

WILLIAM BENTLEY, D.D., THE SALEM  
DIARIST: AN EARLY COUNCILLOR AND  
BENEFACTOR OF THE AMERICAN  
ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

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BY GEORGE FRANCIS DOW

THE circumstances attending the founding and early growth of a Society should always be worthy of the attention of its members in later years. The following material gathered from the records of this Society and from the diary of one of its first Councillors is accordingly presented as a contribution throwing some light on the events of a century and more ago. While Doctor Bentley was not an incorporator, he was nominated for membership November 19, 1812, at the preliminary meeting held for organization, and at the adjourned meeting held February 3, 1813, at the Exchange Coffee House in Boston, when duly elected a member, he became a Councillor and remained on the Council until his death in 1819. He was usually present at meetings held in Boston and his keen interest in everything of a historical or antiquarian nature, added to his official connection, gives uncommon value to the brief comments on Antiquarian Society affairs which from time to time he entered in his diary.

Received a Letter from the Rec. Sec. of Antiquarian Society in which he informs me I was elected a Member, Feb. 3 & at last Meeting, Councillors among seven. I have not yet the history of this Association, its Constitution, its Members or the act of its Incorporation, nor perhaps the political origin of it.

So he writes in his diary on February 22, 1813, and at the same time comments on a proposal recently

received to establish in Massachusetts, a literary institution to be called a College of Arts or, perhaps, "The Massachusetts College of Arts and Sciences." Strong in his attachment to the administration at Washington he records his opinion that the proposed Association should embrace only men "not unfriendly to the administration of their own Government. . . none but men of truly American principles."

Doctor Bentley did not attend the June 2d meeting of the Antiquarian Society, the next meeting following his election. The reason why may be not difficult to discover as the preceding day must have been full of excitement and suspense to the patriotic soul of the Salem minister. That morning the British frigate *Shannon* came into the Bay and the *Chesapeake* went out from Boston in chase of her. All Salem flocked to points of vantage to see the fight, the Doctor going in the Custom House boat to the high lands on the Marblehead side of the harbor where he saw the English frigate "suffer herself to be chased till she was out of sight. Legg's hill in sight," he writes, "was black like the swarm of bees and we left them eager to follow with their eyes and hearts the Am. Frigate." Vague news of the disaster found its way back to the town and the night and following day were full of suspense. "This long uncertainty has exquisite pain, as we were assembled to see a fight at sea, the issue of which was hardly in doubt." So writes Doctor Bentley, and we may feel certain that he then had little heart for a small business meeting of antiquarians in Boston, two hours distant by coach.

The Doctor attended the October 16th meeting of the Council. The evening before he enters in his diary:

Letter from Professor Peck to attend on the morrow a meeting of the Council of Antiquarian Society at Boston for first time, & to arrange for first anniversary Oct. 23, 1813. and after his return he makes this record of the day's events:

Was at Boston with the Council. It has few members & only four appeared. Two were absent. Present Col. Gibbs, Pr. Peck, V. P., & B. Russel, Esq. We met at the house of Mr. Andrew of the company of Thomas & Andrew, booksellers, Thomas, President. I have not as yet seen any documents. From Pr. Peck I learn that the Institution is incorporated. That the Hist. Society are jealous of a competition as I learn from Mr. Shaw at the Athenaeum. We agreed & voted to apply for the Chapel Church & its accommodations, to invite the Pastors to say prayers & read lessons on the occasion, Pr. Jenks had been appointed Orator, to have a meeting of the Council at 9½ A. M. at Concert Hall, and to proceed to the Chapel at eleven. I have not seen a list of the members, or the Constitution, or the preliminary articles or deliberations on the subject.

This comment on the jealousy of the Historical Society is reflected in the letter of Judge Lowell, written seven years later, when he declined the diploma of the Antiquarian Society and wrote:

I always disapproved of the institution, because I thought the Historical Society quite enough for one State and that any diversion of funds or talents from that single object would be injurious.

The Council meeting had been held to complete arrangements for a public meeting at which to observe the first anniversary of the Society and the day selected was October 23, "the day of the discovery of America," which in new style reckoning should have been celebrated the day before.

