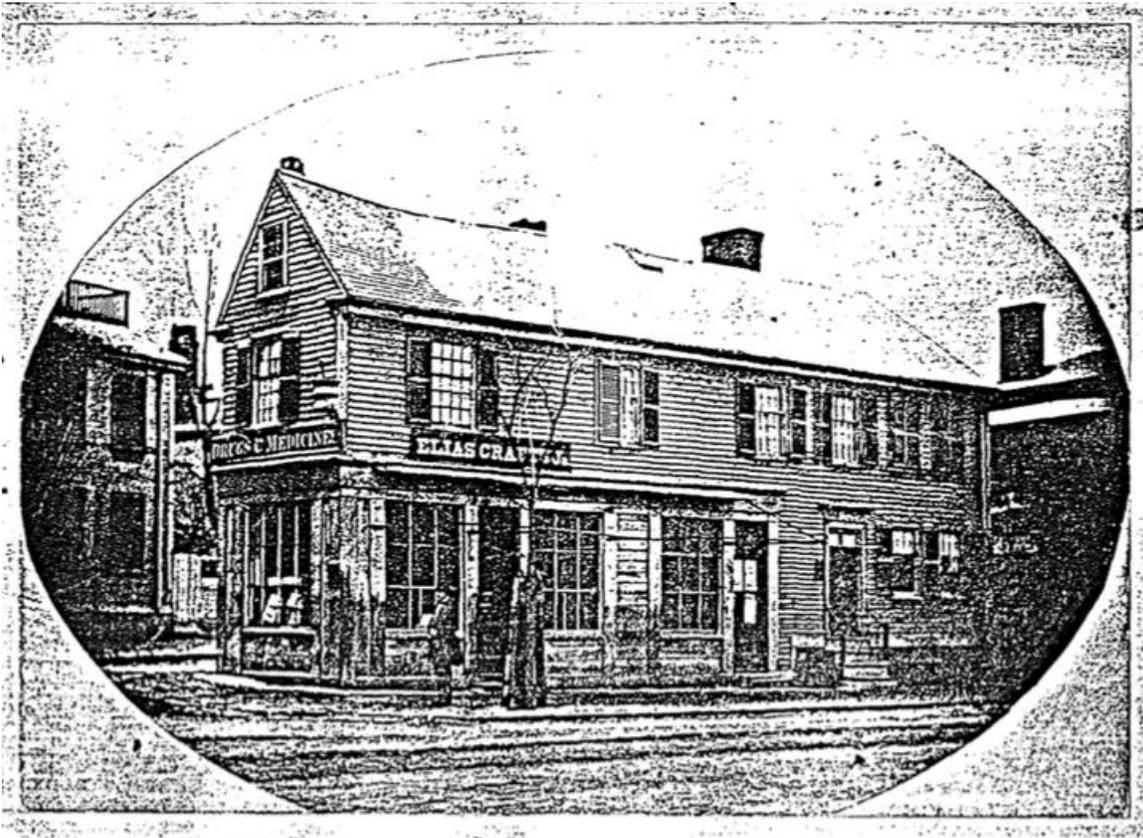


Crafts' Corner

Elias Crafts' apothecary shop at the convergence of Main and Warren Streets was an informal gathering place for townfolk. Crafts first opened his shop in the old Boylston house on "Crafts' Corner" in 1828. Sawyer (T T Sawyer, *Old Charlestown*, 1902) notes that "the Boylston house was probably the first wood frame house built in Charlestown after the battle of Bunker Hill. A house on this site owned by Mrs. Mercy Boylston had been burned on the day of the battle. In any event, Crafts' shop was described as "an old wooden building, two stories with pitched roof. In one end of the lower story of this building, looking directly up Main Street, was a store, the windows of which were ornamented with bottles and jars of fanciful shape, filled with highly colored water of various shades, attractive in the daylight and made doubly so after dark by lights reflected



Crafts' Corner

upon them for the purpose. Projecting from the corner of the building, on an iron frame above the windows was a good-sized gilded mortar and pestle. This was the apothecary store of Dr. Elias Crafts, Jr."

In 1869 the City Council of Charlestown passed an order to cut off this corner and enlarge the public square. To accomplish this, the Boylston Club on Crafts Corner was destroyed.

According to Sawyer, the disruption "was ordered by the City Council on the promise of the owner of the adjoining estate—who would be greatly benefited by the change—that he would at once direct a handsome brick building that should be an ornament to the site and to the city. The promise was not in writing, and was not fulfilled, much to the disappointment and disgust some of us who, on the strength of the promise referred to, had advocated and urged the taking of more land than the original plan of the Council contemplated.

"Nevertheless, the enlargement of the square was a needful public improvement, as was soon made evident by the erection of the elegant stone building of the Charlestown Five Cent Savings bank, and its occupancy by that institution and by the Monument National Bank, the Charlestown Gas Company, the Mutual Protection Insurance Company, the model apothecary store of B F Stacy, and Cobb's modern grocery store, saying nothing of the palacial quarters afforded by it to the lodges and other institutions of the order of Freemasons, always so flourishing in Charlestown.

Crafts corner is a thing of the past. In its place we now have Thompson Square, the name given to it, after annexation, by the city Council of Boston, the title being suggested by the fact

that three members of the old family of that name, each of whom had been prominent in public affairs, have long resided in this vicinity and died here respected and honored by their neighbors and fellow citizens”.

Elias Crafts, Jr was born in Newton, Massachusetts, January 31, 1807. His parents came to Charlestown in 1809. In April 1821, he started to learn the druggist business with Dr. Samuel Kidder. On August 18, 1828 he opened the “store well-stocked with medicines and fancy goods at Crafts corner” in 1857 he open a wholesale store at 148 Commercial Street, Boston, selling out his Charlestown store to Charles N. Chase.