

Twelve-year-old newsboy: John Hancock Building. How do you ... ? Wait a minute. (Runs to curb to deliver newspaper, returns.) How do you want to go, MTA? Oh, I don't know how to get there walkin'. But I think it's pretty far off. (Shakes head negatively.)

Young woman: No, I'm sorry. I really don't know.

Woman: I haven't the slightest idea. I'm sorry.

Well-dressed man: John Hancock Building. You goin' subway or walkin'? Come over here. (Moves to position with view south down Atlantic Avenue.) See that hotel (pointing to Essex Hotel)? Well, right down that street. Go right down there -- straight. As far as you can go (motioning east). You run into Boylston. Essex becomes Boylston -- same street. Follow Boylston right there. It'll be along Boylston a ways. Just go down here (pointing to Essex Street) -- this is Essex -- go down straight to the John Hancock Building. Just stay on straight -- don't leave that street -- and you can't miss it.

Oh, it's a big building -- you can't miss it. With a big round ball -- a blue round ball -- on top. It's sort of a weather vane -- a tall thing on top of the building. Under the blue ball is some glass with other colors, depending on the weather. Tonight it should be white. There's something under that for airplanes, something to warn airplanes. You know. You'll see that blue round ball. You can tell the John Hancock Building by the weather ball on top. Just straight down here (indicating down Essex Street) all the way.

Oh, at least fifteen minutes. You look like ... are you a pretty strong walker? Well, you should do it in no more'n fifteen minutes.

Negro man: Come here. (Walks to best view east down Columbus Avenue.) That's it there (pointing to John Hancock Building). Best way to get there: Go left after the first stop light. Take you right to the John Hancock Building. Go down here (pointing east down Columbus Avenue), to the first light -- that's Dartmouth. The next ... Claren ... (thinking) ... Clarendon is the next one. Go left there.

Oh Lord, it shouldn't take you (with emphasis) no time stall. (Walking away, mutters:) No more'n five minutes.

Man: Straight down (pointing east down Columbus Avenue). Straight down -- you can't miss it. Just go right. See that big building straight down (pointing to distant building a little to the right of Columbus Avenue, looking east)? It's this side of that. (Pause.) We can almost see it. Just go right. Did I say right? I mean left. (Swings arm to the left toward north.) Left. You won't have no trouble. It's the biggest building in Boston. Just go left down there (pointing east down Columbus Avenue).

It's got a big weather vane on top. Changes colors when the weather changes. Can be seen for miles around, at sea, and airplanes use it. Can't miss it.

Oh, it's just down there a little ways. I'll tell you. See 'way down there -- that big building (pointing to same building to right of Columbus Avenue, looking east)? See that smaller stone building just this side (pointing to same place)? Yeah. Just this side. See it? That's the Armory. That's left. That's all the farther it is. You can't miss it.

Seventeen-year-old boy: From here? You got a long way. Do you know Boston at all? See that sign (pointing to one way sign pointing north on Fruit Street)? Go down there till you come to Charles Street. There's a circle. Go to Park Street. You'll see Arlington. Go from there. Yeah, you've gotta go subway or you'll take all day. It's all (with emphasis) the way across town. I'm tellin' ya. (Shakes head.) It'll take you an hour at least. It's way (with emphasis) over (motioning north toward Cambridge). Lessee ... walkin'. Nope. You could take a bus (pointing to Cambridge Street). Go right and keep goin'. You can't miss it. You'll come to Arlington. It's about an hour. Go right down there and you can't miss it. Yeah, it's right over there (pointing north, directly over Charles River).

Man with cigar: John Hancock. That's a long hike from here. Are you walkin'? Yeah? Gee it's a long way. The other side of town. At least half an hour. The other side of the Common. You'll take Charles Street. See that red light (pointing to Cambridge Street)? Go right till you come to Charles Street. You'll avoid going over the Hill that way. Go on around. You'll see a gas station. Go on around to Clarendon. You'll see the John Hancock. It's got a big beacon on top. It's 'way over, across town. Across the Common.

Oh, it's got a beacon. It's a big building. There's lots of big buildings there. That's all the Back Bay district. You've got at least a half hour.

12 noon – 1 p.m.

Eighteen-year-old boy with foreign accent: I don't know. I am sorry, but I can't.

Woman: Oh, it's quite a ways. Why don't you ask one of the cab drivers (pointing to parked taxis). They can tell you. (Pause.) It's quite a ways, you know. It's right in town. Ask one of the cab drivers. They'll know.

Young woman: Oh dear. I'd walk straight down, and up over the hill (pointing to Beacon Hill), and down to the Common, and across the Common. It's on Berkeley Street. The John Hancock Building. Berkeley's the next one from Arlington Street.

