst I tell them of their grandparents. I and my daughter, Annie Gordon, are deeply moved at the kind words you send me from the old folks. God bless the people

whose latch strings are out for us. Such friends are the trusted sentinels on the pathway of life. I am afraid I, without her, will be a disappointment to them. Well, never mind that, we will not cross the ferry until we get to it. Your sincere friend. "O. B."

BOSTON, September 3, 1883.

Dr. John P. Phister—My Young Friend: The cool weather prevailing in the White Mountains, my daughter, Annie Gordon, and myself, bid good-bye to our friends and the scenes round about Intervale last week and took the train for this city. We were pleasantly situated and my health improved while we remained, therefore we left with much regret. But when the frost king commenced his labors of painting the foliage preparatory to giving it to the autumn winds, I was admonished that the time had come for us to seek a more genial climate. And besides I wanted to spend a few days in this and other northern cities before returning home, it, indeed, I should decide to spend the winter on this side of the Atlantic. I fully intended to write you at length about the New England resorts, where we spent the past six weeks. But my time was spent in going from place to place seeing and hearing what I could. I was oftentimes too much fatigued to write. I do not write with ease under the most favorable circumstances. I may at some future time tell you what I saw and heard in the White Mountains. Your curiosity will be satisfied for the present when I tell you that I did not have one-half of the fun I used to have in old Maysville, and that may account for the healthful benefits I received.

This city of Boston excites my admiration. It is a great city in all respects. It seems to be crowded all up in a heap. Its narrow streets, alleys and lanes, twisting and turning in every bewildering direction and crowded by people who are running hither and yon as if they thought the judgment day would catch them away from home. Boston is more like a bee hive than any city I have known. Everything seems to be moving that thrift may follow. The arts and sciences are nourished here with a tender care. A literary friend of my daughter, Annie Gordon, has shown us much attention in various ways. We have visited all the places of interest. The schools of design, conservatories of music, etc., are now open, but the Commons, the gardens the Old South church, the State House, rejuvenated city hall, Faneuil Hall, the stores the statues, the newspaper offices and the grave yard invite the attention of the beholder. There are more and better street cars in Boston than any other city in the world, which covers no more ground. We are invited to visit Cambridge for a few days and other towns in the vicinity where we expect much pleasure. Our friend took us to a curiosity shop, a great building of four or five stories literally crammed with old books, second hand books, yes, third, fourth, fifth and many other hand books from their appearance. I verily believe that the books I studied when I went to school to Sam Coulter, Dr. Williams and Mr. Beatty are stowed away in that curiosity shop. I am almost certain the algebra, mathematics, calculus and such other amusing books as I studied are there. There was a melancholy interest to me in looking over the old school books, thumb worn and soiled as they were

They refreshed my memory with visions of the class-mates of early days; they brought to my mind the name of every boy, the arrangement of the classes, who was head and who was foot; I could see the old time trapping in the class. I spoke to my daughter about that feature of exciting the ambition of the scholar and she was amazed. Trapping in the classes in the fashionable schools of this day seems to be unknown. As I said, the names of the boys came back to me again, the names of the girls have never been forgotten, nor have I forgotten their bright roguish eyes as they peeped from their books. There was Julia and Violet and Sarah Bell and Mary Bell and Calista and Melissa and Zerilda and Hannah and Emily and Laura and Rebecca and Mary and Eliza and Artemissa and Maria and Adelia and Margaret and Eveline and Ann, and the pet names of Sue, Gret, Molly, Nan and Min. You do not remember those girls. They, or many of them, were grown up and gone long before your day. As I looked through the old school books I thought I saw their names written in a boyish hand on the backs and margins. I imagined that the old couplet

If you loved me as I loved you,
No knife could cut our love in two

was there. O, how I would like to meet those girls, they are girls to me yet, I cannot think them old, though I know I am on the shady side of life. Pshaw! what am I thinking about. Those girls were younger than myself. I forgot, I may have dreamed of school day life as I dozed over the old books. I found in that old curiosity shop a little volume new to me which I purchased for a mere nominal sum and read with great interest, "Medical Students in Europe," by L. J. Frazee, M. D. It bears the imprint of Richard H. Collins as publisher. When I left Maysville he was not in the printing business. He was a lawyer and a merchant, a most polished gentleman and the son-in-law of John Armstrong.* I don't remember Frazee. He must have gone to Maysville after I left. My going away made a vacancy for an enterprising young man, as he seems to have been. I read his book with interest because he was a Maysville author and because it brought to my mind experiences and association of my own of a similar character at a later period, not however as a medical student. I was not then able nor am I now to speak so advisedly of the *grisette* as does Mr. Frazee.