Here are Doctor Bentley's impressions of what happened on that day:

Oct. 23. The day of the discovery of America by Columbus, and the first anniversary of the lately formed Antiquarian Society. The day was lovely, & the people assembled few, & the Society were the first who entered the Chapel, but several Gentlemen came in & others afterwards. Our preparatory business was in electing members & this was done by handfuls. It was checked by the choice of a Committee of Nominations in which the President, Mr. Thomas & Mr. Bigelow, Speaker of H. of Reps., Professor Peck, V. P., were entered. The oration of Mr. Jenks had classical purity, without profound erudition. It conceded to enquiry even its wonders. With Bryant's Mythology united to Jones' in-

vestigations & with Welsh Indians & a Language of Signs, he exhibited specimens of great labour & great credulity. But it was in a form which pleased. We returned to the Exchange Building, read the exhibition to be made of our Institution & passed all Laws proposed, from the haste of dinner time & the improper time for discussion. Even Morse obtained to have himself on a committee of enquiry respecting Mounds, which will enable him to get materials for his Geography, as his maps did of the Historical Society, without perhaps touching our funds, but by availing himself of the bounty & the aid of our correspondents. I saw many things to please & some to disgust me much. I found Morse would have a greater influence here than in the Historical Society, & I fear eventually if we do not incorporate with the Historical Society we shall be the miserable engines of stupid fanatics.

Doctor Bentley and the Rev. Jediah Morse at that time had few things in common save a mutual antipathy which had grown out of a newspaper controversy on free-masonry but which was laid on a deeper foundation of fundamental differences in religion and politics. It began in 1798 and Bentley's diary of December 8th in that year has the following:

In yesterday's gazette we had the last roar of poor Morse. His only forte was in recourse to vulgar prejudice. He did not dare to meet an argument fairly. He ranted upon the zeal of Masons in his old copy of Robison, then condemned all Secret Societies, & after saying that  $\frac{3}{4}$ s of what had been said was nothing to the point, he ended by saying that nothing was understood. He had published an account of his benevolence which in the Centinel of this day is proved to be false, attributing to his own zeal the generous exertions of those who were independent of him & despised him.

This antagonism lost nothing in strength as the years went by and doubtless rejoiced in the controversy that arose in 1814 between Doctor Morse and Mrs. Hannah Adams, the historian. Doctor Bentley's summary of the various activities of his controversial opponent, as recorded at that time, leaves but little to be said on his side of the question. Here it is:

Mar. 13. Sunday. The most singular occurrence of the present moment is the dispute between Dr. Morse, Geography writer, & Mrs. H. Adams of the same calling. The pious

Doctor, quite insufficient from his own resources, as Mr. Freeman has abundantly shewn in his review of the first edition of the Geography, has been uncommonly jealous of any use of his compilation. This credulity has never impaired his avarice, or his stealing from other authors given him a will to indulge the second theft from his own. Good Dr. Belnap told me M. took all the popular part of his own Hist. of N. E. and M. ingrafted it upon his own Geography and never even made him the gift of a copy, tho' in his neighborhood, & tho' Dr. B. was nearly ruined by the publication, the popular sale of which M's theft prevented. So after Winterbotham's Collection, made in prison in England, was republished in America, he ruined the publisher in New York by a prosecution under his own patent as W. had made use of Morse's work among other books. In the Hist. Society, upon the best authority, he employed a License to print a map to purchase one for his own work. And in the first meeting of the Antiq. Society his first motion was to search for the mounds, & tho' prevented from any expenses he has facilitated his own correspondence by the use of their name. He sold an infamous publication about the *Ocean* to a political party to take advantage of their madness, & tho' the lie about that ship was proved, never retracted. He sold editions of paltry pamphlets about the Illuminati from Robertson & Barruel, & never made any acknowledgements to the public. He also attacked the Masons & pretended from an engraved seal to convict them of guilty purposes, but never made any concessions after their public vindication of themselves which his arraignment obliged them to make on many occasions. Dr. Osgood, his neighbor, said he meddled in some loans he had made to Charlestown & tho' the justice of the Law had satisfied the parties, this man made no satisfaction. He has even sent a creditor of my father to me, to get a debt which a brother by taking the estate has bound himself to pay, to create trouble & now he is busy with H. Adams. This modest woman induced by her father, a peddling bookseller, but a very useful man in collecting valuable books from private libraries, had published a History of New England, and several other little works for her support & the public mind was favorable to her. An abridgement of her History of New England was recommended but Morse & Parish have interfered with her design ungenerously. He has brought the matter before the world in the *Boston Centinel* & she has replied with spirit. She now claims a further explanation & the controversy with him is endless, he is never done. He has at present a controversy with the distillers of the State for distilling grain. His hand is against every man. It is time he was fully known.

