

INDUSTRIAL SECTION

of

SALEM

*The Great
Leather and Shoe City*

1917

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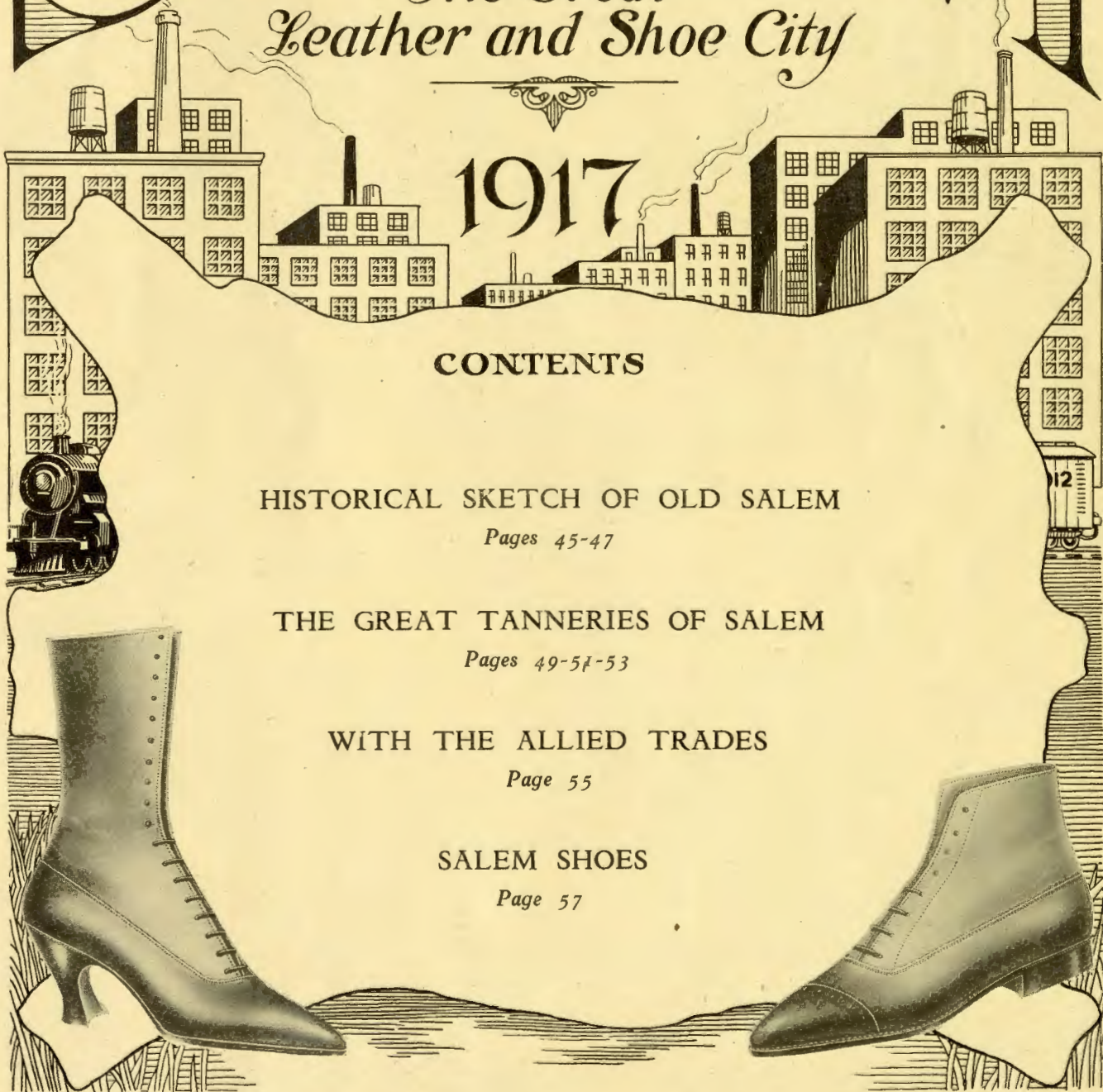
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Glazed and Dull Kid

“Caravan”

Glazed and Dull Cabrettas

LEVISEUR & CONWAY

157 South Street, Cor. Beach ∴ Boston, Mass.

Tannery, Salem, Mass.

