

Orientation analysis, central Boston, Dec 31 '54:  
 impressions of orientation clues on <sup>going on foot</sup> specified objectives

1. From el. station, Dover & Washington, to State House:

First orientation by direction of el. & thus by tracks returning. Openness to R indicates "bay". Sunlight helps, but an intellectual effort, & N-S orientation of Boston always uncertain.

Going on Wash., simply matter of following el. & traffic. Glimpse Hancock Blvd L @ Davis = also open again to R. Open cut @ RR. shows Hancock L & open trackbed R. A pe. of P.O. (see later) bldg ahead means "bear L". El goes off R while I must follow st.

@ Bury, some doubt, since Wash. leads in by name, but see sign "Staller" @ end of Bury & this refers to Common (?) to me. Direction feels in betw. [Overheard: "Where wld. this take us?"]

Take Bury & arrive @ confusing sq., but Shawmut St. seems to go in compromise direct., & then see State Hse. @ end, recognizable by style, elevation & trees. Along Shawmut, a back orient. on Hancock. State Hse reveals more of new wing (wh. I might not have recog.) Diagonal sts: a broken crossing of grids here wh. I could neither draw

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not relate.

Then @ Strahl see the gold dome, very impressive. @ Common space opens; dome less striking; there is a queer twist of the Common's direction. Now in the familiar situation of Wash. to R., Common, & Tremont - but how did I get on it? Feel as if am sidling up to Common. Bldg. appears wh. earlier than the P.O. - by bulk & ht. it is greater than State Hse, but not as effective & somewhat anon. Must be @ Scollay, feel the space "down behind." Then the Park St bridge, a very dramatic landmark. Now in the easy vernal set of Common, Tremont wall, State Hse, Park St Chh., Cross @ West bec. lights w/me. In Common it is easy, since dome shines thru winter trees, walks lead toward, & slope indicates.

## 2. City Hall to Old North Church:

City Hall du in confused prospect on side slope. Only clues are seen, slope & genl. knowledge (im. memory of ~~some~~ motion already accomplished); & if I had heard a pc. of the "Scollay & Bldg." No guide but just "get out," so go downhill to Wash, & along slope on Wash, knowing this will lead me

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out of concentration.

After curve, see open ahead, know coming out but not sure where. Old State Hse not visible until right on it, when also glimpse Seollay Sq. Bldg & Custom Hse. Curve opens more & see new expressway & boat masts (!?) far ahead. Then arrive & see Farnell. Now feel must slip L by Farnell & feel way thru markets to find the end of Hanover.

Then more cars. See expressway ahead & know must go under. Follow line of masts. Custom Hse & Farnell behind - to Farnell area a well organized system but not oriented to rest of city. @ edge masts. recog. entrance of Summer under expressway (wh. gives new dimension & punctuation like a wall). Think Hanover is R of Summer, but then see green trellis of outdoor dining terrace on L & this fixes location Hanover.

Cross to Hanover a bad break & very diff. to cross. Looking back: the Cust Hse, the gold finials of Farnell, & the Seollay Sq Bldg over the expressway wall. Up Hanover is St Stephens, small quiet & distinct @ st. end. Very satisfying, sure going directly to it & is @ map scale.

Along Hanover, occas. glimpses R of Atlant. Ave space. Then mall opens L & see broken

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spire Old N Q (I am not sure I could find it except for this direct.) Ahead see C.G. sign: "end of peninsula." Please simply ~~look~~ by continuing walk itself, cut thru trees. Once there, am lost etc. very badly, since in closed sts. [ $\frac{1}{2}$  blk. away, I was asked the way to Old N Q].

### 3. Custom House Tower to Hotel Shell -

First orient. by sun, by glimpse Atl Ave spire & masts & (by chance) look to Old State Hse. Know must go up there & get across Common. Coming up State, feel that passing thru area I know least - an undigested lump of bldgs & confused sts. betw. Wash. & Bay. Glimpse Faneuil R. Arrive @ Old State Hse feeling lost - little bldg crushed by surround & of little help. Will keep ahead to try find Common.

Push ahead - back end City Hall now rel. to front. "Scollay Bldg" & the opening of the Sq. Slightly off mark? Bear L up hill. Come up to rear courtyard. (An addition to the "Scollay Bldg") & in trap, rd. seems blocked off L. Continue zigging up hill & to L, going only by means of slope & gen. direction until out @ cor. Somerset & Beacon when surprised to see ahead the upper edge Common.

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Then out to peak @ State Hse - out in open again.  
State Hse Common & Hancock. For this vantage can  
see across Copley Sq. etc. & sense the slope dir. to river.  
Now feel sld. keep R & get over to Cas R. Then around  
bend! & see du Beacon to Cities Service sign @ Ken-  
more. First long straight run. See dist. hills over.  
Suddenly fall into Cas R. framework.

