

AN OLD NEW HAVEN ENGRAVER AND HIS
WORK: AMOS DOOLITTLE.

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We are so accustomed to study the lives of men of large deeds, of men who have helped to mould and develop public affairs in one way or another, that we are apt to forget the man of humble calling, who lived and worked humbly, but who nevertheless deserves to be remembered for the success he achieved in his particular sphere of work.

Now any man, who in the past made anything which is highly prized to-day and will grow more precious as the years increase, deserves to be remembered. The irreverent and unsympathetic entertain a kindly pity for those who have a real veneration for old things. It is difficult for them to realize how anyone can derive pleasure from some musty volume or quaint print, save as its mustiness or quaintness is turned into cash. And yet there are those who prize old things not alone for what they are worth in dollars and cents, but for what they are in themselves; prize them for their associations, for their antiquity, and for their intrinsic merit. To such, collecting is a real joy, and the pleasure of a discovery, an experience to be remembered.

Among the old things which are highly prized to-day, engravings hold a foremost place. They are of great historic value, because our forefathers were largely dependent upon the art of the engraver for their illustrative work. It was the man with the burin and not the man with the camera who made their pictures, and the products of his art were as nothing, in point of numbers, to the products of the numerous photographic processes of to-day. A book was rich in illustration then if it had its one engraved frontispiece. To-day we string a wealth of pictures on a slender (sometimes very slender) thread of text. We are largely indebted to the engraver for the representation of historic scenes, and places, and personages. True he may have used his imagination a little, and added a detail here and there, or idealized a face a bit, but we are grateful for these representations nevertheless, and, if they are all that we have, we prize them for their historical significance.

Now New Haven was the home of one of these old engravers. His name was Amos Doolittle. But New Haven cannot claim him as one of her native sons, for he was born in Cheshire, Conn., May 18, 1754.* He belonged to the fifth generation of Doolittles in this country. Abraham Doolittle was the founder of the family in America, and from him came all who have borne that name, for his brother John, who settled near Chelsea, Mass., died without issue. Abraham was here in New Haven about 1640, and owned a house. Among the first settlers of Cheshire was his descendant, and representatives of the

Doolittle family have ever been numbered among the inhabitants of that town, and have played their part in shaping its history.¹

Amos Doolittle was the son of Ambrose and Martha Munson Doolittle, and was next to the eldest in a family of thirteen. It is related as a striking coincidence that his twin brothers, Samuel and Silas, one living in Cheshire, the other in Vermont, and both insane, died on the same day and at the same hour.

Amos turned his attention to the silversmith's trade, learning it of Eliakim Hitchcock of Cheshire. He early came to New Haven, and here he made his home until his death in 1832. The house in which he lived stood on College Street just above Elm, and its site is now covered by the north end of East Divinity Hall. His shop was on the present College square, fronting the Green; about where Farnam Hall is, I imagine.

We find Doolittle's name among that goodly number of subscribers who, "desirous to encourage the military art in the town of New Haven," memorialized the General Assembly "to construct them a district military company by the name of the Governor's Second Company of Guards." Thus Doolittle was an original member of that illustrious and historic organization. It came into existence at a time when membership in it was a serious matter, for in less than two months after its incorporation the battle of Lexington was fought, and no sooner had the news arrived than Capt. Benedict Arnold got together his company, and proposed that they should go to the front. The larger part agreed to do so, and Doolittle was among that number. As a company they remained only about three weeks at Cambridge, when they returned to New Haven.

But soldiering was only a side issue with Doolittle, to be practiced when duty called. He was not exactly an "embattled farmer," but still he belonged to that class of soldiery, and it was a mighty good class too. He had now evidently turned his attention to engraving on copper, and this expedition to Cambridge, patriotic in its intent, was made to serve a practical purpose as well. That expedition was undertaken in the latter part of April, 1775.

In December of that year there appeared an advertisement in the *Connecticut Journal* to this effect— "This day published, and to be sold at the store of Mr. James Lockwood, near the College, in New Haven, Four different views of the Battle of Lexington, Concord, etc., on the 19th April, 1775.

Plate I. The Battle at Lexington.

Plate II. A view of the town of Concord, with the Ministerial troops destroying the stores.

Plate III. The Battle at the North Bridge, in Concord.

Plate IV. The south part of Lexington, where the first detachment were joined by Lord Percy.