Historical Sketch of Old Salem

The First Shoemaker

Rich in records of the shoe and leather trade in ancient Salem, Thomas Beard, the first shoemaker in America, settled there in 1629, coming on the Mayflower, on her second voyage, and bringing with him "divers hydes, both for sole and upper leather." So valuable a man was he that he was to have his "dyett and house room" at the expense of the colony. New industries were welcome to the colony in its struggling days, and a man of skill in any useful occupation was hailed with more joy than a member of Congress coming back home these days.

Birth of Tanning Industry

As early as 1630, Francis Higginson, minister at Salem settlement, wrote back to England telling of the great increase in cattle, sheep and goats, and, also, mentioning "stores of sumac and trees good for tanning and dyeing of leather." Shortly afterwards, Philemon Dickinson was

blooded industry, whose lineage traces back as far as some of the sometimes worshipped colonial societies.

"Richard More, Sr., and Richard More, Jr.," says an old record, "sold in 1688, to Peter Osgood, tanner, land bounded on the creek by land of Joshua Ward. Osgood established a tannery, and in June, 1690, he bought adjoining land of Richard More, Jr., and the wharf."

This senior More was a passenger in the Mayflower. His body lies in old Charter street burying ground, Salem, and it is the only grave of a Mayflower passenger that has been definitely located. Peter Osgood evidently was a successful tanner, between 1688 and 1690, for he added to his real estate, including the wharf. The Osgoods continue in the leather trade to this day, being active in the Boston market.

So the American leather trade of today is traced back to the time of the Puritans, and men in it may take just pride in the record, if so disposed, though, unfortunately, it is a habit of many leathermen to live in the record of



THE HEART OF MODERN SALEM

granted leave "to make tan pitts" in Salem, and to dress leather. By 1650, there were fifty-one tanners in Massachusetts Bay colony, and a number of them were in Salem settlement, which then included what is now Peabody, Danvers and Beverly.

Primitive Conditions

The colonial authorities were strict about whom they allowed within their bounds, and tanners had first to take out a license, before they could settle in any town. This was not because leather making as carried on in olden days was objectionable, for in colonial times, and even up to the nineteenth century, tanners commonly lived upstairs and tanned leather downstairs. Pigs were allowed to roam through the streets.

Ban on Adulteration

The authorities were no great shakes at cleanliness. But they did love to regulate an industry, and they held tanners right under their thumb, forbidding them to burn hides by over-liming them, and to use "false and deceitful mixtures" in dressing them. They also provided that any person who neglected to cure a hide, and let it rot, or carelessly cut a hide in taking it off, should be punished. In the latter case, the fine was so much for each cut made in the hide. It would not be such a bad idea if a similar law were in effect these days.

Blue-blooded Industry

The leather industry, when followed through the records of old Salem to its beginnings, is a real old blue-

today, and ignore the traditions and precepts of the past.

Insufficient Tanning

Continuing the extracts from the old record is this somewhat amusing item:

"In 1642—Ould Francis Esborne was presented for wronging his country by insufficient tanning. His answer was acceptable and he was admonished, and is only to pay ye witness 2s 3d. It is lucky," the record goes on, "that such a law is not now on, for there would be a good many tanners squeak in their shoes when 'ye witness' made his appearance."

Sure enough, anybody would squeak in his shoes with such a law on, for "ye witness" had only to express his suspicions to the court, and he was awarded his fee, even though the tanner might be as innocent as a lamb of the charges against him. But that's a way they had in colonial days. A fellow was guilty until he proved his innocence, and even then he might be admonished. A bit of this stern justice might be effective these days when so many murderers go unhangd, and so many rascals are out of jail.