Possibly Doctor Bentley's irritation against Morse and also his co-author, the Rev. Elijah Parish of Byfield, soon elected a member of this Society, may have cooled his ardor and caused him to stay away from meetings; at any rate it was October 24, 1814, before he again attended. This was the annual meeting and he went to Boston intending to decline a re-election to the Council. But something caused him to change his mind and his name appears in the list of those elected. Here is what he had to say of the meeting:

Was carried to Boston by the meeting of the American Antiquarian Society. My purpose was to relinquish all Offices. The President made a new donation & recommended some arrangements which seemed expedient. The jealousy of the Historical Society is visible but I think we shall succeed, if we persevere. The Council is to be enlarged. The members increased & the Correspondence extended. These seem to be the principle objects. The Catalogue of the Library to be published. I did not return to the meeting after dinner & know not the conclusions.

Meanwhile President Thomas had visited Doctor Bentley at Salem and although he cordially offered aid nevertheless a vein of pessimism runs through the entry that he made in his diary that evening.

July 26, 1814. Mr. Isaiah Thomas & his son came & spent the day with me. He is the founder & President of the Antiquarian Society. He was in search of stores for his Library & Cabinet, & to collect means for some building. I spent some time with him in my collections & laid out a work to give him some communications on the subject. He has great zeal in the work & promises much from the elections which have been made of members. But priviledges & names so easily gained have not urged enquiry. And this paying beforehand is not better in science than it is in business. It makes many debts, & leaves them unsettled or badly & reluctantly paid. It is the opinion of some of the able men of the Historical Society that Thomas will have the honour he wishes & the Institute fall back to the Hist. Society which can embrace all its objects.

The same feeling is shown a year later in August, 1815 when President Thomas again visited Salem.

Mr. Thomas & Son with me, Col. Ranney, & Lt. Liman who at present commands at Fort Pickering. After dinner the military gentlemen visited the forts. Mr. Thomas as enthusiastic as ever in his Antiquarian Society, but he has the interest of the historical society against him. I fear we have but few to labour in the good cause with us & few have means.

Doctor Bentley was present at the annual meeting in October, 1815, and was elected a member of the committee on publications. He also offered the prayer and read the lessons at the Chapel where Doctor Paine delivered the address. The entry in the diary is brief on this occasion, viz.

Went to Boston to Meeting of Antiq. Society as second to Dr. Paine. The prayer & Lessons were assigned to me. The Organ by a celebrated Mr. Johnson. We assembled in the afternoon at Chapel Church & not in the morning as before. We dined at Exchange St. where we met. We admitted several members & chose officers.

The next meeting of the Society was held on January 10, 1816 and Doctor Bentley was in town having gone that day to visit President Adams at Quincy. He did not stay for the meeting but returned to Salem by the late afternoon stage. The meeting turned out to be a very informal affair and was adjourned to January 18th, when a few matters of business were considered.

At the annual meeting in October, 1816, Doctor Bentley delivered the address his subject being "The mercantile character of the first generation." This address remained unprinted until 1875 although a committee had been appointed on the day of its delivery "to express the thanks of the Society to the Rev. Mr. Bentley for the Address delivered this day, and to request a copy of the same for the press." In January, following, the Committee reported "progress" and there the matter rested until the minutes were arranged and edited for publication in 1875. The Address is of real value and is an early account not only of the commerce of the colonial days but of

the domestic life and customs of the times. It gives unmistakable evidence of original research in documentary material and while somewhat clothed in the garb of ministerial phrase yet it always must command attention. A few years ago I printed in a small edition the voluminous inventory of the estate of Capt. George Corwen of Salem who died in 1684. The inventory of mansion house and shop was taken room by room and is of unsurpassed interest as a revealing and most authentic picture of the home and business of a Colonial merchant. On reading Doctor Bentley's Address for the first time it warmed my heart to find that over a hundred years ago Doctor Bentley also had discovered this mine and extracted some of its wealth.

Here is what Doctor Bentley has to say of his own performance. "My subject with the Antiquarian Society was: The Mercantile character of the first generation. We in our own way, after the choice of officers, proceeded to admit a great number of members, with the pretense of enlarging our friendships. Then the wonderful mummy from Kentucky was introduced and the discoverer declared it was not his purpose that it should be exhibited for pay. After dinner we passed to the Chapel in School street & Dr. Harris read prayers from his own manuscripts. After the exercises I walked to Cambridge and passed the night at Judge Winthrop's without any other visit." No word of personal comment upon his own performance nor record of what a friend may have said.

