



# Longfellow House Bulletin

Volume 3 No. 2

A Newsletter of the Friends of the Longfellow House and the National Park Service

December 1999

## The Next Best-known House in America and Its Replicas

The familiar yellow and white Georgian mansion, once home to America's best-loved poet, doesn't stand only on Brattle Street in Cambridge. Almost identical buildings exist across the country in Maine, South Dakota, Georgia, Washington State, and many other places. Recently, a couple in Lincoln, Massachusetts, constructed a replica, which was featured this October in *Boston Magazine*.

The Longfellow House, wrote a leading authority on New England architecture in 1916, "Next to Mount Vernon... is the best-known house in America." The House had by then become an icon, a symbol of the

during the first half of the nineteenth century through illustrations in books and magazines. Regularly featured in travel writings and lectures, the House was a frequent stop for tourists. When Longfellow acquired the House in 1843 through the generosity of his wife Fanny's father, the couple wanted to preserve its historical associations and, although they added modern utilities, they made few structural changes.

As photography grew cheaper and more prevalent in the latter half of the century, the image of the yellow House was disseminated even more widely and often included information that it was the residence of the popular poet Longfellow as well as Washington's headquarters. The meaning of the icon had expanded.

Only one year after Longfellow's death, in 1883 the earliest known Longfellow House replica was constructed. Designed for a ship owner by English architect Henry Vaughn,



Minneapolis Branch Library, Minnehaha, Minnesota, built 1907

nation's history. Already perhaps a dozen Longfellow House replicas had appeared around the country to honor the original, and Sears, Roebuck and Co. would soon market its version of the House as a pattern for builders.

The transformation of the House into a national icon was already underway when Henry Wadsworth Longfellow became a boarder there in 1837—it was renowned as George Washington's headquarters during the early campaigns of the Revolutionary War. Longfellow delighted in knowing that his study had once been the commander-in-chief's bedroom.

The image of the House was popularized



Aberdeen, South Dakota, built 1910

"Gladisfen" in Newcastle, Maine, differed only in minor detail from its prototype.

In 1887, shortly after the completion of Gladisfen, a second replica was built in Evanston, Illinois. Given an equally impressive name, "Enfield Place" established a pattern of close replication of the Longfellow House throughout the country.

The third known House replica was erected in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, in 1898. One of the most exact copies, it even includes the service additions at the rear of the original building and, most remarkably, the terraced landscape complete with linden trees and the poet's balustrade. The architect, Joseph Vance, was trained at M.I.T. and was probably familiar with the House.

The fourth replica, "Pierce House," appeared in 1900 in Lincoln, Massachusetts. Although on the exterior the service wing was moved to the side of the house, the interior copied the stair hall and its turned balusters and the woodwork in Longfellow's study.

The Longfellow House replicas continued into the twentieth century. The



Pierce House, Lincoln, Massachusetts, built 1900

(continued on page 2)



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poet's grandson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow "Harry" Dana, who lived in the House from 1917 to 1950 and served as its informal curator, collected photographs and newspaper clippings of these replicas. His files include a house constructed in 1907 for Robert F. Jones in Minneapolis, which caught his attention when it was converted into a Minneapolis Public Library branch by the Works Progress Administration in 1937.

Confirming the House's stature as a national symbol, Sears, Roebuck and Co. featured on the cover of its 1918 "Home-builder's Catalog" of pre-fabricated houses "The Magnolia," its most expensive design—a mass-produced replication of "the famous residence at Cambridge, Mass., where the poet Longfellow composed his immortal works." Its advertising copy also referred to George Washington. The Magnolia was an anomaly among mail-order houses because its size and its cost defeated the purpose of a ready-made home. But the design remained in production at least through 1927, as verified by construction that year of a Magnolia in South Bend, Indiana. There are, at this

time, no precise records of how many of these houses were built or where.

