

Revere's Metal Cuts, 1762-1781

THESE cuts were all made in lead except for one of 1781 made in brass. Although frequently termed woodcuts, the cuts for eighteenth-century newspapers, almanacs, pamphlets, and broadsides were almost invariably engraved on type-metal, which was an alloy of lead, antimony, and tin. Revere undoubtedly made his own metal cuts by combining the proper proportions of lead, antimony, and other compounds, so that the result would take cutting and not be too brittle. In the earliest sketch of Revere in the *New England Magazine* for October, 1832, page 307, the anonymous author stated that Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse "found Mr. Revere the only man, in 1794, who appeared to know any thing of the discrimination between the ores of the seven metals."

None of Revere's "leaden," or metal, cuts were signed except for the 1770 "Prospective View of the Town of Boston." The only way of identifying them is through the charges entered in Revere's Day Books, the originals of which are in the Massachusetts Historical Society. There are twenty-two cuts representing seventeen charges, which can be thus reasonably identified, and they all bear the characteristic marks of Revere's style. Six of the cuts mentioned in the charges defy identification. The twenty-two which can be ascribed to Revere are herewith reproduced from the originals in the American Antiquarian Society. Revere undoubtedly made other metal cuts, which for one reason or another were not entered in his charge accounts, but it would be unwise to include them, even if they seemed to be possibly cut by Revere.

1765. Cut of Eclipse of Sun in Nathaniel Ames's *Astronomical Diary; or, Almanack for 1766*, Boston: W. M'Alpine and J. Fleeming [1765]. The cut is on the first page in signature C, size 1½ by 3 inches. (See Plate no. 66.) In Revere's Day Book, under date of September 28, 1765, is the following charge: "Messr McAlpine & Fleming Dr/ to Cutting 12 half figures at 2d/ 0-2-0/ to Cutting a Leding Plate for the Eclipse of the Sun/ 1-0-0." What the twelve half figures are is not known. In the second edition of the Ames Almanac for 1766, there is a cut of the eclipse, but it differs from the cut supposedly made by Revere.

The pirated edition of the Ames Almanac for 1766 does not include the special cut of the eclipse.

1770. Masthead of *Boston Gazette* first used January 1, 1770, showing a seated figure at right, with liberty cap, bird cage in center, and view of a town at left (see Plate no. 67). The size is $2\frac{1}{4}$ by $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches. In Revere's Day Book, under date of January 10, 1770, is the following charge: "Messrs Edes & Gill Dr/ To Engraving a Leading plate for newspaper/ 0-12-0." Isaiah Thomas describes the symbolism of the cut in his *History of Printing*, 1874 edition, Volume 2, page 55.

1770. Prospective View of the Town of Boston in *Edes & Gill's North-American Almanack for 1770*, Boston, Edes & Gill; and T. & J. Fleet. The plate is signed "P. Revere" and is $3\frac{3}{8}$ by 6 inches (see Plate no. 68). In Revere's Day Book, under date of January 10, 1770, is the following charge: "Messrs Edes & Gill Dr/ To Engraving plate for Almanack/ 2-8-0/." This cut was reproduced in S. G. Drake's *History of Boston*, 1856, page 747; in S. G. Drake's *Old Landmarks of Boston*, 1873, page 119; and in Winsor's *Narrative and Critical History*, 1888, Volume 6, page 81. The imprint of the Almanac states that it was printed on paper made in America.

1770. Cut of five coffins for Boston Massacre. In Revere's Day Book, under date of [April] 9, 1770, is the following charge: "Messrs Edes & Gill Dr/ To Engraving 5 coffings for Massacre/ 0-6-0/." In the *Boston Gazette* of March 12, 1770, is a long account of the Massacre, illustrated by a cut of four coffins, marked with the initials of the four men who were killed, and in the issue of March 19 is an additional cut with the initials of another victim who died after March 12. (See Plate no. 69.) A broadside of two pages, entitled *An Account of a late Military Massacre at Boston, or the Consequences of Quartering Troops in a populous Town* (original in Boston Public Library and photostat in American Antiquarian Society) reprints the identical text of the *Boston Gazette* of March 12, 1770, but the four cuts of the coffins are slightly different in design. There is a large broadside entitled *A particular Account of the most barbarous and Horrid Massacre! Committed in King-Street, Boston, on Monday, March 5, 1770, by the Soldiery quartered in Said Town* (originals in American Antiquarian Society and John Carter Brown Library). There are cuts of five coffins at the top, but the coffins are

much larger than those in Edes's *Boston Gazette*. There is also a smaller broadside entitled *A Poem, In Memory of the (never to be forgotten) Fifth of March, 1770*, with narrow cuts of five coffins at the top. An original is in the Massachusetts Historical Society, with photostat in the American Antiquarian Society. But the only cuts of the coffins positively printed by Edes are in the *Boston Gazette*.