Blue Law

"In 1672," the record goes on to say, "Mr. Keaser obtained leave to fell twenty trees for bark, and, in the same years, others besides tanners were allowed to trade in hides." Very likely, the Puritan magistrates, in this year, let up on the blue laws of the leather trade, which forbade butchers to tan leather, or tanners to make shoes, or

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Salem - - Mass.

shoemakers to make leather. The purpose of these laws was to hold every man to his trade, and to prevent the formation of any trust, or combination in restraint of trade, which was viewed by the Puritans with a great deal more antagonism than it is by even the trust busters of these days.

Early Salem Tanners

The early tanneries of Salem were near the waterfront, especially about what is now Salem Common, a fine residential section of the city. In early days, this Common was a marsh. Tanners settled near it, so they could Dump their sewage into the waters. Jonathan Andrew was among these tanners. Deacon Josh Ward was another. Both were successful.

After the Revolution

After the Revolution, there was a great expansion in Salem's commerce, and the building of wharves, and warehouses, and of homes of merchants, and sea captains and sailors, forced the leather factories inland, to the Blubber Hollow section, and to South Danvers, now Peabody. A new era in the American leather trade opened. The ships, 472 in number, that were sent out from Salem during the Revolution to prey on British commerce (then it was considered a gentlemen's sport to sail forth and plunder the ships of the enemy) were turned into a peaceful merchant marine. They made voyages to India, China, Russia, Japan, and African and South American ports, and they brought back rich cargoes, including many hides and skins. The merchants turned over the hides and skins to tanners, to be made into leather, and took notes in payment for them, payable when the leather was finished and sold. Anybody could make money with credit like that.

Blubber Hollow

"There were houses in the Blubber Hollow section of Salem as early as 1692, for the house long occupied by Nathaniel Tuttle, a tanner of the last century, was standing when the Salem witches were hung in 1692 and people watched the executions from its windows. But the Hollow then was a marsh. The probability is that it will never be known to anybody who was the first tanner of Blubber Hollow, even the Recording Angel being too busy to take note of an instance like that.

Pioneer Tanners

But the story of The Golden Age in Blubber Hollow is mighty interesting. There were the Harringtons, Leonard Bond, Charles Henry, Richard, Samuel, Augustus, Frank and William, all descendants from Robert Harrington, who came to New England in 1642, and all active in the leather trade of Blubber Hollow for almost a century. Then there were the Putnams, Jacob and George, father and son, who satisfied an ambition to keep the family name in the leather trade of Salem and Boston for 100 years. Besides, there were the Stimpsons, Westons, Popes, Kenneys, James Braden, James Dugan, the Rileys, the Treadwells, the Varnes, the Lords, the Fries, John Powers, Thomas Luby, the Turners, and a score and more of others who made history in the leather trade.

Leonard Bond Harrington

Leonard Bond Harrington was born in Salem in 1803. He sailed for South America, when 13 years old, was shipwrecked there, and also suffered yellow fever. He returned home, became an apprentice to the leather trade, saved enough money to start in business, and he became a foremost leather merchant in Boston. He had factories on Highland avenue, Salem, in which he curried leather, especially wax side leather. He had about 500 hides tanned on contract daily, and he paid five cents a pound for the tanning of them. For 60 years he was active in the leather trade, and in the 35th year of his life he was active in the Boston market.

Old Time Shoe Manufacturing

The history of the shoe trade in Salem is as interesting as is the story of the leather trade. After Thomas Beard, the first shoemaker, came many others. They toiled in the old time simple ways, took their pay in cash, or in orders on the store. They worked at home or in little shops, like the Tapley, or Lye shop, which is now preserved by The Essex Institute as a relic of old time methods of industry, and also as an object lesson for people of today. This Tapley shop was built a century or so ago in Lynn, was preserved by the Lynn Historical Society, and was eventually turned over to The Essex Institute.