Oh, it's on Berkeley Street. Ask anyone when you get there. Near Arlington and Berkeley. Ask anyone in the Common.

Oh, I'd say it would take twenty minutes from here.

Sunday, 27 Jan 57

1 – 2:30 p.m.

Old North Church to John Hancock Building

Man: Oh. You've got a long way. How you goin'? Oh, (with emphasis) it'll take you a good half hour walkin'. Lemme get you started in the right direction. Tell you what you do. Go straight down here (pointing down Salem Street) till you reach an underpass. Go through – then that's Scollay Square. Go down Tremont Street until you reach the Common. Follow me? At the Common go right on Boylston, then go straight till you reach it. You can't miss it.

Oh, it's a big (smiles) building. (Very fast:) Straight to Scollay, left on Tremont, right on Boylston. Can't miss it.

Little 7-year-old boy: (mumbles almost inaudibly) Naw, naw, I dunno. (Rattles off Italian, only "John Hancock" being hear, to a store proprietor across the street, calling him over) It's up near the Common I think.

Italian proprietor: You gotta go uptown, boy. Go to Scollay Square, and ask anybody. Go straight down this street (pointing down Salem Street) to Scollay Square. It's right there. Anybody can tell you. It's right downtown. (Customer forces him to leave in hurry.)

Old woman: (shakes head negatively) No spika English. (or something comparable)

Man across street who overhears: Where you wanta go? Ooooh, that's about 2 miles from here. That's on Boylston Street. Tell you what. You go around the block... Walkin'? Tell you what. Go right over this hill (gesturing up Hull Street) till you reach North Station. Go left on Canal Street to Tremont, and go straight to Boylston. Can't miss it.

It's big. It's at least 2 miles from here. Over to North Station, take a left on Canal Street to Scollay Square. Yeah, that's right. At Scollay, take a right on Tremont. Tremont'll run into Boylston. It's right on Boylston.

It's a good 3 miles away.

Fifteen-year-old boy: Oh Jeez, it's a long way from here, a long way. (Shakes head) A long way. I know where it is, but can't explain how to get there. It's a long way. It's a long way. You've got a long walk. It's over there (gesturing over Church), 'way over. But I couldn't tell you how. Go to Hanover and ask. You've got a long walk. It might be a mile. (Thinks) Listen. See the clock? (Gesturing to large clock on corner of Bennet Street and Salem Street) Go left as far as you can, then go right... (mumbling inaudibly) Gee I don't know what to tell you. It's a long way. Go left at the clock, then right, then left. It's over that way. You'll be on Hanover. Ask somebody.

Anybody can tell you. It's a big building. It's a long way from here.

About a mile. Oh, if you know the way, about 15 minutes.

Sunday, 27 Jan 57

1-2:30 p.m.

Old North Church to John Hancock Building

Young Italian mother with baby in arms: (Heavy accent) Oh, you have a long way to walk. I don't know; it's over that way (gesturing down Salem Street)/ You have a long way. Go straight down this street (Salem) (stops to think) ... to Tremont. Tremont, you know? Just go down Tremont. Ask somebody there. It is close to Tremont. It is very far.

It's a big big big big building. It's a new building.

Oh, maybe half hour.

Saturday, 26 Jan 57

3:30-4:30 p.m.

South Station to John Hancock Building

Man: Jeez, you got me. I'm a stranger too. I'm trying to find my way around too.

Man: By street car or by cab? ('walking') (Walks toward curb) Come over here. (Indicates position with view of Essex Street) See where it says BAR? (pointing to large blinking corner sign) Just follow that street and start asking questions. It's straight ahead – a tall spire.

You've got a good 15-minute walk.

Man: How're ya gettin' there? ("Walking") (Directs to position with Atlantic Street view) See down there? There's a cafeteria down there. See that bridge? See that sign (with emphasis) – that billboard? That's Kneeland Street. Just keep walkin' straight down Kneeland straight as an arrow. It's straight ahead. You'll pass Washington. Go by Tremont Street. You can't miss it. You've got a 30-minute walk. Just don't leave Kneeland.

Oh, it's big (with emphasis), with a sign. On Berkeley, and Clarendon. Get down there, and ask anybody. They'll tell you.

You're welcome. (20 feet away turns and yells:) Good luck.

Short old stooped white-haired man, obviously a native Bostonian: Where are you...how're you going to...? Walk! Oh. (points ahead) Go straight up Summer, cross Washington, go up Winter to Tremont. Do you know Boston, or...? Oh – well then... That's Summer. Keep going until you reach a main street. That's Washington. Keep going ahead on Winter until you reach the Common. That's Tremont. Go left – oh, about 3 or 4 minutes – till you reach Boylston. Go right – you'll be along the Common – till you reach a big hotel,... Copley Plaza Hotel. That's Arlington. It'll be right there in front of you – big. Over the Copley Plaza. Oh, it's hard to miss.

