

**MEMOIR OF A  
MECHANIC. BEING A  
SKETCH OF THE LIFE  
OF TIMOTHY CLAXTON**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649281374

Memoir of a mechanic. Being a sketch of the life of Timothy Claxton by Timothy Claxton

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.

Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**TIMOTHY CLAXTON**

**MEMOIR OF A  
MECHANIC. BEING A  
SKETCH OF THE LIFE  
OF TIMOTHY CLAXTON**





Timothy Claxton

MEMOIR OF A MECHANIC.  
BEING A SKETCH OF THE  
LIFE OF TIMOTHY CLAXTON,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

TOGETHER WITH  
MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

---

BOSTON:  
GEORGE W. LIGHT, 1 CORNHILL.  
NEW YORK:—135 Fulton Street.  
1839.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1839, by  
George W. Licut, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court  
of Massachusetts.

## CONTENTS.

---

### CHAPTER I. CHILDHOOD.

- Birth and parentage. Early education. A benevolent lady. Occupations. Disposition. Anecdotes . . . . . 9—14

### CHAPTER II. APPRENTICESHIP.

- Arrangements. Benefits of a little learning. A useful friend. An intelligent journeyman with an ignorant master. An attempt at clock-making. Writing and composition—Advantages of practising them. Drawing. Apprenticeship happily ended. . . . . 15—24

### CHAPTER III. RESIDENCE IN LONDON.

- Manner of spending time. The industrious find enough to do. Experiments on perpetual motion. Ingenious mouse-traps. Female acquaintance. New friends. Marriage. . . . . 25—32

### CHAPTER IV. SCIENTIFIC IMPROVEMENT.

- A new field of thought. Scientific lectures and studies. Formation of the Mechanical Institution. Its history. . . . . 33—36

**CHAPTER V. RESIDENCE IN RUSSIA.**

- Arrival at St. Petersburg. Description of the building in which the writer was employed. Difficulties. Their settlement. Recommendation. An accident. A threatened explosion. More scared than hurt. . . . . 37—44

**CHAPTER VI. THE ARTS IN RUSSIA.**

- Russian workmen. Public buildings. Carpenters. Masons. Useful contrivances. Carriages and horses. Academy of Arts. The Emperor's Hermitage. The Summer Palace. . . . . 45—54

**CHAPTER VII. FIRST ADVENTURES IN AMERICA.**

- Employment during the passage to America. Excursions in the country. First impressions. Anecdote. Residence at Methuen. Reading society. Amusements, &c. . . . . 55—61

**CHAPTER VIII. RESIDENCE AND OCCUPATION IN BOSTON.**

- How employed. Making of school and philosophical apparatus. Causes of success. Loss of shop and materials by fire. Good fortune comes at last. . . . . 65—72

**CHAPTER IX. INVENTIONS.**

- Small Air-pump. Experiments performed with it. How invented. Large Air-pump. Medium sized Air-pump. Bottle-proving machine. . . . . 73—80

## CONTENTS.

3

## CHAPTER X. SOCIETIES IN BOSTON.

Boston Mechanics' Institution. Its history. Classes. Charitable Mechanics' Association. Boston Lyceum. Mechanics' Lyceum. The Essayist. The Young Mechanic. Franklin Lectures. . . . .	61—92
---	-------

## CHAPTER XI. HOME REVISITED.

Anticipations. Visits to friends. London. Early im- pressions. Occupations. Formation of the Bangay Lyceum. "Hints to Mechanics." Engagement in manufacturing apparatus. . . . .	93—100
---	--------

---

## MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

Introduction, . . . . .	101
Origin of Mechanics' Institutions, . . . . .	104
London Mechanical Institution, . . . . .	126
Methuen Literary Society, . . . . .	133
Boston Mechanics' Lyceum, . . . . .	135
The Ignis Fatuus, . . . . .	138
A Paper for all, . . . . .	139
Hints on the Economy of Heat, . . . . .	140
New Air Engine, . . . . .	142
Perpetual Motion a Perpetual Notion, . . . . .	143
Theory and Practice, . . . . .	146
Hydrostatic Lamps, . . . . .	147
A New Discovery—Apprentices' Library Associations, .	150
Amphibious Steamer, . . . . .	153

Society for the Encouragement of Mechanical Genius,	155
Warming Rooms, . . . . .	157
The Present Condition of the Working Classes, . . .	160
Extracts from Letters, . . . . .	162
Russian Recommendation, . . . . .	167
The Young Mechanic, . . . . .	168
Mr. Chaston's Inventions, . . . . .	172
The Bungay Lyceum, . . . . .	173
"Hints to Mechanics," . . . . .	176