In it toiled such men as Joseph, John and Robert Lye, Burrill Lye, Levi Wentworth, Capt. Amos Breed and his two sons Amos F. and B. Newhall Breed, and Thomas F. Witt, as goodly a crew of shoemakers as ever there was in Lynn.

Yet some of these old timers had to have their daily ration of rum. One day, during the war of 1812, they sent forth an apprentice to get a jug of rum. That youngster observed a notice that a privateer was fitting out at Salem and its captain expected to divide rich prizes with the crew. So he hid the jug behind the stone wall and went to Salem and shipped on that privateer. After a cruise of three months the privateer returned to port. The apprentice found the jug behind the stone wall, got it filled with rum and walked back into the shop. "Well, you've been gone a long time for that rum," was the greeting he got.

Jacob Putnam

Jacob Putnam was an extraordinary man. He had the same courage and determination as "Old Put," (Gen. Israel

(Continued on page 58.)

NEW and REBUILT MACHINES

NEW MACHINES	
4 Turner Style Shaving Machines, latest heavy types.	1 6' No. 3 Drum Setting Machine.
1 Turner Overhead Buffing Machine.	1 Slocomb Level Bed Wooden Frame Jack.
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6.—ACME LEATHER CO.



WITCHCRAFT TANNAGE

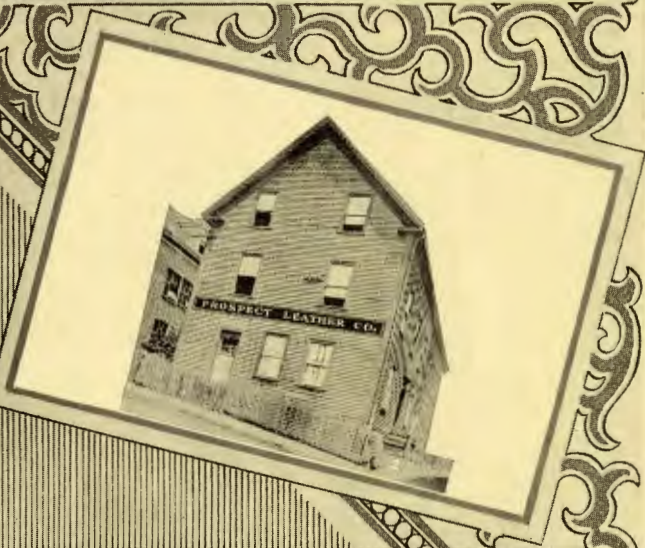
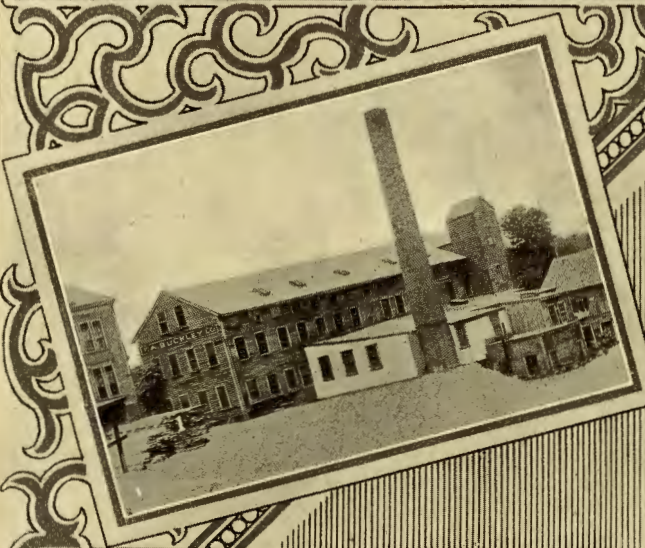
Bark and Chrome Tanned Sheep
Glazed and Mat Kid and Cabrettas
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OF SALEM, MASS.