¹ The old Ambrose Doolittle house in Cheshire is still standing, and is occupied. It is the first house south of the Power House on the line of the trolley, about a mile north of the center and is an old-fashioned leanto.

The above four plates are neatly engraven on Copper, from original paintings taken on the spot.

Price, six shillings per set for the plain ones, or eight shillings, colored."

We are told that Doolittle was entirely self-taught as an engraver. That is charitable, for there is no use in incriminating anyone else. These Plates are exceedingly crude in every way, and if they had to depend upon their artistic merit and skillful workmanship for their Value, they would come perilously near to being worthless. But their very crudity is perhaps their most valuable feature to the collector, or to anyone, for that matter. Aside from all that, however, an interest attaches to them as the earliest work of a man who was struggling with an art, of which as yet he knew practically nothing, and in which he never did rise to any high degree of excellence. And further, they have an historical interest. They cannot be regarded as accurate representations of the scenes depicted, of course, but still they were made by men who were portraying some things, at least, which they had seen with their own eyes.

And this brings me now to speak of the way in which they were made. We are indebted to Barber for our knowledge here. There was among those who volunteered and went to Cambridge, a young portrait painter, Ralph Earle. But Barber was evidently in error in stating that he was a member of the Foot Guards, for his name does not appear on the roster. Presumably he went along as a volunteer without being actually a member of the organization. They did not go as the Governor's Foot Guards, but as the New Haven Cadets.

Well, it was this Ralph Earle who made the drawings from which the Plates were engraved. Earle later went to England, studied under Benjamin West, and became a member of the Royal Academy. He did some work which brought him fame, particularly his painting of Niagara Falls, which has an interest for us in this connection, for this picture was exhibited throughout the country, and in course of time came to New Haven. Here his old friend and collaborator of a quarter of a century back was still his friend, as the following advertisement in the *Connecticut Journal* for June 25, 1800, shows: "Perspective View of the Falls of Niagara. One of the greatest Natural Curiosities in the known world painted on the spot by the celebrated Ralph Earle will be exhibited to view This Day between the hours of 8 in the morning and 6 in the evening at the house of Amos Doolittle, College St. This painting is 27 ft. long and 14 ft. wide, and will afford the spectator as just an idea of the stupendous Cataract as can be represented on canvas. Price of admittance, 9d." It is quite possible that it was Earle who painted the portrait of Doolittle which is in the possession of the Society.

But we must return to the Lexington and Concord Plates. Like Doolittle, Earle was a beginner. As Barber says, "Both their performances were probably their first attempts in these arts, and consequently were quite rude specimens." Barber also tells us, on the authority of Doolittle himself, that "he acted as a kind of model for Mr. Earle to make his drawings, so that when he wished to represent one of the Provincials as loading his gun, crouching behind a stone wall when firing on the enemy, he would require Mr. D. to put himself in such a position." Earle made his drawing for the Battle of Lexington on the spot shortly after, and so far as the buildings are concerned we probably have a representation which approximates the truth, but as for the battle, which was in no sense of the word a battle, why that of course is largely imaginary. But the really interesting thing about this is that here is an attempt, rude though it may be, to

depict the first shedding of blood in the cause of American Independence. It is not at all surprising that these Plates when published "made quite a sensation."

Doolittle was a practical man and had an eye to business no doubt in making his Plates, but, with his patriotic fervor, we may believe that he hoped they would help to inflame the people, and inspire them to action in the great contest which was already under way. And they would most certainly do that. Our first inclination as we look at these Plates is to laugh at their grotesqueness, but not so the men and women who first saw them. It was not the crude effort of a young and ambitious man with the graver which would impress them so much as the fact that they portrayed actual scenes, and scenes in which their fellow-countrymen had lost their lives at the hands of the redcoats. One may hazard the guess that Doolittle's primitive work served another and larger purpose than merely to put him in funds, and that he hoped it would.

Now I have been speaking solely of the first Plate in the series, "The Battle of Lexington." The others are just as quaint and interesting, and the temptation to linger over them is strong, not only for their historical interest, but because they are the first crude attempts of a struggling, untutored genius to express itself on copper. We instinctively feel that the youthful engraver put his whole soul into them. As we look at them we can almost see the painful labor which begot them. These Plates probably constitute the first series of Historical Engravings executed in America, series mind you, for of course Paul Revere's separate Plates of the "Boston Massacre" and "Ships Landing Troops" were engraved prior to Doolittle's work.

