

**SOME RECOLLECTIONS,
COMMENDING THE CLIPPER SHIPS
"HOUQUA," "JACOB BELL," "SAMUEL
RUSSELL," AND "N.B. PALMER," IN THE
CHINA TRADE, 1847-1873**

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CHARLES PORTER LOW

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Some Recollections
BY
Captain Charles P. Low

Commanding the Clipper Ships "Houqua,"
"Jacob Bell," "Samuel Russell," and
"N. B. Palmer," in the
China Trade

1847-1873



"A life on the ocean wave,
A home on the rolling deep"

SECOND EDITION

Boston
Geo. H. Ellis Co., 272 Congress Street.
1906

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FRANCES LOW PARTRIDGE
1905

1955
1956

This book is dedicated to my wife
and to our seven children

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SOME RECOLLECTIONS
BY
CAPTAIN CHARLES P. LOW

“And I have loved thee, Ocean! And my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane.”

Byron.

OVER and over again have I been asked by my relatives to write the story of my life, and once or twice I have begun it; but it seemed so egotistical to tell of one's own exploits! And, then, it is so very tedious to write an experience of many years that I gave it up, not feeling equal to the task; but having at the present time a great deal of leisure, and being pressed to do it by my family, I have concluded on this first day of the New Year, 1903, to start in and try what I can do. As these papers are not for publication, but only to interest my nearest relatives, I feel less embarrassment in writing than I should if they were to go before the public. Of course, I have to trust a great deal to memory, and do not vouch for the truth of the several dates of what happened in the period of my boyhood.

I was born somewhere in Salem, Mass., on the nineteenth day of September, in the year 1824. This I presume is correct, for it so appears in the genealogical records of the Low family. I have no doubt I was the finest baby ever born, for I never knew one that was not; and I grew as other boys do, with the exception that I was, at a very early age, inclined to seek salt water. My mother told me that as soon as I could crawl I went for it, and I remember as far back as I remember anything that to be on and in the water was my supreme delight. When I was four years old, my father removed with his family to Brooklyn, N.Y. That was in 1828, and Brooklyn was a village, and more like a big farm-yard; for the pigs ran about the streets in large numbers.

My life has been a chapter of accidents. The first one occurred soon after we settled in our new home. I cannot say when, but I was not over five years old. I was plaguing the cook one Saturday afternoon while she was washing the kitchen floor, and while she was chasing me I fell on the slippery floor, and broke my left arm half-way between the wrist and the elbow. I probably suffered very much but I do not remember anything about it; and for a few years afterwards my memory fails to find anything remarkable to relate. I went to an infant school, and I presume I bent pins and set them in the teacher's chair and in the scholars' chairs when I could get a chance; and I delighted in mischief. I am quite sure I was looked upon as a bad boy; and if mischief or love of fun stands for Satan, I was one of his favorites.

I do not remember how long I continued in the infant school; but a few years after we moved to Brooklyn my father and Mr. Howard built two blocks of houses—four-story brick houses, two in a block—on Concord Street,