

## [The Trip to America]

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ORIGINAL MSS. OR FIELD NOTES (Check one)

PUB. Living Lore in

New England

TITLE Shoe Laster of Lynn - Section 1

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DATE 4/10/39 WDS. PP. 13

CHECKER DATE

SOURCES GIVEN (?) [Interviews?]

COMMENTS

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THE TRIP TO AMERICA

“Whin I wuz 21, I come over alone in a steamboat that landed at Philadelphia an' there I seen the first cable cars I iver seen in ma life. I jest had three sovereigns in ma pocket whin I got , there, but I said ta myself, ‘If it takes a hull sovereign, I am agonna eat. ‘ An' I got me a good meal fir maself.

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“ It sure taisted good fir wuz I sick on the trip over? It come on me in the English channel. Anyone that's gonna get sick, always gets it in the English channel fir that's the roughest place.

But I din't stay in Philadelphia long 'cause our passage ticket [give?] give us a ride on the train ta Hobaken Hoboken . But before I b left I met up with an Englishman an' his wife an' boy from Manchester, England. They'd come over on the same beat boat an' wuz goin' on ta, New York. They wuz kind ta me, so I saved parta my soveregns sovereigns .

“Whin we got a Hoboken, we come across ta New York on the ferry boat. But thin we said goodbye 'cause his wife got awful homesick an' she made sech a fuse that he tirmed aroun' an' started back ta England agin. I niver seen' em sence an' I ' am sorry too. Fir they wuz good friends, an' they wuz rick, I think. He had a brother somewhere on Beacon St.

“So I wint on ta New York alone. There I seen the biggest meat market I iver seen in my life before or sence. There wuz rows an' rows a the fieneest kinda meat.

“I come from New York on the Fall River [Liene?] ta Fall River an' from there I took the train ta Boston. Thin I come up ta Lynn on the Narra Gage. My brother-in-law wuz here, that is my second wife's brother, but I wuzn't married thin.

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“Lynn looked a lot diffrent th'n it does today. There werz no electric cars in Lynn thin. There wuzn't sa many of the big blocks like there is today, and there wuz more space [betwin?] ( between ) the houses. There wuz horse cars. The Narra Gage wuz here though and the other railroad too. But the town wuzn't sa big.

“I wint ta room with some folks who'd got settled here some years bafore. They had a growed up family an' they owned their house. It wuz a three story, an' they rinted parta it, and rinted out rooms beside.

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"I took my meals there fir a time, but after a while I ate down at the Winthrop Hotel on Summer St. Ya oughta see the meals they put out fir \$4. a week. All ya could eat an' good stuff too , . But in [thim?] days ya could by buy three pounds a good juicy pounds beef steak fir 25 cents a pound and now ya can't get one pound fir that. That steak wuz as juicy as a piece a cheese.

"The Lester's Laster's protective Protective Unfon Union wuz strong thin, but there wuz some shops din't and wun't have union men in 'em. [? ?] My brother-in-law worked in one a thim, run by Patrick Sherry. Well, he got me a job ta learn ta last a show shoe .

" All this wuz before the lastin' machines machaines (machines) come in. There wuzn't no niggerhead thin and no bed machaine. [Leastwwys?] Leastways , Patrick Sherry din't have one in his shop. Musta bin about 2500 hand lasters in the city. And most a thim belonged ta the [unaon?] union .

"Took me a year ta learn ta last. An' then I joined the union an' that lost me my job for Patrick Sherry wun't have no union men in his shop. There wuz a strike ouer over that there onee once .

"After that I worked in another another shop fir two years an' 7 then went to Salem, N. H. ta work. But that shop failed up and the man that run it owed me \$60. But I wuz lucky ta get outa it without his owin' me more. Fir some a the fellas got in deeper'n me. I come back ta Lynn thin an' I worked in diffrent shops.

"I always did hand lastin' except one tame when I worked on the bed machaine. But ya know when a hand laster tried ta work thim machaines he jest coun't get usta ta the machaines doin' the work. He'd hold on sa tieght ta the shoe, or be sa stiff like (tense) when holden' the show shoe ta the machaine, that he'd be all tired out of a night. It wuz much harder fir us hand lasters then doin' hand lastin'. I din't laiike the bed machaine an' I quit it soon's I could an went back ta hand lastin'.

