

surrounded them, and right well did they do their duty. It is very difficult to get much information of the business done before 1800,—the earliest account books I have are dated 1788; the style of bookkeeping is very quaint, and the entries chiefly refer to the interchange of commodities, very little money being used in the trading. The commencement of business was in a small way, money was scarce, the first merchants were traders, bringing here small consignments, and exchanging with their neighbors for fish and furs and natural products. One great advantage they had, was the fact of the West Indies being closed to vessels from the United States; here was a good market for their fish and lumber when they commenced to manufacture, bringing back sugar and rum and West India produce, which they traded with the States for manufactures and domestic articles and provisions. The business part of the city was then wholly confined to Water Street, Dock Street, King, part of Prince William Street and part of Nelson. Other streets, as we know them now were only outlined on the plans of the surveyor, and the ground still covered with a primitive growth of wood. The shores of the harbor had been first cleared, as affording a convenient access for the transport of goods and necessities, and naturally stores and residences were first erected by the water's edge. The North and South wharves at first extended only as far as Ward and Nelson streets, the lower flats were occupied as stores and the upper as dwellings—in fact with the exception of a few families who were possessed of more means than the rest of their fellow exiles, and lived in residences apart from their business, it was the general custom to have the store and dwelling in the same building. At the commencement of this century a great improvement