I think there used to be a Dr. Moore in Maysville. I am not certain of it, neither am I certain of his first name. I have roamed about the world so much that I get confused as to the identity of persons and their locality. This doctor's name may have been Thomas, or it may not have been. However what I want to say about him is this. He was a genial sort of a man, one you would naturally like as a social companion. He was well informed and a good conversationalist. If he had gone to Europe with Mr. Frazee there would have been nothing ambiguous in the history of *grisettes*. Dr. Moore would have told all about it in a straightforward way. It may be that Frazee was a Sunday school scholar when I lived in Maysville. I think it likely he was, inasmuch, as he appears to have given great attention to churches when abroad. If he was a Sunday school

*Wrong entirely. The publisher is R. H. Collins, son of "O. B.'s" Sunday school superintendent, Lewis Collins, son-in-law of Edward Cox, the bookseller.

scholar he will remember me with affection, I hope if he is now living. The typography, binding, and general make up of Frazee's book speaks well for the publisher. Book making being an easy thing now on the part of the author as well as the publisher, I suppose new Maysville can turn out better work of that class than could be done in 1848. Referring to book making, I had a very pleasant interview with one of the leading publishers of the city of New York when I was there some weeks ago. He told me that there was profit in pictures, that illustrated books were always the most readily sold and the most generally read. He called my attention to a very readable and entertaining book which was put on the market without illustrations. A financial failure was the result. A second edition was placed on the market with illustrations. The demand was so great as that the first edition was sold under the pressure and a large profit was made. A publisher in this city called my attention to the fact that the exposition now being held in Louisville opened on Monday. On the Saturday previous the leading weekly in the city of New York had the most graphic pictures of the opening ceremonies; even to the procession and the president of the United States in the act of pulling the ribbon to start the great engine. Pictures make people progressive even to the extent of getting ahead of time. You are too young to remember the pictures in the school books in the early days of Maysville. My old friends George Orr, Dr. Shackelford and James Linn know all about them and can probably tell you of them better than I can. There used to be such illustrations as the skinning of the boa-constrictor. This was represented by a great snake being tied by the neck to the topmost branch of a tall tree and the natives were represented as climbing the snake and taking the hide off. Another was a crocodile carrying off an ox. Another was the Wyley family running away from a slide in the White Mountains, though the slide beat them in the race. I think the Wyley picture may have been all right. I was up there recently and refreshed myself as to the mountain, but the family had entirely disappeared. If the other pictures were true to nature when taken, the habits and growth of snakes and crocodiles has naturally changed of late. The sphinx was a good illustration. I have seen the original. Yes, I have gone off on pictures. What else could I do when writing of school books and thinking of all the pictures seen by the medical student in Europe.

I have referred to Fanueil Hall, the cradle of liberty. I tell you one feels patriotic when he gets in that cradle. I felt as if the Tea Party, the Charter Oak and Bunker Hill were all calling aloud for me to do glorious deeds. I felt like beating a drum, firing a cannon or talking about the battle of Tippecanoe. I tell you, my friend, the patriotic inspiration of the old cradle made me young again. I went over to the old city hall which has been put in the same form and order it was in in 1775. The old drum was there which beat the patriots to arms in '75. I took it down and hit it a few licks in memory of my old friend Charles Tudor and his boys. I struck it with an honest good will and hoped all the time that the notes might reach the father and sons, even though they should be on the other side. I want it understood that I always speak in the most sincere kind-

ness of Charles Tudor and his sons. They did much for Maysville in their humble way. The music of their drum and fife was as much in the way of education to the people of old Maysville as is the great orchestra of Thomas in the larger cities of the present day.

Since I have been in New England I have been gratified to notice the care and attention paid to the memory of the soldier. It matters not in what war they fell or in what command they served. They were soldiers and their graves are respected as the graves of brave men should be. The British soldiers who fell at Concord are buried there and their graves are marked carefully though their names are unknown.