This was the last meeting of the society that he attended but his interest in its welfare continued and he remained on the Council until his death, two years later, when it appeared that he had bequeathed to the Society his large library reserving only the theological and classical books which were given to Allegheny College at Meadville, Pa. The bequest included many German books and periodicals, his New England books, his cabinet with all its contents, his manuscripts



not in his own hand, and all his paintings and engravings. A clause in the will *recommended* to the executor, his nephew William Bentley Fowle, that all manuscripts in the handwriting of the testator be destroyed. Fortunately this unhappy recommendation was not acted upon and so there was preserved for us of a century later the voluminous diary in which for thirty-five years he minutely recorded his observations and personal experiences, remarkable events, deaths, information relating to Salem and vicinity, observations on the weather, shipping news, and also a summary of important events not only in the United States but everywhere abroad.

This diary fills eleven volumes, several of them folio in size. A few years ago it fell to my lot to bring about the printing of the diary, to superintend the preparation of copy for the printer, edit the manuscript and see it through the press. The four substantial volumes printed at that time are a mine of information, diversified in character to an extraordinary extent. No other purely New England diary, save the invaluable record kept by Judge Sewall, bulks so large or preserves in such detail the local color desired by the historian and the sociologist. Since the publication of the diary I have been asked many times, "What was omitted when preparing the manuscript for the press?" About three-fifths of the original manuscript was printed. Everything relating to Eastern Massachusetts was included. Here and there obituary notices of ministers and public men living remote from Boston and Essex County and having no immediate connection therewith had been inserted and these were omitted. Probably much of this biographical information was obtained second hand and may be found in type elsewhere. Quotations from books and lists of parish calls were omitted. Much the larger mass of omitted matter related to national politics and European affairs with a summary of current events in all parts of the United States. This material he

gathered from a wide range of sources but principally from the current newspapers which came to his hands through his semi-editorial connection with Salem newspapers, at first with the *Gazette* and afterwards with the *Register*. For nearly thirty years he contributed weekly to these newspapers upwards of two columns of closely printed matter,—a summary of current events at home and abroad, at the time considered a prodigy of learning and labor. It was the rough notes gathered day by day for this weekly contribution that occupy nearly a quarter part of the manuscript. These were omitted in the printed diary. The nature of this material and the form in which it appears is shown in the last entry in the diary made probably only a few hours before the sudden death of Doctor Bentley. The date is December 29, 1819.

Congress, 16th, House, Bankrupt Bill appeared. 17 Bill of exports & Report of Director of Internal Revenue. Many wants made known at the Treasury. The Prince Regent of England has told a direful tale to Parliament. In France a great calm but for what is still doubtful. In India they watch the movements by land and sea. Capt. Konochie has drawn attention to the Great Ocean. Mr. Kenneii to the power of approaching India from Europe by land. He grants this power as things are only to the Russians in alliance with Northern Asiatic powers. In the Eastern seas as well as the Western they complain of Pirates. In Van Dieman's land they find their European evils acting all the part of our Savages, & have executed destruction. The Bengal Government have a Board of Trade that can give authority to any member to exercise all the powers of the board as circumstances may require.

The Bentley diary is remarkable not only for the large amount of unusual information therein preserved from oblivion but for the incisive description and piquant phrase that in a word or two visualizes an occurrence or observation. In his daily walks he seemed to notice everything going on about him,—the buildings in course of erection, the arrivals and departures of shipping, the local events and the gossip of the neighborhood. No launching or muster escaped

his attention and usually he was present and took part in the festivities. Let us take one example from among the many. He writes of taking his compass and pencil and going for a walk of possibly five miles by way of Danvers Port and Ryal Side, Beverly. The draw at the North bridge arrests his attention and is described and the name of the man who recently repaired it is noted. North Salem does not appear flourishing. Negroes are coming in. The mills at Waters river receive several lines of description and the view from the Reed house nearby is examined. A bit of history relating to the Endecott grant is inserted and the story of the sun dial and the sand-scoured portrait is embalmed for all time. He looks for the site of the old mansion, at the same time commenting on the fine view of the river. He preserves the record of a passing tradition of hedges of damson plum trees and grape vines leading to the little creek where the Governor formerly kept his shallop. He gathers some fruit from the Governor's sugar pear tree said to have been set out in 1630 and still bearing fruit in 1921. The shagbarks growing near Mr. Reed's house are noted, trees that were cut down so recently as 1920. He then recounts his courses as he passes the New Mills and Spite bridge beyond. At Ryal Side a family burying ground demands a moments pause and just beyond were "mean houses," some with shattered diamond glass in the windows. After a few civilities at Beverly he returns over the long Essex Bridge and even the fact that he reached home just before the clock in the church tower struck six is minutely recorded in the diary. His frequent journies to Boston and about Essex County are rich mines of history and description for local antiquarians. One day the Doctor's theory of life finds a permanent record:

