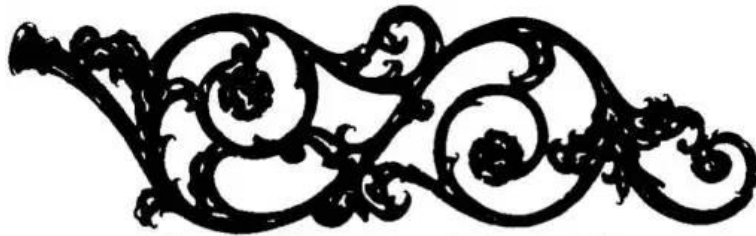


# THE EVERETT FAMILY LETTERS, 1851-1859

AT

## THE SOUTH END HISTORICAL SOCIETY



**ABSTRACT:** These letters were written between 1851 and 1859 and contain correspondence between Otis and Elizabeth Blake Everett in Boston and their son Otis Blake Everett who was working in India.

**DATES:** 1851-1859

**EXTENT:** 168 Letters

**REPOSITORY:** The South End Historical Society

**CALL NUMBER:** Mss 001

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection documents the Otis Everett family who lived in the South End neighborhood in the mid-nineteenth century. The collection contains letters exchanged between Otis Everett and Elizabeth Everett to their son, a merchant living and working in Calcutta, India from 1851-1859.

The letters highlight the concerns and everyday life of the middle-class living in the South End and the life of a Boston man living and working in India. Letters often took an average of two months to travel to their destination by steamer.

## HISTORICAL NOTE

The Everetts lived at the corner of Washington Street and Blake's Court in the South End. Their home was near where the Cathedral of the Holy Cross is now located.

In the 1830s, the South End neighborhood was still an empty expanse of land surrounded by salt marshes between Boston and the town of Roxbury and was nicknamed the "Boston Neck." The Everetts moved to the South End as the landfill development began and lived on Blake's Court, a section of old Boston that became known as the South End during development.

In 1801, a plan by Charles Bulfinch was presented to develop the land around the Boston Neck as residents began to fill in along Washington Street to prevent erosion in the low-lying areas. Development slowly began in the 1830s when the city began filling in the Charles River basin to establish the South End. The plan was to establish an idyllic, Eden for the middling population. Bulfinch planned tree lined streets with elegant, brick townhouses with wrought iron gates that surrounded pocketed residential parks adorned with stately fountains. Although lot sales were slow in the beginning, some families did move to the South End to build their homes during the 1830s development.

During the 1840s, some Boston middle class families eagerly moved into the South End. These families included merchants, politicians, bankers, and industrialists, as well as bookkeepers, house servants and laborers. Bulfinch intended for this neighborhood to be for the middle-class, not the Brahmins of Beacon Hill. Three squares, Chester Square, Worcester Square, and Union Park were designed and built by the 1850s. Union Park was a great success because of its close proximity to downtown Boston and its beautifully designed park equipped with two matching lotus flower fountains. Father Otis Everett wrote to son, Otis B. Everett in 1851 "The South-end markes progress rapidly; [Washington] street has been paved from Dover to Brookline Streets and Union Park is having an iron fence erected to round it, and preparations for a fountain, so we should look in nice order when you return."

The Everetts represent a typical middle class family living in the South End. As members of the merchant class, they had servants and could afford luxuries that the working class could not. The

children received proper educations that would ensure that they would stay in the middle class, if not move up to the upper class. This set of letters describes the everyday lives of father, Otis Everett, mother, Elizabeth Everett, oldest son, Otis Blake Everett, middle son, Thomas Blake Everett, and youngest son, Percival Lowell Everett.

## **ORGANIZATION**

**SERIES I.** Correspondence from Boston (1851 – 1859)

**SERIES II.** Correspondence from India (1853-1856)

## **ADMINISTRATIVE**

### **RESTRICTIONS:**

None

### **PROVENANCE:**

Donated to the South End Historical Society (SEHS) in Boston in 2012 by Richard Card, founding president of SEHS. Richard purchased them from an owner of a house in the South End.