The mistake has frequently been made of claiming Doolittle as the earliest Connecticut engraver on copper. There was an engraver here in New Haven who antedates him, Abel Buel. It is quite likely that he engraved the first book-plate for the Linonian Meeting of Yale College which was organized in 1753, that quaint old plate with the Chapel and North Middle in a small loop at the top, both looking as though they had suffered from some seismic disturbance, and were in danger of speedy collapse. And then there was Deacon Martin Bull of Farmington, almost ten years Doolittle's senior, who did some engraving. But, after all, the output of these men in point of quantity and pretentiousness was insignificant as compared with Doolittle's. Outside of Connecticut there were such engravers as Paul Revere, Elisha Gallaudet, James Turner, and Nathaniel Hurd, who were earlier, the latter being perhaps the best of our early engravers here in America.

But to return to the story of Mr. Doolittle. What occupied his attention next after his famous Historical Series it is not possible to say with certainty, but in the Boston *Gazette* for Monday, May 19, 1777, this advertisement of his may be found—

"Proposals for Printing. A new map of the state of Connecticut with some of the adjacent parts of the States of New York, New Jersey, and Rhode Island, collected from the best and latest Surveys.

Conditions.

1. The Plate will be 24 inches, by 16 in size.

2. The price to Subscribers to be One Dollar plain or Ten Shillings properly coloured.
3. It will not be delivered to Non-Subscribers under Eight Shillings plain or Twelve colour'd.
4. It will be published in about four weeks from this Date.
5. Those who subscribe for six Sets shall have one gratis. N'. B. If this work meets due Encouragement, the Author intends publishing other useful Maps. Subscriptions are taken in by the Printer hereof. New Haven, April 21, 1777."

That is only a proposal. Perhaps it did not meet with a sufficient response to warrant him in carrying it out, for while it would not be safe to say that no copy is in existence, yet nothing is known of such a map where one might reasonably expect to get some knowledge of it.

His next production, or what we may assume to be his next, has an interest all its own, for it shows the ambitious, if somewhat daring, nature of this young self-taught engraver. In the *Connecticut Journal* for September 24, 1777, we find him advertising a plate, in the presentation of which, doubtless, he was moved by a patriotic impulse, as one likes to think he was, in a measure at least, in the presentation of his Historical Series. Those were momentous and intense times in the history of the nation. All eyes were on the Continental Congress, and we may well believe that its distinguished President, about whom the report was going around that he had written his name large on the *Declaration of Independence* that no one might fail to see it, yes, written his name, as it was said of him later, "where all nations should behold it, and where all time should not efface it," would be a personage of rare interest to the people in general, and would fire the young engraver's ambition to portray his features on copper.

And so his advertisement reads, "Just published and to be sold by Amos Doolittle, a metzotinto Print of the Hon. John Hancock, Esq. Price 4 shillings plain, \$1.00 neatly coloured." Now the interesting thing about this is that it shows Doolittle's ambition in respect to his art, or if that be too strong, let us say in respect to his craft. He is experimenting with the mezzotint. That, speaking in the most general way, is the opposite of line engraving. It is the process of working from dark to light. The surface of the plate is roughened, and then by scraping, that degree of light is produced which the artist desires, according as he scrapes much or little. The great thing in the process is the preparation of the plate in the first place.

Whatever may have been the motive which prompted Doolittle to try the mezzotint process, apparently he did not feel warranted in making further use of it, for I know of no other attempt of his in that direction. And as for this John Hancock plate, it is doubtful if a copy of it is in existence.

We pass on now to the memorable year of 1779, memorable certainly in the annals of New Haven, for that was the year when her citizens had the chance to show the metal of which they were made. And it proved to be good metal too. It had the right ring. When the British sailed up the harbor and landed on the East shore and then on the West shore, they met with a welcome to be sure, but then it was hardly the kind of welcome which men court. They encountered those who were emphatically disposed to question their progress, who, as a matter of fact, did emphatically question it. Those men were fighting

for their liberty, and they needed no other incentive of course, but, could it be possible that neighbor Doolittle's pictures were in any small way responsible for the patriotic fervor of that citizen soldiery which so valiantly contested the progress of the British invaders? Did they remember those brave Provincials whose life-blood they had seen, by the aid of Doolittle's graver, mingling itself with the dust, yes, actually seen, for Doolittle was nothing if not realistic, as will be evident from a careful study of the Plates? Well, be that as it may, their defence was heroic, and the invaders soon found they were dealing with a very determined foe.