Salem: Sunshine Tannery
Johnstown, N. Y.: The Red Mill
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Toronto, Ont.: Ed. R. Lewis

Boston, Mass.: The Witch Store
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New York City: 178 William Street
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THE GREAT TANNERIES OF SALEM

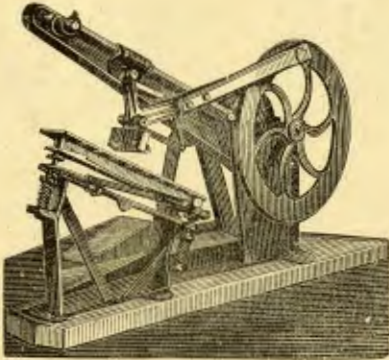


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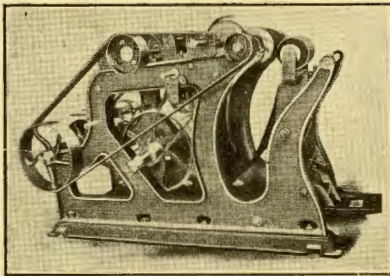
J. W. AULSON & SONS

SALEM, MASS. WAUKEGAN, ILL.



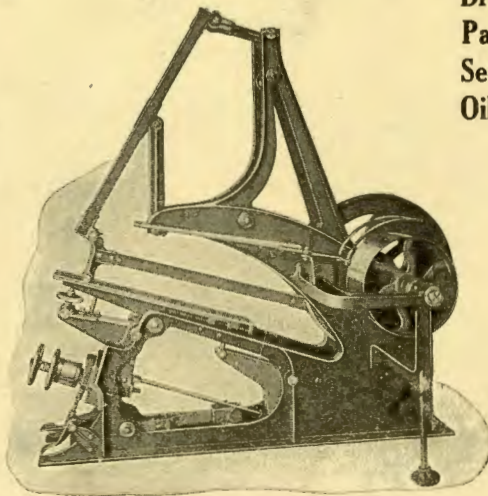
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Used for rolling only
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For goat, sheep, horse, colt, calf, side, harness, or any other leathers requiring shaving.



LIGHT JACK

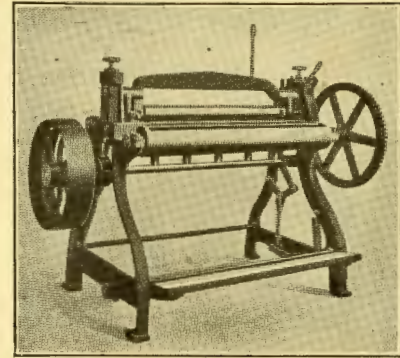
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Some of our features

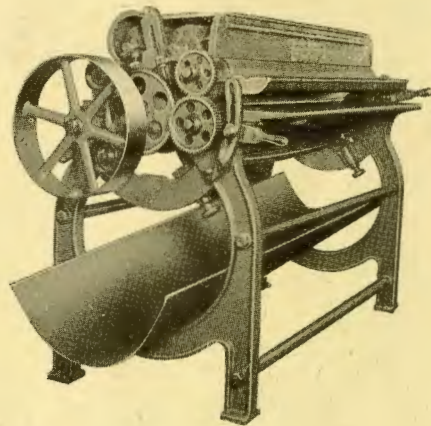
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Light Iron Frame Jack
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Cheeking
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Roll Putting Out
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Unhairing
Splitting
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Ball Bearing
Ceiling Fans
4 blades
12 blades
16 blades

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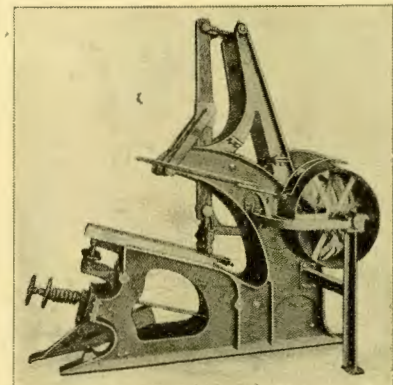
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For splitting or leveling heads and necks of hides and skins.



