

#30 Hancock Street.

Cambridge, Feb. 24/1890

To the Honorable Board of Mayor and Aldermen  
of the City of Cambridge:  
Gentlemen—

It was my privilege, at the last session of the City Council to call the attention of your honorable board to the unsafe condition of Hancock Street, south of Main St., and to point out the unjust and unwise discrimination of the Committee having such matters in their jurisdiction. I know well that the statement of discrimination is very likely to be either pook-pooked or flatly denied, and therefore I wish to add one more fact to those already furnished.

Since that communication was written the charges therein have been fully verified, as the sidewalks on the northerly side of

of the street between Main and Harvard  
streets have been repaired and graveled.  
Was this necessary? If so, why not con-  
tinue the same treatment, where it is very  
certain that even for decency's sake it is  
necessary - i. e. - between Main and Franklin  
streets. Is there not discrimination?  
As one fact is worth a thousand theories  
I wish simply to call the attention of the  
proper authorities to this matter, and will  
leave it in the hands of the board for  
the present.

Respectfully

Geo. L. Duffy

Communications <sup>123</sup>  
from James L. Duffy  
relative to repairs on  
Hancock Sh

Feb 25 - 1889

Feb  
25.90

Roads Bridges & other Board

Walter W. Pike City Clerk

38 Hancock Street

Cambridge, Feb. 11, 1890.

To the Honorable Board of Mayor and Alderman  
of the City of Cambridge:-

Gentlemen,— Your attention is respectfully called to the following Extract from the City Ordinances, Chapter 36, Section 43, regarding Sidewalks:—

"All sidewalks shall be kept in repair at the expense of the city; provided" etc

At various times during the past three years I have endeavored to get the sidewalk on the easterly side of Hancock Street, between Main and Green Street placed in proper condition for travel. For this purpose I have applied to the Street Department and to the Board of Mayor and Alderman, but all to no purpose. Some two years ago about fifty feet of the street next to Main Street, was

opened to connect the sewer in the latter street with the one in Hancock street. When this work was done the dirt was shoveled back into the excavation without any regard to the grade of the street, leaving a large mound in the centre, extremely dangerous to travel. I called the attention of the Superintendent of streets to the matter, and was informed that the Sewer Department was the proper party to grade the street there. As the mound looked so much like a huge grave. I did not apply to the Sewer Department, fearing a reference to the Cemetery Commissioners. I petitioned the Mayor and Alderman that the sidewalk be properly graded and made safe, as portions of it sloped from the fence to where the gutter is supposed to be at an angle of nearly 45 degrees, rendering it exceedingly dangerous, especially in winter. That no accident has occurred there is most providential. But it is only a question of time when some unfortunate person will

look to the city for damages for a broken limb, and there will be no difficulty in proving the city's liability. Formerly, there was a ~~grand~~ surface, but this has now nearly all been washed away by heavy rains, and leaves only mud, mud, mud. I have been told, when asking that something be done to mend this, that the department has no money. The city teams pass nearly every day down this street on their way to the "dump." A few loads of the ashes spread over the soft mud would make a substantial foundation, and with a light layer of gravel thrown over it, and properly graded, would make a solid and inexpensive sidewalk. But the hill portion, at least, should have edge stones to keep the gravel from washing down to Green Street. However, the teams pass on to the "dump." per order and the citizens are allowed to wallow in the mud in order to reach their homes

in the classic city of Cambridge. Absolutely nothing has been done to this <sup>section of the</sup> street for four years, and of course during all that time it has been going from bad to worse, and is now in a horrible condition. But listen: That part of the street lying between Main Street and Broadway has been regularly cleaned and swept once a year at least. It was so cleaned last year. Why this discrimination? Do the property owners on the northerly section pay more taxes proportionately than their fellow citizens on the southerly side of Main Street? or is it because of—well—what's in a name? I consider no language too strong when applied in denouncing the wretched policy pursued by the authorities regarding the streets in certain sections of the city. This much on sidewalks.

And now comes the crowning outrage. I do not know whether the past or present city government is responsible for the

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granting permission to a non-resident company to erect poles on such a narrow street as Hancock is at this point; but they evidently conclude that the residents have no rights in the matter. Now I do not propose to submit tamely to any such outrageous proceedings. The pole erected at the entrance gate to the writers residence - #30 Hancock, is in violation of a city ordinance which requires, when plank walks are laid that they be three feet wide. The actual distance of this pole from the fence post is thirty-five inches. The committee can see and measure for themselves, if it is not too much trouble. I claim that my property is damaged fully five hundred dollars, and I hereby notify the Board that I will claim to have that amount deducted from the Citys valuation, unless the pole is removed. I respectfully ask that the proper committees pay a visit

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to this street and judge from their  
own observation, if I have overstated  
the utter want of care shown for the safety  
and comfort of its residents. It is a lasting  
disgrace to Cambridge, and its government  
which permits such a state of things.

In conclusion permit me to refer your  
honorable board to Mr. Chas. F. Wyman,  
Rev. Dr. Howe, the Misses Dallinger,  
and the Drs. Chase.

Respectfully submitted

Jas. L. Duffy.

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Communication from  
James L. Duffey  
relative to repairs on  
Hancock Street

Feb 18-1890

Feb  
BOARD OF ALDERMEN 18 90  
REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE  
ON Roads & Bridges of this Board  
Walter H. Pike City Clerk

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# ❖ CITY OF CAMBRIDGE. ❖

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In Board of Aldermen, *Apr 8* 1890.

The Standing Committee on Roads and Bridges  
to which were referred two petition Communications  
from James L. Duffly, dated Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> respectively,  
relative to repairs on Hancock Street, between Main and  
Green Streets,

## Reports

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~~Recommending~~ no action

necessary in the matter of said Communications, this Board  
having covered the setting of edge-stones on both sides of said  
Hancock Street, and when this is done the street will be put  
in proper repair.

For the Committee.)

Edward R. Cogswell

accepted

attest Walter W. Pike  
City Clerk

## REPORT.

*standing*

Committee on Roads and Bridges,

*upon two communications from  
James L. Daffy.**april 8. 1890.*