Reports and letters about other Longfellow House replicas continue to find their way to the National Park Service's historic site, where the staff adds them to the file. There are snapshots of a blue Longfellow House in Freeport, Illinois, and a replica owner's request for advice on turning out replacement spindles. A couple sent photos of what looks uncannily like the Longfellow House—except that it was their home in Aberdeen, South Dakota, from 1973 to 1990. A woman from Tacoma, Washington, enclosed a newspaper clipping and asked if her yellow, Colonial, pilastered house looks like the poet's residence.

People today still base their house designs on the Longfellow House. In *Boston Magazine's* recent article entitled "Estate of Grace" about the building of a Lincoln, Massachusetts couple's house, Jeanne Blackburn writes, "The couple wanted Gorman [the architect] to take design cues from the Georgian-style Longfellow House in Cambridge. 'They couldn't verbalize what they liked,' he says. 'They had an emotional connection to it.'"

## Letter to the Editor: Another First Lady at the House

Dear Editor:

I always enjoy browsing through your *Bulletin*. However, in your June '99 issue, I came to a startled halt upon reading that our current First Lady, Hillary Clinton, was the first First Lady to cross the threshold of the Longfellow House (Martha Washington having only been a "future" First Lady when she lived there).

I wish to challenge your statement by mentioning another First Lady who came to the Longfellow House and whom I saw there with my own eyes.

I was born in 1919 at 5 Longfellow Park (the house which now belongs to the Quakers) and lived there until I was thirteen. When I was about nine or ten years old, I attended a tea party at the Longfellow House (then known as the Craigie House). The tea was in honor of the wife of the current President Herbert Hoover.

I can remember myself in my best dress walking across Brattle St. to this affair with my mother, Amelia (Amy) Thorp Knowles, who was a granddaughter of H.W.L. and a daughter of Anne Allegra Longfellow Thorp, the poet's youngest child.

It must have been a beautiful day because we did not go in the main front door, but simply walked around to the long porch on the right side of the house. Mrs. Hoover was standing by the steps of the porch and greeting guests as they arrived.

She was a most gracious lady, who chatted with my mother for a short while, then turned and spoke kindly to me. I was very shy in those days and recall being so awed by her attention that I was tongue-tied. All I could muster up was my best curtsy whereupon she gave me a rose from her bouquet!

I am sorry I cannot recall any further details. My great Aunt Alice Longfellow, who lived in the House until she died [in 1928], surely must have been there as hostess and also her sister, my grandmother, who lived only two houses away at 115 Brattle St.

So with all due respect to Mrs. Clinton, I send this in hope of setting the record straight on First Ladies who have visited the Longfellow House. Perhaps your archives will contain some mention of Mrs. Hoover's visit to corroborate my tale. Do let me know.

—ANNE LONGFELLOW KNOWLES DICKINSON  
 Lake Forest, Illinois

## Interview with a Friend...Meet Barclay Henderson

by Ruth Butler

Barclay Henderson became the president of the Friends of the Longfellow House in June 1998. He is the “angel” who makes the summer music program possible, and he lives within walking distance of the House. When I arrived at his home this October to interview him, Barclay ushered me into a warm, white room with a prominent grand piano and a music stand holding an open score.

**Ruth Butler.** What do you play, and what have you been playing this morning?

**Barclay Henderson.** I play the oboe, and I've been working on a Schickardt and a Boismortier for a Baroque class. I've taken lessons for thirty years. I haven't progressed much, but I continue. I play in two different woodwind quintets from which I get a great deal of enjoyment. The first hour of every day is spent on the oboe. It may just be the best hour of the day. And my summers are full of music. I attend an annual composers' conference in Wellesley as well as the Apple Hill Center for Chamber Music in Sullivan, New Hampshire, where people of all ages come to work on chamber music.

