

Mrs. Merlo

Post-walk interview

Space

I noticed at the beginning the pleasant, wide walks that they had. It's much more pleasant to shop in a place like that than on crowded walks or streets. And also at that same corner I noticed something that can't be restricted to that area but throughout the area, if you will look notice toward the right, that is, looking toward Newbury St., ~~it~~ ^{the view} is more pleasant than it is looking toward the John Hancock Building. That mass of buildings there isn't too pleasant.

I suppose the next thing I noticed was the pleasant ^C shops that they have along that area. Most of the shops are very neat looking and very nice looking. The one modern front that they have on Boylston St. is very attractive. I don't remember just what building it is.

And I believe I mentioned something about the church, also, there on Boylston St. It seems a little incongruous to have it right there in the busy shopping district, and it doesn't seem to be too well kept, although I understand it is still in use.

Then, as we were walking around Arlington St. in front of the Public Gardens, that area seems a little wasted. They certainly need a pleasant area like that in such a large district, but I think a little better use could be made of that area, particularly in such a crowded district. It could either be cut down or more things could be used there.

On Newbury St. I think much the same is true as on Boylston St., with the wide walks and nice shops. The parking seems to be a little ^C although traffic is congested and parking is really a problem in the whole Back Bay area. ^T

The alley we walked ^{space} through was quite a disappointment. I hadn't known it even existed let alone being so terrible -- the bad pavement, all the clutter. ^{much}

I think those are ^{the} major things that impressed me that I have thought of since then. ^{Pa.}

(Anything you remember at any other particular time?) No, I don't think so. ^{C.}
(What event made the greatest impression?) I think the unpleasantness of the John Hancock building, being so massive and blocking the whole view practically from that one angle.

The wide sidewalks ^{space} and pavements, which were much more pleasant than being crowded? (Any particular features?) This one modern front on Boylston St. (Any particular buildings?) No, I don't think so.

(Question 4) Well, they're all rather small. Not very common to find such small buildings in a large city like that. They're all very old, as far as that's concerned, although most of them are well kept.

(Any particular people?) Most of the people who ^P frequent that area seem to be well-dressed. I've always suspected that the poorer classes aren't seen there too much. One single person, you mean, rather than a type? No.

(Any particular sound?) Yes. As everywhere in Boston, the constant use of horns. ^{Sounds}

(Smells?) No, not even in the alley.

(Traffic?) ^T Well, it's very congested in that area, even though they do have the one-way streets that certainly do help somewhat. Even so, it seems to be quite crowded. So much double parking which makes it difficult for a driver. The drivers in that area don't seem to be too courteous.

(Signs?) No, I don't. It always has impressed me that there is rather a ^S lack of signs on stores in that area. There aren't too many large neon signs, which I think are very nice.

(How many definite areas?) It seems that it is pretty well one area, except for the Public Gardens. That seems to be very separate. There is no connection between the two, it seems. (Two areas then?) The whole street area and the Gardens.

(Anything that gave these 2 areas characters of their own?) Of course, the shopping area is made up mostly of shops, businesses. The Garden is completely - so peaceful compared to the traffic; it seems to be like a little world set apart.

(Anything that gave them order or continuity?) No. It seems to be very disorderly, other than the wide walks, of course. They make for orderliness, as far as pedestrians are concerned. So many of the buildings are dissimilar. There's continuity in the sense that there is shopping in the whole area. It's rather difficult to get from one street to another, though, because of the one-way streets (if you're driving). Oftentimes you have to go out of your way several blocks in order to come back to a certain point. I think there tends to be less (continuity) than more.

(The sidewalk pavement?) On Boylston and Newbury it's just concrete blocks. On Arlington St., across from the Gardens, I believe it's brick. That is rather difficult to walk on. The others are quite adequate. (Street pavement?) Frankly, I don't even remember whether it's concrete or black pavement.

(How often have you been there?) Probably an average of once a month. (Used the area at all?) Yes. Shopping mainly.

(Question 14) Oh, yes. (Do you feel at ease?) Yes, I do. (Question 16) On that particular day I was very cold, but other than that I enjoyed the walk. I think I would have enjoyed it a lot more if some of these things I've described weren't existent. On the whole, I enjoyed it. Mainly, I think, because I looked in the shop windows.

(What did you like or dislike?) The main thing I disliked is the traffic. It annoys me terribly when I have to cross the street, or if I'm driving, particularly at the rush hours. I avoid it at all costs. (Things you liked?) The shops and the nice displays they put in the windows, I think. The Public Garden is very nice, too, when the weather is nice.

Hebron,

Have lived in Boston 2 years and 3 months. Originally from Indiana. Lived in Stockton, Calif., for about 3 months before coming to Boston.