

MOTHER LOUISA MARY'S OWN
WORDS REGARDING THE BEGINNING
S.S.M. IN AMERICA

It has often been spoken of, that I should write some account of our first settling in America, so few can remember the little incidents which may be of interest in future years, and to another generation, so tho' I do not feel myself very competent for such a task, I will do my best, if it is God's Will that I should do this. He will help my incapacity. In 1871 the present Bishop Grafton (of St. John Evangelist, Cowley, Oxford and then Father Grafton) was asked by some of the Church people of Boston, (Dr. Shattuck among them, and Mrs. Tyler, whose name is known to all who remember the Civil War, and the noble work done by the ladies in the Hospitals then) to find Sisters to take charge of the Childrens' Hospital in Boston, which Mrs. Tyler had then charge of. So Father Grafton applied to one or two Communities in England, and eventually he persuaded the Mther of St. Margaret's, East Grinstead, to send out Sister Theresa, then a Novice at St. Margaret's, and who had had training at the Childrens' Hospital in Great Osmond St. London, and had been under Father Grafton's direction, to take charge of the Childrens' Hospital, then situated at the corner of Washington and Rutland St. Boston. So in Nov. 1871, they started for America, Mother Alice with the party and Bessie

Masher. Mother returned after she had seen them settled there, and Sister Theresa took up the work. She was joined by Mile. Perry (Sister Ellen), Miss --- (Sister Letitia) and Miss Tovey was soon made an Associate, and Mrs. Sullivan came as Housekeeper. Then in 1873, they were very anxious that there should be a permanent Community established in Boston, and a friend offered two thousand dollars yearly to start it. In the summer of 1873 Father Grafton, Sister Theresa and Miss Vase (Now the Mother Superior of the Holy Nativity Sisterhood) came over to England, and Father Grafton came to St. Margaret's canvassing for Sisters to return to America with them, for no Sisters were sent, they were to come of their own free will. I offered myself (I had known Father Grafton in former years and in very troubled times) and Sister Jessie offered herself. Sister Theresa was Professed in the Octave of the Holy Name and I was Received as Mother Superior of the American House, at Vespers of Holy Cross (Sunday) Sept. 13th. The next day we started for London, and at Victoria Station were joined by Father Grafton (who had been installed as Chaplain by Father Alison, Father Hall, Brother William and Joe Minot, as well as Miss Vose and Father O'Neill who came to see us off. We came down to Liverpool and slept that night at the Adelphia.

I remember that at supper that night they gave us a Tomato Omelette, which I did not recover the dislike of for a long time!! The next morning we walked about Liverpool to find the All Saints Sisters Chapel which was some distance from the Hotel, and where Father Grafton Celebrated for us. After breakfast we took a walk along Bond Street and saw the shops and had luncheon, and then set off for the Wharf, where we got on the tug, and were conveyed across to the Batavia, which lay in the middle of the River. Then we said good-bye to dear Mother, and she returned to the shore. Sister Theresa and Sister Jessie had the Captain's Cabin on the deck, and Miss Vose and I were downstairs--Father Grafton and Father Hall in the room opposite. I slept on the couch under the Port-hole as far as I remember. We got off punctually, and I remember the first experience on board-ship!! as if the ground were moving under you, and you felt as if you would like to ask them to stop and set you down!! But this soon went off and I do not think you ever feel it after the first voyage. Soon after we started the bell rang for dinner, and green-horns as we all were then, we went down, but hardly had we begun to eat, when Sister Jessie gave out, and we

all tumbled upstairs again, and so ended our first dinner on board. Afterwards the other did not attempt it, and I followed suit, and we had our meals brought up on deck. I had used to go to the Ladies' Cabin for breakfast, but the others had theirs in bed, certainly for some days. Poor Brother William was miserably sick for a good while. Father Grafton was a good sailor and had been over often before, and Father Hall got on pretty well. One morning Father Grafton celebrated in our Cabin, but it was hardly an experiment to be repeated, and I remember the look for poor Father Hall and his white face. In those days the voyage was much longer than it is now, and we were all very weary of it, tho' as the time went on and Sister Theresa and Sister Jessie got a little better, we had pleasant times. At last we passed Sandy Hook, and began to see sights of America. Soon the Pilot Boat came with New York and Boston papers, and Miss Vose was eager for them, as her mother was old, and of course there had been no communication with the shore for 10 or 11 days; but it was all right, and she found her mother much as she had left her, I think. We arrived in New York Harbor on Saturday night, and the first sight I had of this city was on Sunday morning--a long low shore with low buildings (It was before the days of the 16 story Warehouses,