**R.B.** Was it your idea to get a music program going at Longfellow?

**B.H.** Oh no! There was always a music program. It goes back to Alice Longfellow. The family trust continued it after her death, as did the Park Service until 1995. Kelly Feller [park ranger] managed the whole thing. All that was missing was the money. I considered it an important amenity for Cambridge—the idea of these golden afternoons sitting on the grass under that big tree listening to chamber music. The concerts bring people off Brattle Street and onto the property. Sometimes in the summer we have four hundred people at a concert. So I was moved to fund the program.

**R.B.** Have you always lived in Cambridge?

**B.H.** When I was born, my mom and dad lived on Channing Circle. During the Depression, Dad bought the Continental Hotel for \$500. It's a big brick building near Longy that now belongs to Harvard. He had good luck in the hotel business. The Continental became the Sheraton which then grew into the Sheraton chain. My family left Cambridge for Lincoln, and after college I went to Japan. That was in 1962, and I stayed for three years. The thing I wanted most in the world was to get a black belt in Judo. During that time I met Minako, and we were married there. Knowing Cambridge as a rich

heterogeneous place, I thought it would be the right place for us to settle. We've been in this house for thirty years—it's where we have raised our two boys.

I didn't follow my father into the hotel business. I worked with a Japanese organization, as a franchisee of Benihana of Tokyo, and we opened a number of restaurants throughout this country. I've since sold my franchises, and I'm semi-retired.



**R.B.** You have been walking by the Longfellow House for a long time. How did you see it back then, and how did you connect with the Friends?

**B.H.** I walked by it for years and years, always admiring it, but never going in. One day a neighbor, Ron Fleming, an architect active in preservation work, introduced me to Charlie Sullivan, the long-time director of the Cambridge Historical Commission, who knows all the people and all the players. He introduced me to Diana Korzenik [first president of the Friends] and that was it. He sort of gave me a push. I was motivated by the fact that, as far as I knew, hardly anyone visited this marvelous house. There was an article in the *Globe* about the House being in bad condition, complete with photographs of rotting woodwork. They mentioned the government cut-back in funds. Then Diana Korzenik and [director] Jim Shea told me about the music program. That pulled me in. Luckily, I was at a time in life when I had time and energy available, and I have been fortunate. This was a chance to give something back.

**R.B.** Was there anything else that attracted you to working on Longfellow projects?

**B.H.** Very early on Jim took me to the basement and showed me some of the mementos of Charley Longfellow's trip to Japan—all the photographs, the screens,

the fans, etc. My own trip to Japan as a young man was such a turning point in my life that I totally identified with Charley's trip—with the adventure and the discovery, the whole different world visited.

Then there was another thing: the gardens. Minako is a professional landscape architect. She has taken me to so many beautiful gardens all over the world. Once gardens did not interest me so much, but now they do, and I see the gardens and the music as complimentary. Together they have much to give to enhance the aura of the House as well as providing a gracious presence in the city of Cambridge.

I recently found out that people go into the garden early in the morning to do tai chi and yoga exercises. Jim came in early one day and discovered they were a regular group, so they are beneficiaries of the Friends' work as well. Apparently, they enjoy the gardens enormously.

Last year when Lauren Meier showed the Friends the plans Ellen Biddle Shipman [landscape architect] made in 1923 for Alice Longfellow, I began to contemplate how exciting it would be to restore the gardens to their former splendor. Right now, for me the garden is top priority.

**R.B.** What do you see as the major challenges or opportunities for the Friends at the moment?

**B.H.** I'd like to see the refurbishing and restoration recognized and appreciated by a larger constituency so that the house reaches out to a broader group. Probably a million people drive or walk up and down Brattle Street over the course of a year. Many of them note that there is a really beautiful piece of architecture, but they don't go in through the gate. So this is an opportunity to change that.

I look forward to the conservation and restoration of the architecture and furniture and artifacts—the return of some of the grandeur there that's been hidden, that's gotten dark and dingy over time. You can see how the coal dust blew through the air vents and covered things.