### The Niggerhead Machine

“In the ‘70s an’ the 80s. the United Shoe wuz jest called the Niggerhead Company. That wuz ‘cause the niggerhead wuz the most important machaine they owed. They wanted ta put it in all the shops, a course, an’ the Laster’s Protective Union din’t want ‘im there fir a coupla raisons.

“First, they thought they wun’t wirk, an’ thin, they thought if they did wirk, they’d take away all the wirk from the hand lasters.

“But the lasters din’t worry about it much fir, as I told ya before, most a the min wuz jest about sure, the niggerhead wun’t wirk.

“They voted in meetin’ two. three tames on whether ta accept thim, an’ each tame they tirmed ‘em down. They din’t avin (even) consider thim an empourtant thang ta discuss.

[“If?”] they hadda accepted ‘ em now , what a diffrunce it ‘oulda made fir the lasters. Fir by votin’ fir ‘em, an’ havin’ the approval a the Lasters’ Protective Union back a ‘em, the Niggerhead Company woulda agreed ta jest use union min (men) ta run ‘em.

“ [Laike?] Laike it wuz, the Niggerhead Company got their niggerhead in some a the shops without the Union approvinn’ a it, an’ whin the lasters wun’t run ‘em the owners the shops got scabs in ta run ‘em. That way a lotta the old hand lasters got pushed outa the lastin’ renk (rink) an’ some niver wirked in shoe shops agin.

“Bafore that there wuz only English spakin’ (speaking) paople in the shops. Most a thim wuz from down Maine, thim Yankees that had bin a livin’ here, an’ the Irish, an’ the 9 Irish Americans.

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"I remamber one Jew laster though. He come from Russia an'he had red whiskers an' wore a tall hat an' carried a coin cain (cane).

"A course all the niggerheads din't come in at once. Jest a couple shops tried 'em at first an' thin whin the othars others seen how they warked sa well, they got the Niggerhead Company ta put 'em in their shops. So gradually laike, the old hand lasters that din't take to thim machaines got pushed out into the cold.

"After the Lasters' Protective Union seen that the machaines wuz acomin' in all the shops whether they fought it er not, they give in an' let the union min wirk on' em. But by that time tame a lotta the scabs had the regular jobs. An' the 2500 hand lasters that wuz in Lynn thin kept dwendlin' (dwindling) down all the time tame . Now there 'aint more'n 200 if there 're that miny.

"[An?]' the United Shoe kept gettin' stronger'n stronger. Kept improving on that niggerhead so as ta kape (keep) gettin' new patents on it so they could kape control a it.

"The United Shoe got sa strong there fir a tame that they jest about run some a the shops. Their machainery be in 'em, ya see, an' if any one a 'em 'ould be in danger a failin' up, often tame the Niggerhead Company 'ould take it over an' the min that wuz the owners before. 'ould run it fir the compiny (company).

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"I guess the first shop ta put the niggerhead in in Lynn was Worthy. His shop wuz down on Market St., near the Narra Gage. It wuz there that I seen the only rale (real) feightin' over it. Four 'er fieve (five) union min had a feight with thim that wuz scabbin' their jobs.

The niggerhead machaine an' the bed machaine come in some years befor the weltin' machaine. The first weltin' machaine I seen wuz in '86 or '87.

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"The strongest unions in Lynn ta fieght the machaines wuz the Lasters ' Protective Union, but iven(even) it din't succeed in stopping stoppin' the niggerhead.

"After it wuz broke up, there come other unions, but none of 'em very wuz sa strong as the Protective Union. [=?] [Nu ?] Next afterwards come the Boot & Shoe Workers Union an' after that the United Shoe Workers of America. This one that they have here in Lynn today is joined up with the C. I. O.

### SUPERSTITIONS AND AMENA

"Whin I wuz a little fella in Ireland on a rainy day, I usta it sit by the hearth, reight inside the kitchen door, alog along with all the old min, an' miny's the tale they'd tell ya about red haired womin, an' ghosts an' fairies. Ya mighta hierd a all a thim, I' am sure.

"I niver seen iny ghosts or fairies maself, but sometames when I wuz a young man awalkin' out of a neight (night) alone whin it wuz dark an' misty all over the turf begs bogs , I mighta thought I'd seen 'em. Er (oo) maybe I'da thought I'd seen a big black man er a black dog, that ralely (really) wuz the divil.

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I ain't scared of a cimitery (cemetery) in this country. But in Ireland now it's diffрут. There me an' every other body is awfully 'fraid a ghosts. No one 'ould thenk a stayin' alone in a house of a neight.