1771. Masthead of Isaiah Thomas's *Massachusetts Spy* of March 14, 1771. In Revere's Day Book, under date of March 12, 1771, is the following charge: "Mr Isaiah Thomas Dr/ To engraving a plate for Newspapers/ 2-8-0." It was an elaborate scroll title, with figures at either side. It was first used in the issue of March 14, 1771, and was continued until Thomas removed to Worcester in April, 1775, with an additional design of the well known snake device, with a dragon added, under the title engraved by Revere, for the issue of July 7, 1774. It was ten inches wide. (See Plate no. 70.) Thomas used part of the cut, omitting the figure at the right, in his paper published at Worcester through May 17, 1781.

1771. Cut of compass in Stearns's *North-American's Almanack, for 1772*. In Revere's Day Book, under date of September 20, 1771, is the following charge: "Messr Edes & Gill Dr/ To Engraving a Compass for Almanack/ 0-18-0." Edes & Gill, in company with R. Draper and T. & J. Fleet, published *The North-American's Almanack for 1772* in the fall of 1771, and on the title-page is an elaborately drawn compass in Revere's characteristic style of lettering. (See Plate no. 66.) The size was $2\frac{5}{16}$ by $2\frac{5}{16}$ inches. Edes & Gill advertised the publication of the almanac in the *Boston Gazette* of September 23, 1771.

1771. Cuts in Ames Almanac for 1772, printed for and sold by Ezekiel Russell. In Revere's Day Book, under date of December 16, 1771, is the following charge: "Mr Ezekiel Russel Dr/ To Engravin two plates for Ames's Almanack/ 2-0-0." Yet there are three cuts in the Ames *Astronomical Diary; or Almanack for 1772*, printed for Ezekiel Russell — one of a dwarf on the title-page, one of John Dickinson on the fourth page, and a third of Mrs. Catharine M'Caulay on the seventh page. The sizes of the three items were $3\frac{5}{8}$ by $2\frac{3}{4}$, $3\frac{5}{8}$ by $2\frac{3}{4}$, and $3\frac{5}{8}$ by $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. If Revere's charge is correct, which were the two cuts made by him? The cuts of Dickinson and Mrs. M'Caulay seem to be in Revere's style. All three are reproduced, and the reader can take his choice. The Dickinson portrait was appar-

ently copied from a frontispiece in Dickinson's *Letters of a Farmer*, Philadelphia, 1769. (See Plate no. 71.)

An additional complication is caused by another charge in Revere's Day Book, under date of December 21, 1771, as follows: "Messrs Edes & Gill Dr/ To Engraving 3 plates for Ames Almanack/ 2-14-0." But there is no Ames Almanac for 1772 with an Edes & Gill imprint. There is an almanac with only this imprint: "Price 2s. 8d [per?] Dozen, and Six Coppers single." This may well have been the Edes & Gill edition. The three cuts are the same subjects as those in the E. Russell edition of Ames, but they are different in the cutting. Did Revere re-cut them for Edes & Gill from the Russell originals? The three varying cuts are not reproduced herewith. Any reader can consult the original almanacs in the American Antiquarian Society and other libraries.

1771. Cut of Boston Massacre in Isaiah Thomas's *Massachusetts Calendar, or an Almanac for 1772*. The cut was on the reverse of the first leaf, and measured $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches high by $3\frac{7}{8}$ wide, to the border lines. It was not signed but was unquestionably Revere's work. Revere did not charge Thomas for the cut in his Day Book, although there was a charge, under date of December 21, 1771, as follows: "Mr. Isaiah Thomas Dr/ To Engraving Copper Rules/ 0-10-0." The same woodcut was again used on a large broadside entitled *A Monumental Inscription on the Fifth of March*, printed in 1772. These cuts are discussed in more detail in the chapter on the Boston Massacre, where both are reproduced.