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VIEWS OF SOME OF SALEM'S BIG SHOE FACTORIES

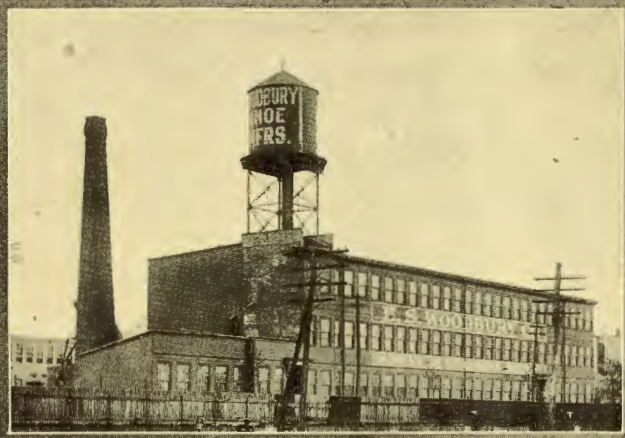
SALEM SHOE

"HIGH QUALITY IN EVERY PAIR" HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE SLOGAN OF SALEM'S SHOE MFR'S

ARE KNOWN 'ROUND THE WORLD



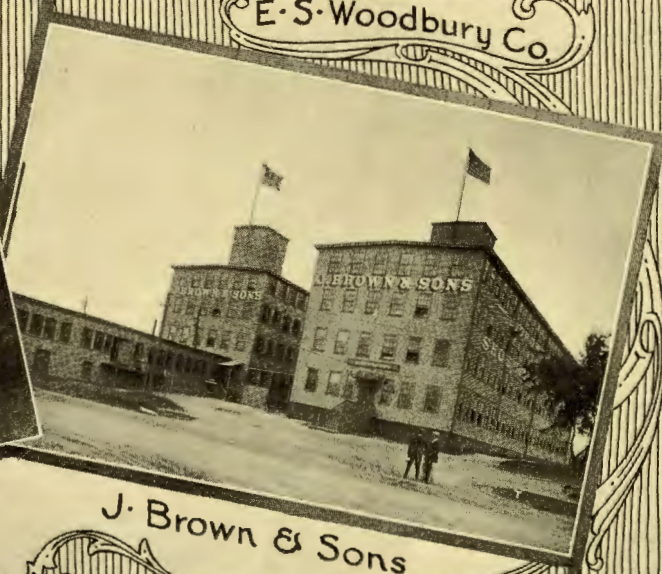
Cass & Daley



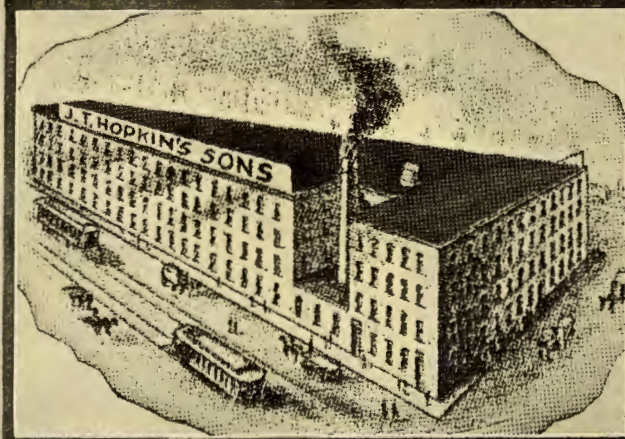
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TANNING CO.

Tanners of

Upper Leather

CONTRACT
 WORK
 EXCLUSIVELY

CHROME SPLITS
 in all colors

BLANEY STREET

SALEM :: MASS.

(Continued from page 47.)

Putnam) of Revolutionary fame. They were cousins. Jacob was a wonderful worker. He called his men to work at 3 o'clock summer mornings, for those were times when men toiled from sun rise to sun set. Putnam worked them to the limit. And he worked harder himself. Indeed, he died from overwork in the 93rd year of his life. He had modern efficiency system beaten to a frazzle. And as for the modern idea of changing the clocks one hour to save daylight, Putnam would have changed them two hours.