"I always reminber what one a my five uncles told me, him that wuz a twin, an' drove a cart all over Ireland. [?] That wuz before the railroads come in, an' stuff had a be drove from one city to another in carts. My uncle wuz a driver on one a thim carts. He seen lots a [suare?] quare thengs on thim trips fir sometames he' ould be gone from home two, three weeks at a tame.

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“Once he wuz a drivin' up to a home of a couple he knowed well , . They always got along fine, they did. But this tyme, my uncle noticed as he wuz goin' up ta the door, that a big black dog had his nose liftin' the latch. Ya know they had them kinda latches that ya' lifted up before ya opened the door.

“Well that big black dog wuz a tryin' ta lift the latch with his nose. My uncle walked up near him an' said, ‘Get away! in a loud voice. An' the dog tirmed an' looked at him, an' then walked away liserly(leisurely) aike.

“When my uncle went inside he seen the woman on a chair cryin' an' whin he asked her what the trouble wuz she said that she an' her husband had been afeightin.

“‘I guess we got the divil in us,” said the woman to my uncle. We ain't niver been afeightin' laike this bafore’.

“So my uncle told her about the dog and how he walked away. ‘I knowed it, “ ‘ said the womin, ‘it wuz the divil in the form a the dog, an' that 's why we been afeightin.

“My uncle said he believed it wuz too. Who else could 12 it abin?

“Another tyme my uncle wuz a driven by a big turf boy bo bog to a cartin' place where he wuz ta put up fir the night an' he noticed a big / black man afollowin' his cart. He said he wuzn't afraid none but he seen that the man followed him clare ( [clean?] clear ) up ta the place where he put the horse up, reight (right) up ta the manger. While my uncle wuz there at the manger, the fella kicked the door.

“If the big black man had been any other body but a ghost, ya'd knowed it ‘cause the dogs from the place ‘ould ‘oulda barked. Fir dogs always barks whin strangers come aroun' a place in Ireland. But the dogs din't bark none at this black man.

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"My uncle waited, and he hierd the kicks agin. This tame he wuz scared so he climbed (climbed) outa a winda and run ta the kitchen door. He wuz sa scared he hadda set down. An' after he got his supper he jumped inta bed an' he din't go back ta the manger ' till mornin'.

"Often other tames, my uncle said, his horse would jump laike, 'cause he probably seen a ghost, an' if it wuzn't that the carts had trams like (a little shelf like arrangement) at each end a the cart, they'd a tilted over, an' the weight a thim 'ould a broke the horse's neck. That way, though the tram 'ould hit the ground and keep the heavy part a the cart from goin' over too fir (far).

"Most a the cairts (carts) had cribs (a sort of wooden frame) built up slaint (slant) ways on both sades (sides) a the cairt too so it 'ould hold more. None a thim had but two 13 whales (wheels) ya know.

"Mosta the firmers had thim kinda cairts to take their stuff ta mairket (market) ta sell it.

"My uncles uncle told me that oftin tames the ghosts wuz fallen angels laike ya've read about in a Bible. He told me about the fairies too. Most folks said fir cartin' sartin' there's fairies all over Ireland. Ya mighta read somewhere about that.

"Ya know the Danes built forts years an' years ago on the top a hills an' on the top a each is a light that kin be seen by the light on the fort on the next hill. That way signals would be made from one ta another all over Ireland in case a a enemy about ta come ta invade the land.

Down underneath in the center laike there's fortifications, an' there, it's claimed, the fairies stop. My uncle said he often seen 'em at diffрут tames in diffрут places when he wuz adrivin' aroun Ireland.

"There is good an' bad omens in Ireland too. Ta meet a horse and cairt is good luck.

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“But ta meet a red hired woman is bad luck. A firmer with his cairt on way ta sell sometheng at mairket don't niver laike [mate ta?] [ta mate?] (meet) a red haired womin on the way. Some ‘ould tirn back an go agin another tame, 'stead a risk the bad luck a maybe not sellin' his stuff. Yes, a red haired womin acrossin' yer path is sometheng laike a black cat in this country.

“But she ain't bad luck 'less she mates (meets) va on the road. Anyways min laike her , for she marries same as any other body. An' some thenks she's a mighty pretty women woman . I seen the other day how there're all the rage in Washington today. More so'n the blondes.