Among those who took part in the defence of the city on the west side was Mr. Doolittle. We know how stubbornly and valiantly those defenders resisted the progress of the enemy, but they could not hold them back. They were compelled to retreat into the town, the enemy following.

Of the various stories told of citizens respecting this invasion, and the disagreeable scenes which followed, one concerns Mr. Doolittle. It has been preserved by Barber, but I venture to give it here because it rightly has a place in my story, and as Doolittle was Barber's informant we have no reason to doubt its truth, in the essential facts at least. When Doolittle and the other defenders were forced to retreat into the town he at once went to his home, where his wife was lying sick, and throwing his gun under the bed, anxiously awaited the coming of the invaders, his anxiety being greater for his wife probably than for himself. In due time the enemy were before his house, and at once an English lady who resided with him stepped to the door and requested of the officer a guard for the house. He insolently asked her who she was, and being informed that she was an Englishwoman and had a son in His Majesty's service, he placed the house in the charge of a Highlander, with orders that no harm should be done to any of its inmates. But during the parleying, it would appear that some of the soldiers had entered the back door, and were searching for themselves, and looking under the bed found Mr. Doolittle's gun. Well, this complicated matters, and for a moment it looked serious for Mr. Doolittle, but again the Englishwoman came to the front, and explained that the law required every man to have a gun in the house, and the owner of that gun was as great a friend to King George as they were themselves. They would have had some difficulty in believing that if they could have seen Mr. Doolittle that morning out there on the Derby road at Hotchkisstown popping away at some of His Majesty's subjects. But the good lady won and no harm came to Mr. Doolittle nor to his wife.

From this time on Mr. Doolittle's life, so far as we know, was devoted to the quiet pursuit of his occupation. War entered into it no more, save as he pictured some phase of it on copper. Other work than engraving was evidently done at his shop on College Street, though that occupied his attention for the most part, for an advertisement announces in a very dignified way, that specimens of Varnishing, Enameling, etc., might be seen at Mr. Amos Doolittle's painting-rooms, and one of his own prints carries the information that he had a rolling-press, which shows that he not only made his plates, but that he made the prints from them, and apparently did other printing also. At one time he evidently had Ebenezer Porter associated with him in the business. And in 1798 one Marcus Merriman advertises silver and metal Eagles, as made and sold by Amos Doolittle and himself. But, of course, engraving was his chief occupation, though it is not surprising that he should have made some use of his knowledge and experience gained as a silversmith's apprentice.

In 1782 there was published here in New Haven, "The Chorister's Companion, or Church Music Revised, containing besides the necessary rules of Psalmody a variety of Plain and Fuging Psalm Tunes, together with a Collection of approved Hymns and Anthems, many of which never before printed," to quote the title page quaintly engraved by Doolittle. It was printed for and sold by Simeon Jocelin and Amos Doolittle. He seems to have done a good deal along this line, for in 1786-7 he published in connection with Daniel Read, Vol. I of *The American Musical Magazine*. There were twelve numbers covering forty-nine pages, presumably all engraved by Doolittle, for Read was simply a merchant and kept a general store up on Broadway where you could buy anything from hardware to snuff and from hair powder to Gospel Sonnets. Apparently the Magazine was not successful for it lived only a year. It was not a magazine in our sense of the word, for it had nothing in it but music. It had a high ideal, namely, "to contain a great variety of approved music carefully selected from the works of the best American and foreign masters." With that ideal it ought to have lived.

Well, the young Republic was started on its wonderful career, and George Washington, in peace as in war, was the man of the hour. It was not to be expected that this industrious and ambitious craftsman would fail to find a subject in him. Indeed I fancy that every American engraver felt that he was false to the highest ideals of his art until with his graving tool he had made the likeness of Washington. Those of you who have seen Mr. Charles Henry Hart's sumptuous volume, published by the Grolier Club, entitled, "Catalogue of the Engraved Portraits of Washington," will appreciate the significance of that statement. He describes eight hundred and eighty distinct plates, and six hundred and thirty-four different states of them, and it is hardly likely that his catalogue is complete. And mind you, these are only the portraits on copper and steel. Nor are there included any of those numerous scenes in which Washington is the central figure.