There is a lot of energy from the different board members. The house speaks to them in many different and profound ways. It's such a heterogeneous bunch—with the music people, the architecture people, the literature people, the landscape people, the poets. Part of my job is to get out of their way and encourage them to follow the voice that is speaking to each of them.

## Ole Bull Delegation from Norway Visits House

On September 23, a group of Ole Bull's family and friends along with board members from the Ole Bull Museum in Lysøen, Norway, visited the Longfellow House. Bull, the internationally renowned Norwegian musician, had been a long-time friend and neighbor of Henry W. Longfellow and often played his violin at the House. The Norwegian visitors were interested in seeing letters, objects, and photos from the House archives pertaining to Bull and his family.

The Longfellow House staff showed the visitors sheet music handwritten by Ole Bull and dedicated to his friend Henry Longfellow as well as photos of Bull from the Longfellow family album, and a journal entry by Fanny Longfellow which describes hearing the violinist in concert. The Norwegians, in turn, presented the staff with a copy of a letter from Longfellow to Mrs. Ole Bull.

Ole Bull was born in Bergen, Norway, in 1810 and as a child showed outstanding musical ability. By his mid-twenties, he had won European recognition and in ten more years achieved worldwide fame. The United States became his second home. Bull met Longfellow in the 1840s and maintained his friendship with him until Bull's death in 1880. The poet based the colorful character of the musician in his poem "Tales of a Wayside Inn" on Bull.

In 1870 Bull married Sarah Thorp, the sister of Longfellow's daughter Annie's hus-

band, Joseph Thorp. The musician and his wife spent their summers with their three children in Lysøen, Norway, at the house which is now the Ole Bull Museum. Frankie Wetherell (née Thorp and the granddaughter of Annie) joined the delegation at the House and met her Norwegian second cousin for the first time.



Ole Bull, late 1870s

The delegation also planned to visit the Cambridge Historical Society, Sarah Bull's house at 146 Brattle Street where she lived for many years after her husband's death, and also the house of Ole and Sarah Bull's daughter Olea in Maine.

### from *Tales of a Wayside Inn*

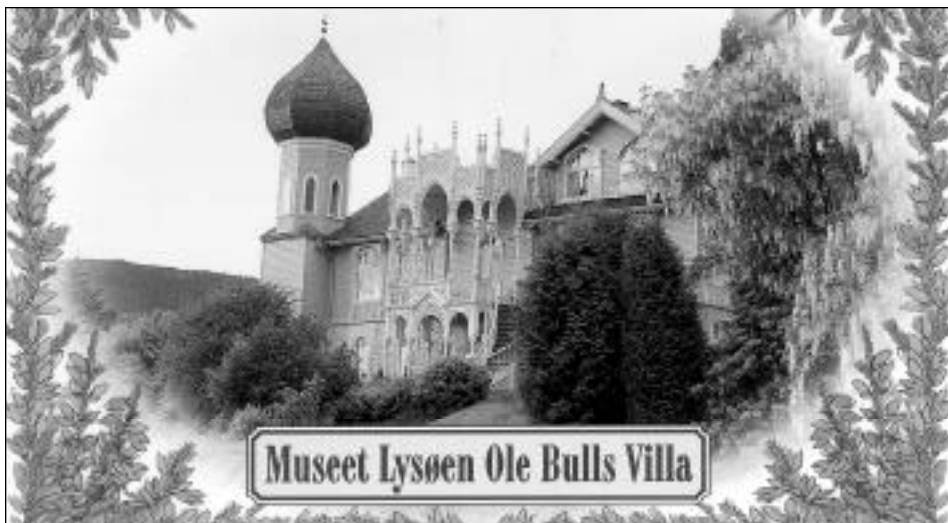
Interlude

*And then the blue-eyed Norseman told  
A Saga of the days of old.*

*"There is," said he, "a wondrous book  
Of Legends in the old Norse tongue,  
Of the dead kings of Norrway,—  
Legends that once were told or sung..."*