There used to be an old revolutionary soldier, and the truest type of a soldier he was, too, who lived on the bank of the Ohio river a few miles above Maysville. He died there more than fifty years ago. When the alarm of war was sounded in 1775 he was living in Virginia, in the neighborhood of Staunton. He was then a young man of twenty-six or seven years of age, of fine physique and scholarly attainments. He shouldered his musket and took his place in the ranks of the patriotic army then being raised. His soldierly qualities soon brought him a commission as a lieutenant in the regiment of colonel Patrick Henry, with whom he was on terms of intimacy. He marched to the north and was in the battle of White Plains and Brandywine, was in the retreat to Germantown, and took the chances of war in the battle at that place. Was in that terrible march to Valley Forge, where the shoeless men left their footprints in blood on the frozen soil. He was in that winter encampment when destitution of clothing and starvation from lack of food made the stoutest hearts quail. If ever patriotism was tested—if ever the love of country nerved a man it was in that awful winter at Valley Forge. He was in the hottest of the fight on the bright sabbath day when the battle of Monmouth was fought. That battle had some of the features of the battle of Shiloh, both armies being almost numerically equal and fought with unequalled desperation. He was at Brunswick. He marched through Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas, to Charleston, S. C., under colonel Woodford and general Lincoln. He stood the siege of Charleston until the capitulation, when he was made a prisoner of war and suffered as such until peace was declared. He was personally known to Washington, La Fayette, old Mad Anthony Wayne, Pulaski, and all the galaxy of military officers who fought that liberty might prevail. In his march through Caswell county, North Carolina, he encamped near the home of John Atkinson, who had been a patriot member of the house of commons of that state. He there met the daughter of John Atkinson. A mutual attachment sprung up between Miss Atkinson and the young soldier. When the war was over and he was released he returned to Caswell county, N. C., and married the girl he had accidentally met on the march. A brother of this girl was subsequently a general in the regular army of the United States and did gallant service in the war of 1812. The soldier of whom I write was awarded nearly seven thousand acres of land for his services in the war of the revolution having risen from the rank to the grade of major in the Virginia continental line. This land was located in

Kentucky and though large in number of acres it was small in real cash value, being valued at about thirty-three cents per acre. This land became a cause of profitless litigation to him and he was left quite poor with a large family to support. He lived in a quiet unostentatious way and died regretted by all to whom he was known. His name was Charles Pelham. You may have known some of his decendants who still lived about Maysville when I left there. Opposite his house there was a ripple in the river called Pelham's Ripple, or by the hardy boatmen of the early day it was known as Pelham's Riffle. That may remain a monument to his memory. I hope if there be a stone at his grave some soldier will deem it his duty to remove the moss and lichen from it that it may be read by the passer by. I would that the grave of the true soldier everywhere should receive kindly care in a modest way, and I would not insult their memory by picnic demonstrations.

I must tell you a circumstance concerning a Maysville man whom I do not remember if he were living in the old city when I was or he may have been one of the younger boys. I was invited into the company of some scientists an evening or two ago. Why should I have been invited to meet such men? I am not one of that class of cultivated men. Well, it matters not why I was invited, it is sufficient that I was among them. The conversation turned on the wonders of electricity and the great development made in that branch of science within the last few years. I was told that among the great electricians of the age there was a Kentuckian, and one who had been raised in Maysville, though now known as a citizen of Ohio. I asked his name and some particulars about him. I was told that his name was Nicholson and that he was small in stature and aged about fifty-five. Can he be the son of my old friend Strother B. Nicholson, and the tireless lad we used to call Pete Clay. It is just such lads as he was who keep the machinery of the world in motion. I was proud to hear a Maysville boy so approvingly spoken of. The friend to whom you sent the letter and cane has probably made good use of both. He may have read the letter and replied to it and the cane may be more valuable to him than to myself. Such intimate friends do not add much to one's good temper. I cannot recommend them as trustworthy.

"O. B."

I mailed you this day a long paper. It will doubtless prove uninteresting and I make haste to apologize. You can give it a place in the waste basket without regret. You must be aware that I cannot know anything personally of the decendants of those of whom I have written, and my memory may be defective or wholly at fault about some of whom I have written. I would have you correct anything which may tend to give displeasure to any one. I have gone through life with the sincere effort to bind up wounds rather than to open them. It cannot have escaped you that my feelings and associations have been, and are now, with the humble, the great mass of the people. I have but little sympathy with sham aristocracy or inflated humbuggery.

"O. B."

BOSTON, September 3, 1883.

Dr. John P. Phister—My Young Friend: I received the cane this day. Though no certificate of character, geneological tree or pedigree accompanied it, I doubt not it is out of the old market house. It looks like the old market house—it looks like the old fellows that used to be around and in the old Market house. I will prize it as a memento of the past and when I lean upon it I will feel that I am supported by the old friends who stood by me on the November morning of 1833 when the great meteoric display excited the admiration of some and brought terror to others. When I shall no longer need its support it will be returned to the mayor and common council of the city of Maysville to be, by that august body, placed in the historical society of the city as an evidence that the old market house once existed or stood for the good of the people. I thank you for the high mark of consideration which prompted the bestowal of the gift on me. I beg you to assure the citizens of Maysville in the most public manner that the memento is in the hands of one who appreciates its value.

"O. B."