Ah, well, it was only natural that he should have been a favorite subject of the engraver. Of Doolittle's chief effort Mr. Hart has this to say, "I consider this one of the most interesting in the catalogue, not only as being one of the largest, if not the largest plate executed in this country at the time of its issue, but also on account of its extreme rarity." There are at least five variations of this plate. The one we possess in our Collection is, apparently, the third state of it. It bears the date October 1, 1791.

But what is the plate? Well, here is its title, ornate alike in its wording and its engraving: "A Display of the United States of America. To the Patrons of Arts and Sciences in all parts of the World this Plate is most respectfully Dedicated by their most obedient humble servants, Amos Doolittle and Ebnr. Porter." Now one thing is clear from that, and it is that Mr. Doolittle is not catering to any restricted public. He is out to conquer the world. And he is appealing to those who are interested in the promotion of the Arts and Sciences. As Doolittle's worthiest contribution to Washingtoniana it deserves a few words of description. In the center is the large circle enclosing the bust of Washington, and on the band of the circle is the inscription, "George Washington, President of the United States of America. The Protector of his country, and the supporter of the rights of mankind." Around this large circle and forming a frame for it is a chain of fourteen smaller circles. The circle at the top encloses the Arms of the United States, and on the band is the total number of inhabitants. For each of the thirteen original States there is a circle, enclosing the arms of the State, and in the band of each is the name of the State, its number of inhabitants, and its number of Senators and Representatives. Taking it all in all this is an exceedingly

interesting plate, not alone because of its extreme rarity, but because of the originality of its conception, and the marked improvement in workmanship. Mr. Doolittle signs it both as its designer and engraver. It is evident that, during the thirteen years since his first pretentious effort, practice with the graver was not without its results, though he was not yet, nor was he destined to become, a great engraver.

We find him making maps for Jedediah Morse's American Geography, and folding plates of military tactics for Baron de Steuben's book, and in the American edition of Maynard's Josephus published in 1792, fourteen of the sixty plates are signed by Doolittle. We find him also making a portrait of Jonathan Edwards for his History of Redemption, and a portrait of Ezra Stiles and numerous plans for his History of the Judges of King Charles I. For Trumbull's History of Connecticut, he contributes plates of John Davenport, John Winthrop, and Gurdon Saltonstall, and a fine map of Connecticut. These are only some of his works along this line during the years just before 1800.

In 1799 he issued a New Display of the United States with the portrait of John Adams in the center, and with the coats of arms of sixteen States, Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee having come into the Union. It bears the famous saying, "Millions for our defence, not a cent for tribute." There is nothing laudatory in the inscription. It is simply, "John Adams President of the United States."

In 1803 he put out another New Display of the United States. This time, of course, the portrait is that of Jefferson. But the plate is much smaller and simpler than his former "Displays," perhaps in deference to "Jeffersonian simplicity," for, according to his obituary notice in the Columbian Register for February 4, 1832, "Mr. Doolittle was an old Jeffersonian Democrat, adhering to first principles through evil and through good report."

In this new "Display" he has abandoned the circle for the square, except that Jefferson's bust, like Washington's, is enclosed in a circle. Around this is the inscription, "Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States, Supporter of Liberty, True Republican and Friend of the Rights of Man." Enclosing this circle is a square of little squares, each representing a State.

I have spoken of his "Display" as his chief contribution to Washingtoniana. But it was not his only contribution. He engraved for Trumbull's Funeral Discourse on Washington, published in New Haven in 1800, a portrait after the Joseph Wright profile. And in the Connecticut Magazine, or Gentleman's and Lady's Monthly Museum for January, 1801, there appears an engraved bust of Washington after Gilbert Stuart. This same plate reworked and relettered was afterwards published by Shelton and Kensett, the latter being Thomas Kensett, who was connected through his marriage to Elizabeth Daggett, with Doolittle. Kensett himself was an engraver. It was he who made the old Wadsworth map of New Haven. In 1812, or about that time, he removed from New Haven to Cheshire, where he had a little engraving shop. It is worth noting in passing that he was a pioneer in the great canning industry, for he was a member of the firm of Daggett & Kensett, which experimented with the process of preserving extract of beef in hermetically sealed cans, which was supplied to the United States Government. Their store was on the west side of York Street, just north of Chapel. He was the father of the distinguished painter, John Frederick Kensett. This Cheshire firm of Shelton & Kensett published a number of Doolittle's plates,

among them being Alexander I of Russia, Bonaparte in Trouble, Dartmoor Prison, and his Prodigal Son series.