1772. Cuts in *North-American's Calendar for 1773*, by Samuel Stearns, printed by Edes & Gill. In Revere's Day Book, under date of September 15, 1772, is the following charge: "Messr Edes & Gill Dr/ To Engraving 3 plates for Almanack/ 1-16-0." The three plates in the above almanac are "A Projection of the Twelve Signs of the Zodiack" on the title-page, a cut of the Anatomy of Man's Body on the second page, and a cut of the Eclipses on the third page — all reproduced. (See Plate no. 72.)

1773. Two cuts in *A Vision of Hell*, Boston: John Boyle, 1773. In Revere's Day Book, under date of August 7, 1773, is this charge: "Mr John Boyles Dr/ To Engraving two leading plates/ 0-12-0." The two plates are found in *A Vision of Hell*, by Theodorus Van Shemain [Jacob Green], Boston: Printed and Sold at

John Boyle's Printing-Office, 1773, an octavo pamphlet of twenty pages. The first is a view of four devils, one with a pitchfork, grouped at right, and the monstrous open jaws of a fish-like animal, with flames pouring out from its mouth — this on the title-page. This latter design is almost the same as Revere's drawing for his plate "A Warm Place — Hell," issued in 1768. The second cut is of a man conversing with a skeleton. Both cuts are reproduced. The latter cut was also used by Boyle on the title-page of a sixteen-page pamphlet entitled *A Dialogue between a Blind-Man and Death*, by Richard Standfast, which he printed in 1773. The two cuts measure $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches high by $3\frac{1}{2}$ wide, and $3\frac{3}{8}$ by $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches to the borders of the cut. (See Plate no. 68.)

1773. Cut of Globe in Samuel Stearns's *North-American's Almanack for 1774*. In Revere's Day Book, under date of September 9, 1773, is this charge: "Messr Edes & Gill Dr/ To Engraving a leading Plate for Sterns's Almanack/ 0-18-0." The plate, which is on the title-page and measures $3\frac{1}{8}$ by 3 inches (see Plate no. 66), attempts to illustrate the Globe, indicating by letters the North and South Poles, the axis, the equator, the sun's declination, etc. The description of the illustration is given on the second page. The almanac is advertised in the *Boston Gazette* of September 27, 1773, as "now in the Press," and on October 11, 1773, as "To be sold by Edes & Gill."

1773. Cut of "The wicked Statesman, or the Traitor to his Country" in *The Massachusetts Calendar for 1774*, by Ezra Gleason, Boston, Printed by Isaiah Thomas. In Revere's Day Book, under date of October 15, 1773, is this charge: "Mr Isaiah Thomas Dr/ To Engraving a plate for Almanack/ 0-18-0." The plate has the inscription underneath, "The wicked Statesman, or the Traitor to his Country, at the Hour of Death." On the second page is a fifteen-line statement regarding the virtues of patriotism and the wretchedness of disloyalty. The size of the cut is $3\frac{3}{4}$ by 3 inches. (See Plate no. 69.)

1773. Masthead of *Essex Journal* of December 4, 1773. In Revere's Day Book, under date of December 15, 1773, is this charge: "Mr Isaiah Thomas Dr/ To Engraving head for Essex Gazette/ 1-16-0." Revere confused the *Essex Gazette* with the *Essex Journal*. Samuel Hall was publishing the *Essex Gazette* at Salem in 1773 and it carried a title which it had long used. Isaiah Thomas estab-

lished the *Essex Journal* at Newburyport on December 4, 1773, and he obtained his masthead design from Revere, showing the figure of an Indian at the left, and a ship at the right. The size of the cut is $2\frac{1}{4}$ by $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches. (See Plate no. 67.) The issue reproduced is that of January 19, 1774.

1774. Vignette on title-page of *Royal American Magazine*, January, 1774, showing an Indian seated, offering a calumet of peace to a woman portraying the Genius of Knowledge (I. Thomas's *History of Printing*, 1874 edition, Volume 2, page 72). In Revere's Day Book, under date of February 6, 1774, is this charge: "Mr Isaiah Thomas Dr/ To Engraving a Leading Cutt for Magazine/ 0-16-0." The cut was used on the title-page through the issue of December, 1774, and on the front cover for the issues of January to March, 1775. The size of the cut is 2 by $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches. (See Plate no. 69.)