July 10, 1804. My friend Judge Winthrop with me from Cambridge. He boasts a theory of life different from mine. He says he intends to purchase every thing with ease, I by

labor. He uses little exercise, drinks even his wine hot, & hot water at all times. I have no favour for his plan, as leading to indolence, to irritation, & to irregularity. I propose exercise as the way to get free air & temperance in a good appetite. I propose regular hours as a necessary slavery of appetite for the freedom of the mind. I propose some severity of choice, that I may bear it of necessity. I feel my worst evils from those habits in which inclination suffered no force. And I find it easier to endure the greater evils, I have ever felt from my present restraints, than to resist my untutored & early propensities. Had not my friend betrayed in early life a very great excentricity, I should think more kindly of his theory which is rather a convention than a direct conquest.

The diary presents few analogies with other well known diaries. One finds little self contemplation. Moral experiences, adored by the Mathers, soon disappear from its pages. The busy man found no time for introspection. He continually looked about him with an unflagging zeal for information for what was happening in every walk of life. If there is any feature of his daily record that may be considered distinctive it is the frequent biographical sketch, the pithy obituary, hitting off in a phrase the weakness or virtue of the individual.

Oct. 3, 1803. Yesterday departed from life Samuel Adams. He graduated at Cambridge in 1740, & died aet. 81. He was very active in our revolution, was in the first Congress, and was excluded with Hancock from pardon by a British Proclamation. Was afterward Governor & persevered through life in his Republication principles without any conformity to parties, influence or times. He was not a man of ready powers, but he had an impenetrable secrecy & a great popular influence by his inflexibility & undaunted courage. No man contributed more towards our revolution, & no man left behind him less, distinctly to mark his resolutions, his peculiar genius & his communications. He was feared by his enemies, but was too secret to be loved by his friends. He did not put confidence in them while he was of importance to them. He was not known till he acted & how far he was to act was unknown. He had not entire confidence in Washington in the Army, & less confidence in the government. He was too independent for Hancock, as he esteemed very lightly private obligations in public character. He was reconciled but not restored. He preserved the severity of Cato in his manners,

& the dogmatism of a priest in his religious observances, for theology was not his study. Our New England Fathers was his theme, & he had their deportment, habits, & customs. Often as I have conversed with him, I saw always this part of his character-zeal. He was a puritan in his manners always. In theory he was nothing, he was all in himself. He could see far into men, but not into opinions. He could be sure of himself on all occasions, & he did more by what men thought of him, than what he discovered to them. His religion and manners were from our ancestors. His politics from two maxims, rulers should have little, the people much. The rank of rulers is from the good they do, & the difference among the people only from personal virtue. No entailments, no privileges. An open world for genius & industry. I never conversed with him as a man of letters, but always as a man of whom I might say, all his thoughts were his own.

Doctor Bentley was a man of human passions and at times he was caustic in his dislikes. These generally were of a political cast but his religious antipathies were deeply seated also. In Timothy Pickering, the *Federalist*, he could find little to praise. In paragraph after paragraph he holds him up to disparagement or ridicule and he never overlooked the incident of the march to Concord in 1775. In June, 1805, he writes:

Mr. Thomas Paine's ridicule of Mr. Timothy Pickering, grounded upon Mr. Pickering's ridicule of the militia, has excited much merriment. No just cause is known for the slow step of Mr. Pickering at the Concord Fight, but no evidence has appeared to justify the belief that he stopped to pray. If Mr. P. had behaved well on that day, all the grades of promotion in the army prove that he was no soldier, so that Mr. Paine will be amply justified with posterity for this hint of a most fatal delay.

"The celebrated Charles C. Pinckney is in town with his wife," writes the Doctor in September, 1803. "He is at Gen. Derby's & with him has been riding round the Town. Some of us think of Hezekiah's showing the City to the Babylonians."