The mention of Doolittle's connection with Kensett through the latter's marriage to Elizabeth Daggett reminds me that nothing has been said of his own matrimonial relations. That he was twice married I can safely affirm, though of his first wife I have been able to find nothing, save that her name was Sally, and that she died of a lingering consumption, January 29, 1797, in her thirty-eighth year. A lengthy poem accompanies her death notice, but obituary poetry is of little value when one is in quest of facts.

By this wife he had at least one child, a son, for in a letter dated June 4, 1798, written in reply to an inquiry about his doing some work, and in which he says he is unable to do it, Mr. Doolittle adds, "however I have a little son that has just begun the business, he has done some engraving in the copper plate way very well." Of this son I have not been able to learn anything, not even his name.

But this chance reference to him is not without its interest. The view of Yale College, a copy of which is in the University Library, is signed, "A View of the Buildings of Yale College at New Haven. Drawn and Engraved by A. B. Doolittle. Published April 6th 1807 by A. Doolittle & Son, College Street, New Haven." So far as I am aware, this is the only plate which is signed in this way.

Now whose plate is this? Undoubtedly it is A. B. Doolittle's, and that perhaps is the son's name. It was signed by him as the designer and engraver, and published under the firm name, so to speak, of A. Doolittle & Son. That is only a conjecture, but when we find that son's name, I shall be surprised if it is not A. B. Doolittle. There was an A. B. Doolittle who had a shop on Church Street, "nearly opposite the Church," and whose advertisement begins to appear in the paper early in 1806. Besides the usual things found in a jewelry store, he advertises "Miniatures painted, and set in a handsome style. Profiles accurately taken, and all kinds of Devices painted and set." Could he be the same man as the one who signed that Yale print?

Mr. Doolittle's second wife was Phebe, daughter of Ebenezer and Eunice Moss Tuttle of Cheshire. They were married in New Haven, November 8, 1797. Thus through his second wife he became connected with the influential family of Tuttle. She died March 4, 1825, and with him is buried in the Grove Street Cemetery. It was her sister's daughter who married Kensett.

But from this digression we must return again to the consideration of his work. We find him now doing a good deal in the way of making illustrations for books, such as allegorical frontispieces for "The Guide to Domestic Happiness" and "The Refuge," also engravings of mechanical appliances and diagrams, and maps for a Bible Atlas, and, with others, plates for "The Self Interpreting Bible." In 1812 he published his map of New Haven, which was revised in 1817 and 1824.

It could hardly be expected that our little affair with England in 1812 should pass unnoticed by this patriotic craftsman. His "John Bull in Distress" undoubtedly expresses his feelings at the time. It is a little vindictive perhaps, but then there were extenuating circumstances. A half-bull, half-peacock is pierced through the neck by a hornet. The hornet is represented as saying, "Free Trade and Sailor's Rights you old rascal," while from its victim comes, "Boo-o-o-hoo!!!" This was published early in 1813, and has

reference to the engagement between the "Peacock" and the "Hornet," when the latter, under the command of the intrepid Lawrence, won a signal victory. And, by the way, that victory inspired another Doolittle, this time to song. Eliakim Doolittle, a younger brother of Amos, composed a song, "The Hornet' Stung the Peacock," which, for the time being, was immensely popular. Here is the way it begins,

"Ye Demo's attend and ye Federalists too,
I'll sing you a song that you all know is new,
Concerning a Hornet, true stuff, I'll be bailed,
That tickled the Peacock and lowered his tail,"

and so on through six more stanzas, with a chorus equally long for each stanza. And thus in their respective ways the Doolittle brothers gave evidence of their patriotic fervor. I think, however, that in this case the graver is mightier than the pen.

But we must not go on with this enumeration of his works. I have tried to mention those which will give us an idea of the wide field he covered, of the variety of subjects with which he dealt.

There is, however, a branch of his work about which I would say a few words before bringing this paper to a close, and that is his book-plate work. I believe there are nine book-plates which bear his signature, and several others are confidently attributed to him. It was the fashion at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries for individuals and libraries to have engraved book-plates or labels; sometimes they were very simple, sometimes they were very elaborate—a fashion which has again come into vogue. Oftentimes of course, in the case of individuals, the family coat of arms served as the book-plate, but in the absence of this symbol of aristocracy, and always in the case of the library, the engraver could use his imagination, and thus produce something awfully democratic perhaps, but at the same time quaint and interesting and individualistic, something which would rise above the monotonous level of heraldic designs. It was in the case of libraries, perhaps, that the engraver gave his ingenuity the freest play.