*And in each pause the story made  
Upon his violin he played,  
As an appropriate interlude,  
Fragments of old Norwegian tunes  
That bound in one the separate runes,  
And held the mind in perfect mood,  
Entwining and encircling all  
The strange and antiquated rhymes  
With melodies of olden times...*

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Ole Bull's house in Lysøen, Norway, built in 1872 and now a museum

*Fanny Longfellow, Henry W. Longfellow's wife, in her journal, May 21, 1844*

*Passed the... evening in hearing Ole Bull. He is a divine musician—another Orpheus, and puts a soul into a violin almost angelic. Vieuxtemps and all other scrapers play from the head only—he from the heart chiefly, with deep pathos and sometimes drollery as in the Carnival at Venice. A Mother's Prayer, composed by him, was next to the Miserere for touchingness—such pleading, pleading tones, deepening into more passionate appeals at the end as if a mother's heart was really speaking thro' them. He is young to my surprise. A vast crowd and vast applause.*

## Longfellow House in Print

In its October issue *Boston Magazine* ran a story called "Estate of Grace" about the most recent known Longfellow house replica, in Lincoln, Massachusetts, completed in 1995. "Money was no object. The goal was to blend the stately Georgian elegance of the Longfellow House with a spirited style and the latest technological advances," writes Jeanne Blackburn.

In *National Parks* magazine's September/October 1999 issue, Bess Zarafonitis Stroh discusses managing paintings in the park system's collections in her article "The Art of Appreciation". She highlights, in words and photos, the Longfellow House's extraordinary fine-art holdings.

*The Boston Campaign: April 1775-March 1776* by Victor Brooks which was published in November contains information about the House as George Washington's headquarters.

*Eastman Johnson: Painting America*, a catalogue to accompany the current Eastman Johnson retrospective at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in New York, features several of his drawings on loan from the House and a photo of the study showing these portraits as they usually hang.

*The Historic Lighting Report for the Longfellow House 1999* by J. Craig Maue and Daniel Mattausch meticulously documents all the lighting fixtures in the House with helpful photos and illustrations. (See page 7.)

## Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana Finding Aid Published

In case you thought the Longfellows were a prim and proper family, meet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana (1881-1950), left-winger, pacifist, and gay. The NPS staff have recently inventoried and catalogued Dana's papers in the Longfellow House archives, and have published a "finding aid" to make it easier for researchers to use this fascinating collection.

H.W.L. ("Harry") Dana was the second son of the poet's daughter Edith (of "golden hair" fame in Longfellow's poem "The Children's Hour") and her husband Richard Henry Dana III, the son of the author of *Two Years Before the Mast*.

The H.W.L. Dana finding aid lists all the holdings in the archives related to or collected by Harry Dana. Organized by topics such as Personal Materials (childhood writings to appointment books), Correspondence (his letters), Academic Life (his student and teaching days), Research (his notes and materials), and Organizations (records of his participation in many), the finding aid provides a comprehensive and convenient list of items in this collection.

These papers reflect the twists and turns in the life of Harry Dana, scholar, teacher, political activist, lecturer, and prolific author of many books and articles including *The Six Centuries Since Dante*, *Opinions and Attitudes in the Twentieth Century: Shaw in Moscow*, *Handbook on Soviet Drama*, and *Longfellow and Dickens: The Story of a Trans-Atlantic Friendship*.

Dana received A.B., A.M., and Ph.D. degrees from Harvard and became a professor of comparative literature at Columbia University. He was dismissed in 1917 because of his association with the People's Council of America for Democracy and Peace, an anti-war organization. Following this, he wrote a number of articles and letters about academic freedom, stored in the collection.

