

THE AGE OF INVENTION

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CHAPTER I

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND HIS TIMES

ON Milk Street, in Boston, opposite the Old South Church, lived Josiah Franklin, a maker of soap and candles. He had come to Boston with his wife about the year 1682 from the parish of Ecton, Northamptonshire, England, where his family had lived on a small freehold for about three hundred years. His English wife had died, leaving him seven children, and he had married a colonial girl, Abiah Folger, whose father, Peter Folger, was a man of some note in early Massachusetts.

Josiah Franklin was fifty-one and his wife Abiah thirty-nine, when the first illustrious American inventor was born in their house on Milk Street, January 17, 1706. He was their eighth child and Josiah's tenth son and was baptized Benjamin.