Like many other boys of his time, he sailed the seas before he settled down to business. He built two tanneries. He bought ships, and sent them to foreign countries, for hides and other merchandise. He had a pepper ship come into New York, and he cleaned up a profit of \$50,000 on it, without even seeing the pepper. Though his transactions were large, yet he kept account of them in a little pocket memorandum book, and it was not until his son graduated from college, and took up the business, that he opened a set of books. First he objected to the books as a waste of time and effort. But when he heard that he could charge six per cent interest on bills due him, he accepted the books without further protest.

It is tradition that he kept a stock of gold in a great safe in his office, and paid his bills in cash. He kept his wealth in gold, so the assessors, whom he didn't like at all, could not learn how much he had. Tradition is that more than \$1,000,000 worth of gold, and bonds, was in that safe at times. It was a very good strong box for Putnam's own time, but the other day it was hauled away to the junk yard.

Interesting History

There was James Braden, reputed one of the most successful leather men of Blubber Hollow. For many years he occupied "the church tannery," so called, because the building was originally a church in Topsfield, and was hauled on the snow one winter day by many yoke of oxen to Salem. There were the Varneys, the first of whom came to Salem from a New Hampshire farm, with his worldly goods in a red bandana handkerchief hanging from a stick over his shoulder. One of the last of them, Daniel, died the other day. There were the Lords, who built a large factory (where the Donn D. Sargent shoe factory now stands). They made their soaks so that the tides of the nearby North river could flow through them. The water of the river was reputed of superior quality for softening hides. The old time tanners used to lay packs of African dry hides on the flats of the river, and weight them down with stones, and let the tides flow over them. The late J. A. Lord was a great man for the old fashioned fire fighting. He "ran with the macheen." So did every other tanner in Blubber Hollow. The first two men grabbed the fire bucket, etc, and ran to the brewery, and got a couple of buckets of beer for the fire fighters. These were days when national prohibition was not thought of. Indeed, every grocer had a barrel of old New England rum "hossed up" beside his molasses barrels.

There was Luby, who gave his profits to charity. There was James C. Stimpson, tanner and merchant. His son-in-law, who commanded one of his ships, brought home a Chinese cook, a very skillful one, too, but unfortunate in one instance, as the story of the rabbit stew shows. One day, the Stimpson family smelled a horrible smell, which was positively unbearable when they entered the dining room where the Chinese cook offered "rabbit stew" made he explained of a nice rat rabbit he had caught in the Great Pastures. That rabbit was a skunk.

Irish Tanners

The leather workers from Cork made their appearance in Salem between 1830 and 1860. They had served an apprenticeship of seven years in Irish tanneries. They were singularly skillful in knife work. They showed Salem manufacturers how to green-shave leather, so that the hides could be tanned more quickly, and made into leather of more uniform weight. And the shavings were sold to the glue makers. Some of these men were of superior education. They added much to the life of the city. Among them were Patrick Eagan, and his three sons, Martin, Patrick and Richard; James Griffin, and his three sons, Timothy, John and Thomas; Timothy O'Shea, Michael Barnett, Terance Sweeney, Joseph Lynch, David Mahoney, Patrick and Jeremiah Curtin, Jeremiah Saunders, Thomas Lyons, John Mullin, William O'Connor and Daniel Crowley.

FRED B. BARRON, President

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COLORED CALF AND SIDES

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THE R. M. S. LEATHER COMPANY

Upper Leather Tanners

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MANUFACTURERS OF

**Black Chrome
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WITH

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In Chrome and Vegetable
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BOYS', YOUTHS' and
LITTLE GENTS'

MEDIUM GRADE
SHOES FOR THE
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*High Cut Storm and "Scout" Shoes
Our Specialties*

DANIEL GLOVER & SON
SALEM, MASS.

Women's and Misses'

Fine

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JOBBERS

See the New Fall Line of Sales-
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