Of the known book-plates engraved by Doolittle, his four local library plates are by far the most interesting, as they are the most pretentious. Two are College plates, one for the Brothers in Unity and the other for the Linonian Library. The former was designed by Wm. Taylor, the latter presumably was designed as well as engraved by Doolittle. They are quaint and crude both in design and workmanship. The plate for the Linonian Library is dated 1802. It is rich in allegory, and full of detail. The other two local library plates were the plates of the Mechanic Library and the Social Library Company. The former was organized in 1793, the first meeting of the organizers being held in the State House, February 5th of that year. This is probably the earliest public or semipublic library in the city. There seems to have been some connection between it and the Mechanic Society of which Mr. Doolittle was a member, or at all events his funeral was attended by the Mechanic Society, which would indicate his membership in it. The library never reached large proportions. A catalogue published sometime after 1801 shows nine

hundred volumes. This library had two book-plates. The smaller, and as I suppose earlier, plate is not signed by Doolittle, but that he engraved it there can be little doubt in my judgment.

As an indication of some connection between this library and the Society of Mechanics it may be stated that this plate, only slightly altered, appears as a wood-cut in the advertisement in the paper of the meetings of the Society. For mechanics as for readers of books the motto was, "Improve the Moment." That was back in 1800. The larger and more elaborate plate carries his name as designer and engraver.

In 1807 another library was organized, though not incorporated until 1810. This was known as the Social Library Company, and for this Doolittle designed and engraved a book-plate. I might add that in 1815 the Mechanic Library was merged with the Social Library Company, and the two were known as the Social Library, which existed under this name until 1840. This Social Library Company book-plate is in some respects the best of Doolittle's book-plates. It has its defects, but on the whole it presents a very neat and attractive appearance. Across the top is a ribbon bearing the name, and underneath is a black cloud in which are two well-fed, sweet-faced cherubs, holding in their hands a huge scroll on which are the words, Theology, History, Biography, Voyages and Travels, Classical, indicating the character of the books in the library. You will notice the absence of Fiction. This library frowned upon that branch of literature. In the distance is a large house on a knoll among the trees, while nearer is a body of water, and on the grass in the immediate foreground are books and scrolls, and a compass, and a globe. Underneath all is the perfectly proper sentiment, and eminently sage advice,

"Tis Books a lasting pleasure can supply,
Charm while we live and teach us how to die,
Seek here ye Young the anchor of your mind,
Here suffering Age a blest provision find."

Another branch of his work is indicated by the following receipt given to the Treasurer of Yale College—

"Rec'd Newhaven September 12, 1817 of Elizur Goodrich, Esq. Sixty one Dollars for that number of Diplomas for the Bachelor of Arts graduated in Yale College this week—by me Amos Doolittle"

But I must bring to an end the story of "An Old New Haven Engraver and his Work." If I have seemed to make much of insignificant things, you must remember that if from the story of a life like this the insignificant things are eliminated, there will be no story left. For we have not been considering a man of great deeds, but just one of those plain, industrious citizens who form the strength of every community.

That he was a valuable man in this community there can be no doubt. So far as I know he did not serve his fellowmen in high public office—in 1797 he was tax lister (assessor)— but he served them in that humbler way of quietly doing his duty as a citizen, and industriously working at his trade.

We have not even been considering a man great in his chosen occupation, for Amos Doolittle is not remembered for the rare quality of his work. It is enough for us that he was an old New Haven citizen who with head and hand fashioned those things which men everywhere, with a veneration for the quaint and the ancient, most highly prize.

Mr. Doolittle died January 30, 1832, after working at his occupation for almost sixty years. It is interesting to note that about three weeks before his death he was engaged in helping to make a small plate of his Battle of Lexington, and it was his last work. It was most fitting that it should be. We may judge of the esteem in which he was held from the funeral notices in the local press. "He was a worthy and highly respected citizen. His funeral was attended by a large concourse of friends and relatives, together with the Mechanic Society, and his brethren of the Masonic Fraternity." "He was a gentleman of an amiable and obliging disposition—a Christian in all the relations of life." Fortunate indeed is he of whom that much may be said.