

M Sigal + W. S. Teitel
Street Interview

M. Sigal

Needless to say I've always been impressed by the pretentious Otis Clapp Pharmacy here and its big, old clock, its idiotic face by face with this monstrosity. I've always wondered what that chair is, whether it is marble or some painted-over substance. The contrast of is the worst. This store is really amazing. Of course, the Book Clearing House and its scroungy display of cheap books. . . Talisman's changed its display. Getting into travel acts. In keeping with the neighborhood, of course. I wonder what used to be in here before that. It was obviously some kind of steamship agency; you see the ship and bottle there. I've always remarked at that -- who was there before they took over. What's the French Line closed today for? All the agencies are closed. Hm. I always thought Andrew J. ~~Lorax~~store was the original of the chain. It must be. Old fashioned spectacle hanging out there. . .

I get a laugh out of the people around here, the admixture of the poodle dogs and the shop girls, Rolls-Royce's and broken-down Fords. Although the street has pretensions and grandeur, I don't think anybody really considers it all of a 5th Ave. . . I always thought that Plotkins over there has badly used space in the front, too much waste space, very expensive space. (windows set way back)
in the Navy

Friends of mine/were telling me about the day they were trying to get into the Arlington St. here for services. They wouldn't let them in, - nonmembers. . . Obviously you will expect me to comment on the traffic conditions on this corner which I consider to be as bad as anything in Boston, almost as bad as South Sta. . . The placement of this subway here is fine except that they have one on the next block, and they always manage to close that just when we want to use it, so I come tramping all the way down here. (Around 6 o'clock at night.) . . William Ellery Channing. (He was the founder of the Arl. St. Church.) Oh, really. . . These windows leave something to be desired. They typically have very, very excellent windows. And Roach & Craven here is an abomination; although I like antiques their taste in antiques leaves much to be desired.

What's going to happen to that property there for sale? And an even better corner, right down there at the corner of Arlington and the whole corner building is falling in disrepair. Also, I always get a chuckle out of Zero, Z-E-R-O Newbury St. here. The Ritz Carleton is so convenient it's a shame they charge so damn much. It's 14\$ and up for a single! . . . Church going out of business, eh?

Another thing -- this is my evening route home. I often swing into Newbury. I don't mind people parking illegally along the curb, I almost don't mind them double parking, but when they double park on both sides and triple park in the middle it's a little bit trying.

What's the name of this church over here. I's just known it exists. (Emmanual) . . . One thing I've always marveled at -- how do they get into this window to trim it. Ah, it's open, now I see. . . For purely snobbish reasons my personal sentimentality tends to lie more on Newbury St. (Why?) The utter snobbishness of it all. Elizabeth Arden, bay windows and all. . . Now here's something I've always seen and wondered at. Just what is this Academy of Arts and Sciences. I've stumbled in here, seen nothing and stumbled out again. (Lecture hall mostly) . . . Elliot, Inc. -- you hear their ads over XHR. . . I wonder if anyone buys in Irving Davenport over there; such an uninteresting type of furniture. They have a plant up in Lechemere Sq. . . Silly I wish I was a kid again and knew where Schwartz was located so conveniently. . . used to be the sexton in the Church of the Covenant there. They've replaced him by a recognized of managers who though are efficient certainly don't have his charm and personal touch.

I was disappointed by the John Hancock Bldg. up here. (Why?) It was built recently enough for them to have done something decent with it. It's just another big building. And when one goes to New York and sees what they've done with some of their new big buildings, Lever, Gulg, Alcoa, it makes one wonder who had whose head up whose.

Look at this alley. This is typical throughout the Back Bay -- garbage, pigeons snooping around in it. I'm surprised there are no rats back here. There are reputed to be some. This made a very beautiful pattern the other night when the snow had just fallen, the snow on these fire escapes. (This particular alley?) Yes. The snow is remarkably clean back here. Oh, this is what they're doing with their empty apartment; they told me they were going to change it over. (Who?) It seems a shame we didn't walk down the alley between Commonwealth and Newbury. I like that alley better. I wonder what the city does here for garbage collection, if anything. There're still Christmas greens out here. . . That's a nice fire escape. . Why doesn't some silly person knock out these walls and sell this as parking space back here? You should see some of the people who get in and out of those incredible for \$20 a month. I wonder how much people have to pay for these spots here. We've been very lucky with parking, it's been no problem. Now I know all the illegal spots you can legally park in, and how many times to go around the block before giving up. . . Still marching. . . I'm surprised there are no smells back there; usually it does. . . Oh, I see how you tell; it's that thing going 'round.

WESTEREE

Wonder how long it's been since that building across the street had a paint job. This particular brownstone one here. It looks rather tattered on the topside. . . There's something really horrible - that red brick. (Top of the flower shop?) Yes, that's a very garrish color. . . This church has a quaint English-type quality, English country church, you know? Spires going here and there, worn stones.

What was this here, this Bonwit Teller, It certainly was not built as a store originally. (Museum of Ntl. Hist.) Oh, I see. It makes a rather interesting store anyway. It gives it an elegance it probably wouldn't have otherwise. . . Now there's something terrible -- ^{sup}Henry Massage. Up there on the building. Imagine in the middle of Boston seeing a sign like that.

On second glance, that John Hancock Bldg. is rather attractive, very nice. . . . Garbage and alleys. I suppose they put these fire escapes on the outside because the fire laws were passed after the buildings were put up. It's a funny thing, there's something about alleys, and this type of an alley, which doesn't have any of the charm that a comparable street in Europe would have. The one thing that really saves this alley though is the fact that you look out and see that very broad open space which gives relief to it. Pigeons flying there, and the sun silhouetted by the buildings. If you had these alleys running continuously through the streets and could see nothing else, then you would really see a most depressing picture. ~~Kax~~ I wonder how people like living back in this sort of thing, or do they? Probably not. . Mosler Safe Co. . That's a terrible place to work, down there in the cellar, with little light. Cottage industry come to our century. Here we are at this parking lot again. Something about cars grouped together that's highly unattractive. It gives the impression of a junk yard more than it does a parking lot. . . . That sign really strikes one, Edison, over there, doesn't it. . . I suppose this is the inevitable result of trying to adapt a city to modern conditions when it was built for horse and carriages.

Boston has such an odd skyline. Occasionally a building sticking up here and there, with seemingly no planned design. And there's the State which looks like a mountain sticking out behind the first row. If it weren't for the gold top on the state capitol, it certainly wouldn't look like the state capitol, from here anyway. . . Oh, this is very nice - skating. This is really an enormous park. Just in size I think. Perhaps because it doesn't have so many trees to close in the view as you find in Central Park in New York. . . We're only a few yards from the edge of the city and already you notice the difference in sound.

Sound

I think that's the Park St. Church, isn't it, over there -- white spires. That's always a distinctive landmark, very attractive one too. Much more so than this church looking in the other direction, for example, this stone affair.