and being Sunday there did not seem much going on. "We have aroved", said the Captain, and I think we were all glad. We landed at last (Now I do not remember as it has been wiped out of my memory by later landings) and we all started off in one of the heated coaches, which then, and perhaps still, took passengers to the various Hotels. We went to the Grand Central, as it was near the Railway Station, but I must say there was not much else to recommend it!! It was a burning hot day, and Sister Jessie and I took a hot bath (we had not been provided with that luxury on the old Batavia) and by the time we got dressed again and went down to dinner in the big dining room of the Hotel, we (I speak for myself!) were thoroughly uncomfortable! I forget what we did the rest of the day but I remember at night, English fashion, we wanted supper and it was an impossibility to get it. I forget if they brought plates and nothing to eat, or something to eat and no plates. But we soon went to bed, and the first night on shore after being at Sea, is not to be despised. The next morning we Sisters got up and went out to find our way to St. Mary's--46th Street. Father Hall was to Celebrate--Michaelmas Day--and of course, we took the wrong turn, but as it is only four

blocks, we arrived in time, and were most kindly and hospitably received by Mother Harriet and Sister Sarah. Father Grafton had gone to look after the baggage which was something terrible to behold--as Father Hall remarked he hoped "the outside was no criticism of the inward Vow of Poverty. After breakfast we went off to the Grand Central Station, and by the Boston and Albany (the only route I think then between New York and Boston) for our destination, which we reached in due time. The things which impressed me most on the way, were the uncultivated look of the country through which we passed, though it had a wild beauty of its own; and the glaring advertisements on every piece of rock and every available spot. We reached Boston in due time, and were met at the Station by Father Coggisdale, Dr. Shattuck, Mr. Minot and others. Miss Vose went off at once to her mother and Sister Theresa, Sister Jessie and I went to Dr. Shattuck's Office in Staniford Street, where Sister Jessie and I were to stay for the present. Dr. Shattuck's old cooks were there and his butler. We had tea, and then, (I think) Sister Theresa went on up to the Childrens' Hospital, the corner of Rutland and Washington Sts. The next morning Sister Jessie and I found our way to St. John's Church on Boudoin St.

We stayed at Dr. Shattuck's Office for about three weeks, I think. Sister Jessie went up to the Childrens' Hospital most days. Sister Theresa had come down and taken us up there one day, and it was most intricate to me, getting into the horse-cars. Nobody knew where!! The first Thursday after we arrived, Mrs. Tyler came, and she and I went out and got cake for the Class which was held then, and has continued ever since on Thursday evenings in the school-room under St. John's. We went to the Class in the evening and I was introduced to the people. Father Grafton came, and I suppose Father Hall. On Sunday we went to Church, and sat in Dr. Shattuck's pew, which was nearly under the Gallery where the organ then was. Mr. Whitney played and the Choir came into the Church to the Hymn "Crown Him with many crowns". Perhaps this was in the evening, when I think Father Hall preached. On Sunday, Sister Jessie and I went to dine with the Shattucks on Newbery Street. One day Mr. Perkins was there and I was struck with his cultivated and gentleman-like manners and speech!! After dinner, we had used to go, and lie down in the spare bedrooms, and I think we went back to the Office to Tea, and then to Church. After a time it was arranged that Sister Jessie should go up to stay at

the Childrens' Hospital, and I should go to the Choir House on Lynde St, (now pulled down) and live there with Mrs. Foster, which I did and there I met Charlie Person, Miss Newell and others. It was decided about this time that we should take the house on Washington Street, next to the Childrens' Hospital, and Mrs. Joy came and went with me to get furniture, etc. Both she and Mr. Joy were most kind and helpful. Mrs. Parker, Miss Perry (Sister Ellen) Miss Hayley (Sister Letitia) and Bessie Newton and Mary Maclaine were at the Hospital.