### **PROCESSING INFORMATION:**

Corinne Bermon, March 2017

### **CITATION:**

Everett Family Letters 1851-1859, Mss 001; The South End Historical Society

## FOLDER LIST

FOLDER DESCRIPTION	DATES	DESCRIPTION	FOLDER
<b>SERIES I. CORRESPONDENCE FROM BOSTON (1851 – 1859)</b>			
August – September 1851	19 August; 23 September	2 ALS; [8] p.	1
October 1851	14 October	1 ALS; [4] p.	2
January – February 1852	17 January; 17 February	2 ALS; [8] p.	3
November – December 1853	Undated; 21 November	3 ALS; [12] p.	4
February – March 1854	13 February; 26 February; 15 March; 30 March	4 ALS; [16] p.	5
May – June 1854	Undated; 1 May; 4 June; 18 June	4 ALS; [16] p.	6
July – August 1854	19 July; 2 August; 18 August	3 ALS; [12] p.	7
September 1854	September 1854	1 ALS; [4] p.	8
October – December 1854	Undated; 1 October; 15 October; 14 November; 1 December;	5 ALS; [20] p.	9
[?January] – [?March] 1855	Undated; 26 February	3 ALS; [12] p.	10
April – May 1855	Undated; 14 April; 1 May	4 ALS; [16] p.	11
July – September 1855	Undated; 15 July; 30 July; 16 September; 30 September	6 ALS; [24] p.	12
October – November 1855	Undated; 30 October; 11 November	3 ALS; [12] p.	13
January – March 1856	Undated; 17 February; 17 March	3 ALS; [12] p.	14
April – June 1856	Undated; 1 April; 12 May; 2 June; 17 June; 29 June	7 ALS; [28] p.	15
July – September 1856	26 July; 17 August; 30 September	3 ALS; [12] p.	16
October – December 1856	11 October; 14 November; 15 December	3 ALS; [12] p.	17
February – March 1857	Undated; 1 March; 16 March	4 ALS; [16] p.	18
April – May 1857	20 April; 1 May	2 ALS; [8] p.	19
December 1857	13 December; 25 December	2 ALS; [8] p.	20

<b>FOLDER DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>DATES</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>FOLDER</b>
January – March 1858	Undated; 30 January; 1 March	4 ALS; [16] p.	21
April – June 1858	Undated; 2 May; 1 June; 20 June	5 AL; [20] p.	22
July – August 1858	Undated; 3 July; 17 July; 9 August	5 ALS; [16] p.	23
October – November 1858	2 October; 18 October; 12 November	3 ALS; [12] p.	24
January – March 1859	Undated; 14 January; 16 January; 6 February; 20 February; 22 March	6 ALS; [12] p.	25
April – June 1859	Undated; 3 April; 19 April; 5 June; 19 June	6 ALS; [12] p.	26
July – August 1859	Undated; 3 July; 14 July; 1 August	4 ALS; [8] p.	27
<b>SERIES II. CORRESPONDENCE FROM INDIA (1853 – 1856)</b>			
August 1853	23 August	1 ALS; [2] p.	28
November – December 1853	3 November; 27 December	2 ALS; [10] p.	29
January – March 1854	7 January; 9 January; 19 February; 3 March; 15 March	5 ALS; [14] p.	30
April – June 1854	1 April; 15 April; 28 April; 12 May; 29 May; 12 June; 29 June	7 ALS; [30] p.	31
July – September 1854	12 July; 16 August; 3 September; 16 September	4 ALS; [17] p.	32
October – December 1854	3 October; 17 October; 6 November; 17 November; 3 December; 15 December; 17 December	7 ALS; [26] p.	33
January – March 1855	7 January; 21 January; 7 February; 21 February; 7 March; 22 March	6 ALS; [24] p.	34
April – June 1855	6 April; 20 April; 2 May; 17 May; 2 June; 15 June	6 ALS; [24] p.	35
July – September 1855	1 July; 17 July; 6 August; 22 August; 5 September; 20 September	6 ALS; [27] p.	36

<b>FOLDER DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>DATES</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>FOLDER</b>
October – December 1855	6 October; 20 October; 7 November; 20 November; 7 December; 20 December	7 ALS; [26] p.	37
January – March 1856	5 January; 19 January; 6 February; 20 February; 5 March; 20 March	6 ALS; [24] p.	38
April – June 1856	6 April; 19 April; 1 May; 14 May; 1 June	5 ALS; [20] p.	39
July – September 1856	2 July; 8 July; 12 July; 4 August; 19 August; 1 September; 18 September	7 ALS; [24] p.	40
October 1856	6 October	1 ALS; [4] p.	41