Let's see. It would take me (with emphasis, as he ponders height of interviewer) about (pauses) 25 minutes. Say anywhere between 20 minutes and a half hour.

Saturday, 26 Jan 57

1-2p.m.

Mass General Hospital to John Hancock Building

Two men, one of whom does talking: (Thick Italian accent) Wow. (20 second silence)

(Thinking out loud:) Too many streets to cut over ... (points toward Beacon Hill) ... cut

over ... Do you know how to get to Tremont Street? ("Is that the main street?") That's

right. Just go down Tremont Street, and you can't miss it.

It's got a big sign on it. John Hancock.

About an hour.

Twenty-year-old girl, possibly nurse: (Laughs) That's too far. Are you driving? ("No") Better take the sub- way. Catch a bus down there. (Points to Cambridge Street) ("No, walking") I tell you...turn right down there (pointing) at Cambridge Street, go to the circle and take Charles Street to Beacon, go along Beacon to Berkeley. It's on Berkeley. You can't miss it – just go right, left, right, left. (In a hurry, she walks toward Cambridge Street) It's quicker over Beacon Hill (pointing), but the streets are so mixed up there, you'd get lost. Better go around. Come and I'll show you.

There's a sign – oh, it's huge, the biggest building around.

Half an hour...or 20 minutes. Have you got it? (On Cambridge Street corner now) Left down there at the traffic circle (pointing), right on Beacon, then left on Berkeley. They're numbered alphebetically: Arlington, Berkeley, Clarendon, Dartmouth... Berkeley's the second.

Graying middle-aged woman: Ohh, you're way off. Let me see now... Tell you what, take a bus right... Oh, walking? Tell you what, go down to the traffic circle (pointing) and veer left at the first big street – that's Charles. Go waaaaay along down Charles Street till you reach the Common ... and ask somebody. It's at the corner of Berkeley and, and ... near Boylston.

Oh, it's big – and it's got a tall spire on top.

You're good and tall. (Hesitates) You should do it in about 20 minutes.

Monday, 28 January 57 7 – 8 p.m.

Columbus and Warren to John Hancock Building

Stout distinguished-looking Negro man: Easy. We can almost see it. Go straight down this street. (Grabs arm and starts walking down street.) This here's Columbus. Go down here until you get to Berkeley. Go right, or left I mean. You'll be at the police station – precinct station. One block over (swinging arm to left); you'll be at the door of the John Hancock Building. I ought to know. I work right there. I'm police chief. Been there 37 years (with chuckle).

Ah, nothin' to it. Just 10 blocks down to Berkeley, and over one.

Ah, it's big – huge. It's straight ahead. Too bad you're not on the other side of the street. You could see it easy. Come here. (Grabs arm and pulls interviewer across street.) See there (pointing to visible top of John Hancock Building)? See that red light? That's it.

Negro man: See that set of red and blue lights up there. Yep, that's John Hancock. Go right down (pointing east down Columbus Street) to your second set of stoplights. Take a right – I mean left. Straight on left.

Ohhh ... it'll take ya maybe 10 minutes ... if ya walk.

Monday, 28 January 57

3 – 4 p.m.

Arlington Square to John Hancock Building

Woman: Oh. Go right down that street (pointing down Arlington Street) and ask anybody. (Hesitates) It's right down there.

(She is facing, in full view of, the John Hancock Building) Oh, it's a very very tall building. Go down Arlington – right down there (pointing) – and ask someone. Around Columbus. Right down there (pointing). It's that way (swinging arm to left). You won't have any trouble.

Oh, about 10 minutes.

(Attempt was made to find position now in view of John Hancock Building)

Man: (In amazement, steps around corner of building.) It's right there (pointing). (Pause) Take your next right over the bridge. (Sees confusion in statement) Go over the bridge (swinging arm to left, along Chandler Street) and take your first right. Go straight along.

(Smiling) A coupla minutes.

Very short man: Hiya champ. It's right there (whirling, pointing). See. The big one. Ha ha ha ha. Go right around (swinging arm in arc down Arlington Street to John Hancock Building). Nothin' to it. Go right around. Down there, and over any of those. Just a coupla blocks. Ha ha ha ha.

Coupla minutes. Go right around. (Twenty feet away, turns and yells:) You can't miss it – it's too big. Ha ha ha ha.

Woman: That's the John Hancock Building right there (pointing). See, right there. I can't tell you exactly how to get there, but you just go down there (pointing down Arlington Street) and ask anybody. Someone can tell you there.

Oh, I don't know, but it's not more than 3 minutes.