1774. Masthead of *Massachusetts Spy* of July 7, 1774. In Revere's Day Book, under date of July 6, 1774, is this charge: "Mr Isaiah Thomas Dr/ To Engraving leding plate for News/ 0-12-0." The cut in question was the famous "Join or Die" inscription under the title of the newspaper. The cut was higher at the left and right, leaving room for type lettering in between. Revere had already engraved the scroll-work title for the issue of March 14, 1771. (See Plate no. 70.) Thomas used the "Join or Die" wording until his last issue in Boston, April 6, 1775. The cut was $3\frac{7}{8}$ by 10 inches.

1781. Masthead of *Massachusetts Spy* of May 24, 1781. In Revere's Day Book, under date of May 2, 1781, is this charge: "Mr Isaiah Thomas Dr/ To Engraving a head for a Newspaper on Brass/ 9-0-0/ To the Brass & prepareing/ 1-4-0." This cut, which measured $1\frac{7}{8}$ by $8\frac{3}{8}$ inches, contained the title, with a figure of Liberty at the left, and crossed hands with sword at the right. (See Plate no. 70.) It was the only metal cut made by Revere for newspapers and almanacs after 1774, so far as his Day Book shows, and it was the only one cut on brass. Thomas used the cut until the issue of December 30, 1784.

UNIDENTIFIED

In Revere's Day Book, under date of March 25, 1762, is this charge: "Messr Fowle & Draper Dr/ To Cutting a Leaden Plate/ 0-12-0." The only illustrated

pamphlet published by Fowle & Draper in 1762, that I can find, is James Hervey's *Treatise on the Religious Education of Daughters*, which contains a title-page cut showing two young people, kneeling and reading books. It looks like Revere's work, but the plate was used earlier by Fowle & Draper in D. Jones's *Discourse upon the Great Fire of London* in 1760.

1765. In Revere's Day Book, under date of January 20, 1765, is the following charge: "Mr Shubal Hewes Dr/ To Engraving a Leding Plate/ 0-16-0." Shubal Hewes was a tallow chandler in Boston in 1765. What the cut was for is not known, possibly for some form of advertisement. Later, during the early days of the Revolution, Shubal Hewes was well known as butcher for the British army quartered in Boston (see Eben Putnam's *Lieut. Joshua Hewes*, 1913, page 331).

1768. In Revere's Day Book, under date of February 1, 1768, is the following charge: "Messrs Eades & Gill Dr/ To engraving 16 leading plates at 5s/ 4-0-0/ To engraving 9 Dito at 5s/ 2-5-0/ To engraving 4 small Dito at 2s/ 0-8-0." These twenty-nine cuts are not identified. Edes & Gill published the *Boston Gazette* in 1768, but none of the issues from January to June have cuts, and none of their books or pamphlets of 1768 examined have cuts. Perhaps the cuts could have been used in some broadside or pamphlet not carrying the Edes & Gill imprint.

1768. In Revere's Day Book, under date of February 1, 1768, is the following charge: "Mess. Mein & Fleming Dr/ To engraving 3 leading plates at 8s/ 1-4-0." The identity of these cuts has not been discovered. Mein & Fleeming early in 1768 were publishing the *Boston Chronicle*, but the only cut in all the issues from January to June, 1768, was a single cut of a coffin in the issue of January 25. They also published *Bickerstaff's Boston Almanack* for 1768, presumably printed in October, 1767, and this included two full-page cuts. But Revere, if he made either of these cuts, would have charged over £2 for a single plate. *Mein & Fleeming's Register* for 1768 contains a crude cut of an eclipse. They used several crude cuts for *Bickerstaff's Boston Almanack* from 1768 to 1773, and these were continued by Mills & Hicks in 1774 and 1775. Both firms were Loyalist and opposed in their publications the revolutionary cause. Revere, as an intense patriot, would presum-

ably not have engraved for either firm during this period. Callender signed one plate in the Almanac for 1774. All of the four Loyalists removed to Great Britain during the early days of the Revolution.

1771. In Revere's Day Book, under date of April 3, 1771, is the following charge: "Messrs Edes & Gill Dr/ To 6 Types for Newspaper at 2s/ 0-12-0." An examination of the *Boston Gazette* for the first six months of 1771 reveals no especially cut type. There is a display article in the issue of March 11, 1771, but it seems to be made up of ordinary printer's type.

1773. In Revere's Day Book, under date of February 11, 1773, is the charge: "Messr Edes & Gill Dr/ To Cutting Plate for Indenture/ 1-10-0." This may well have been a copper-plate. It is not identified.