Sometimes Doctor Bentley's characterizations become almost corrosive in their biting phrase. Little remains to be said after this summary of life's little ebb and flow.

This morning died in Walnut Street, Hubartus Mattoon, aet. 78. He removed from Newcastle, N. H. after his marriage & was a zealous follower of Whitaker & an Elder in his church, & he never renounced his attachment. He was as far from beauty as he could be without deformity, & as brutal in his zeal as he could be without persecution. He was ignorant, noisy, petulant, but hapily neither his organs nor his abilities made him intelligible. He was a Blacksmith with the same fame as he was religious. There was no polish, no invention & no praise in what he did, more than in what he said. He declined at last into intemperance, dishonesty, & derangement & died of a cancer which took away all his face, & made him as ghastly to behold as he was terrible to hear. His wife was glad he was dead & even Charity had not a tear, tho' she comforted him in his sickness & carried him to the grave. The race is extinct, & like the Mammoth nothing is left but his bones.

And now look at the opposite, a kindly, appreciative picture of his recollections of Mrs. Adams, the wife of John Adams, who died in 1818.

Oct. 30, 1818. We have had notice of the death of Abigail, wife of the late President John Adams, who is still living at his home in Quincy. She was the daughter of Revd. William Smith of Weymouth. When the controversy with Hamilton and Mr. Adams was published, the mean artifice was employed to interrupt domestic life by representing the President as under the sovereignty of his wife, & Pickering when dismissed was not unwilling to repeat the same calumny. The first time I ever saw Madam was at her own house shelling her beans for a family dinner to which without any ceremony or apology she invited me but from engagements I did not accept. I saw her repeatedly at her own house without any impression unfavourable to her person or manners. I found a freedom in conversation which took its familiar topics. When at my own house at Salem she left the kind opinion of a respect for herself adapted to make her courtesy & conversation more valuable & agreeable. She was in appearance of middle size, in the dress of the matrons who were in New England in my youth. The black bonnet, the short cloak, the gown open before, & quilted petticoat, and the high heeled shoe, as worn universally in that day. Everything the best but nothing different from our wealthy and modest citizens. She was possessed of the history of our country & of the great occurrences in it. She had a distinct view of our public men & measures & had her own opinions which she was free to disclose but not eager to defend

in public circles. She had the vigour of a firm constitution & seemed designed for great old age. Her children are of disproportioned genius, but the Sec. of State would be an honour to any family. Mr. Adams always appeared in full confidence but that of an equal & friend who had lived himself into one with the wife of his bosom.

Doctor Bentley was a booklover and collector of books and his diary is full of book chat and literary comment. One example will serve our purpose at this time. In August, 1804 he went to Boston to attend the funeral of Dr. Simeon Howard, of whom he writes a long and intimate biographical notice. The next day the diary continues with the following:

After proper visits I spent a few hours in Dr. Mather's Library. Still without a catalogue, I could only gratify my curiosity as some accident might tempt me. But I find it diminishes. I was indulged with specimens of the Sermons of the four American Mathers in succession, Richard, Increase, Cotton & Samuel. And I took such specimens of the hand writing of the Boston & other clergy as I had liberty to select. This was once the largest private library in America. The heads of Richard, Increase, Cotton, Samuel of America, & Samuel of Dublin, & of Nathaniel of London yet remain, but their situation does not promise their long preservation. That of Richard will soon be gone. It agrees as well as possible with my block print. That of Increase, in his old age, is a good picture and was called a likeness. Of Cotton, the portrait much resembles Samuel, whom I intimately knew, but Samuel's I cannot see & the family does not acknowledge the least resemblance. The others were probably great likenesses as they were taken upon the spot where the best artists dwelt. My small Increase is taken from the full length in the Historical Society's collection, and that was taken while Increase was abroad on Colonial affairs in England, & was out of health."

From these examples of Doctor Bentley's picture of his time and neighborhood one can form some estimate of this active-minded man, possessed of a capacity for enduring friendships, but also capable of vigorous antagonisms. His memory is still fragrant in the older families of Salem. His personal characteristics are yet preserved in anecdote and transmitted reminiscence. But time is taking its toll and in years to

come he will be remembered best through the pages of his diary—that confidant of his evening hours which has preserved for curious later-day inspection a picture of the daily life of a busy Massachusetts seaport at the high tide of its commercial growth.



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