On way, Common disintegrates more &  
more into formless space. Feel Beacon Hill out R.  
@ Cas St. bottom of slope & feel sld turn & break out  
to level - also ~~know~~ know Cas St by name to come  
out on river. Slope used here. Looking back, tip of  
Cust Hse ~~is~~ in line - not bad! Run Cas, feeling  
swinging ~~me~~ back out of way, so pressure goes L  
where pass. L on Chestnut & sure surf. trees & curve  
new footbridge ahead. Go to it, w/ side glimpses  
Publ. Gard. - surprising so close to Cas Riv. Near  
end feel pressure river air as well as flatness of land.  
@ Storrow Dr. view opens out, see must backtrack  
slightly to get over bridge, but music still just dead  
& R. Drive & bridge cut off what would otherwise be a  
commanding view - Saltpepper Budge, MIT, BU, & hills.  
Looking back up Chestnut, a rise to Beacon Hill & gold dome  
over - very fine. @ foot footbridge can for 1st time see con-  
tact Common & Riv, w/ Cust Hse in dist. A heavy ft., wasted ances.

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[Note potential power of Commonwealth → Publ. Jrd  
→ Ph St Cl → Cust. H&E axis]

#### 4. Front of Staller to Haymkt O:

A confused space dominated by Staller  
I know for ever. Nat Tremont (? see later) near &  
away from Staller. Also see glimpse near Trinity Ch.  
thus know direct downtown. Will move away  
from this & then L to Tremont (?).

Ph Sq itself utterly disintegrated, but Com-  
mon seen thru gaps L & go to it. Here I face the  
point of a corner, a diff. decision. Feel that L is too  
far off, but to R is better. But will choose gully-corner  
path thru Common to State H&E dome. [Washed the direct.  
to Staller & the bus terminal]. Once on path, easy again  
due to direct. path & flow people. Ahead see it leading  
me right into "slot" @ subway stas., Ph St Cl, & Tremont.  
Come onto busy Tremont "again", puzzling. Before  
it must have been Boylston (note unconv. equation  
of Boylston toward Copley w/ Tremont @ Common).

Go up slot, nothing visual esp. sense of  
funneling, but know will lead to Seallay. One  
renewal here, an exploded space: no indic. of wh.  
way to go. But see Old State H&E R & know if bear L

will go to Cambridge St around Bear Hill to Riv. This feel old compromise in direct for Haymst. Go diag. across Sq. w/ intent to go ch. Beattle.

But this bends back & not famil. This feel along further. The name "Hanover" means leading to R. of Haymst, & I also see the expressway. I come to bend swinging L to Riv. & see a staple assoc. as nr. Mass. Genl. So decide go dn Sudbury & feel way.

This winds & seems to dead end. Un-famil. ground for me. Tip Cust Hse over. Then @ Portland see Hot Manger L (~~Assoc.~~ N. Sta), Faneuil R, & expressway ahead. For moment think still a little to R, then see sign & low bumper of subway & know going into Haymst. Here see N Sta L, expressway & open ahead not well related, & "Wash" coming in R. This last puzzling. Looking back if it see does actually lead back thru a confusing break, prob. Dosh Sq.

5. Northern Artery O to S Sta:

A poor place for the ped. w/ cars swirling, the expressway, ch, river rd. Mus of Sci nearby, &

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openness of river space tho cannot feel it @ all (more like RR yds). In dist. great spine of a Pasture @ Bunker Hill Mount. Otherwise formless here wh. shld sense sweep rivers & Harbor.

Feel as if far here to S Sta is farthest trip of all - then right unknown ground. Uncertain how to begin. Old start to N Sta & thence around by Atl Ave to S Sta. Decide might be shorter to cut thru. Will plunge in, pick up Cust Hse tower & go for there.

For quite time, go du Cavayeth by remembered direct. only. Top of tall bldg: <sup>visible</sup> anon design of 1930 modern - but not sure. @ Causeway troubled, feel bearing too far R. Thus du Cymon @ Stamford, Hot Manger L. & gold dome & distinct (but new) parade road State Hse R! Surprised. Up to Green, trying to zigzag. Then see open ahead, looks like Scollay, so bear to it. Come in, see the anon. bldg. is on S. but is not court hse. To somewhat like it (also like P.O.) Now feel in some relation to stuff on R, but not to territory L. Feel must work to L but not too much. See tip Cust Hse @ Sudbury, decide bear L @ end Scollay. Feel I do not know well where



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I came from.

St. swings due to Old State Hse. Now have located Wash stopping & Cust Hse (tho not yet seen). Feel shld go betw. them as best can, despite grain of sts. Thus wch du Congress, & see phung fait, another anon bldg, & st. going in "my" direct. : Pearl St.

P.O. Sq. cold, anon & lost ~~the~~ place, somewhere back of Wash. Keep on Pearl, looking L so as not to overshoot. Nothing recog. R or L, feeling insecure. Cust Hse L rear. Demolition @ High & Purchase, glimpse of ramp L: figure must be end expressway & this shld turn L soon for S Sta. Post demol. forces me ahead one more blk & then find to St. surprise come out perpendicular to Atl. Ave ~~to~~ w/ So Sta R 2 blks - where st. going parallel to it or @ most angling in. Momentary ~~whirl~~ whirl of fragments, before settled. Atl. Ave recog by clad. & famil. bldgs, & know space of So Sta to R to cannot see bdy. Go to it, & when there: famil bldg, ahead see unknown getting spire on dist. hill - to L little sense of channel wh. shld be there. "Up" & to R thru maze, is Wash stopping. If were going back to start, might take diff. st. - up to Wash & thence to Scollay?