After leaving Columbia, Dana lectured at universities, forums, and workers' institutes around the country on socialism, literature, and Russian drama and history. He became involved in the union movement, helped found the Trade Union College in Boston in 1919, and taught at various workers' colleges in Boston, New York, and Pennsylvania, such as the Worker's University of the Inter-

national Ladies Garment Workers Union in New York City and the Bryn Mawr College Summer School for Women in Industry. He was so moved by the Sacco and Vanzetti case that he visited Bartolomeo Vanzetti's family in Italy and tried to bring his sister to the U.S. One of the last letters that Vanzetti received in prison before he was executed was from Harry Dana.



Dana met John Reed when they were both students at Harvard, and by the 1920s Dana supported communism and was an active member of the John Reed Club of Boston. Harry Dana admired and collected photos of Reed, author of the gripping journalistic narrative of the events of the Russian Revolution, *Ten Days That Shook the World*.

In order to study its culture and government, Dana lived in the Soviet Union from 1927-28 and went back four more times by 1935. He was a regular contributor to the periodicals *New Masses* and *Soviet Russia Today*.

Harry Dana also took a strong interest in historic preservation, especially of his family home. He actively collected the papers of his antecedents on both sides of the family, organized, and researched them. He not only encouraged other family members to make the House a repository for family papers, but also purchased related documents from dealers with his own money. Generous also with his time and knowledge, Dana helped researchers, including Robert Frost, use the collection.



Harry Dana in Cossack clothes on porch of House

Although he was born and spent his childhood next door, Dana moved into the House in 1917 (the Longfellow House Trust established in 1913 allowed any Longfellow descendant to reside there) and lived with his aunt Alice Longfellow until she passed away in 1928. He stayed on alone, with the exception of visitors and occasional boarders, until his death in 1950.

During his years at the Longfellow House, Dana acted as caretaker and accepted donations of objects, letters, manuscripts, and books relating to the Longfellows. When the Longfellow House Trust sought an organization to administer the House, he led the family opposition to donating it to Harvard, Radcliffe, or the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, who considered turning it into a private residence and dispersing the contents. Dana insisted that the House be kept intact as a place for the public to come for inspiration and education—complete with furnishings, library, and archives. Due largely to Harry Dana's efforts to collect and preserve, we have the archives at the House today.

As the staff finds additional pockets of Dana's papers throughout the archives, they will add these to the finding aid.

### Other Finding Aids Now in Print

The Longfellow National Historic Site has published many finding aids to help researchers navigate through the 600,000 papers in its archives. They are available at the Site or at other libraries. The following is a partial list:

*Frederic Haven Pratt and Stephen D. Pratt Research Papers, 1783-1996*

*Appleton Family Papers, 1752-1962*

*Washington Allston Materials as Compiled by H.W.L. Dana, 1798-1966*

*Frances Elizabeth Appleton Longfellow Papers, 1825-1961*

*Dana Family Collected Correspondence, 1808- 1938*

*Patricia Pratt Papers, 1759-1994*

*Alice Mary Longfellow Papers, 1850-1965*

*Architectural Drawings & Blueprint Collection*

*Longfellow NHS Print Collection*

*Longfellow, Appleton, Dana Family Art Collection*

For information, call (617) 876-4491.

# Longfellow's Historic Lighting Fixtures Illuminated

A meticulous room-by-room analysis of the function and artistry of hundreds of lighting fixtures throughout the Longfellow House was completed earlier this year by Museum Quality Restorations, of Palmyra, New Jersey. Because of the age and size of the House, their 120-page report offers a fascinating overview of many aspects of the evolution of interior lighting in upper-class homes in the United States from the 1820s to the 1930s. They provide a compendium of historical information, aesthetic fashions, patent drawings, advertisements, engineers' and contractors' invoices, before-and-after photographs, and explanations of ornamental detail and style.

Shortly after Nathan Appleton purchased the Craigie Mansion, in 1843, for his daughter Fanny and her new husband, Henry Longfellow, the young couple began to make improvements to their home. Aside from candlesticks, we can only speculate about the lighting devices they found when they moved in. The earliest surviving fixtures are two oil-burning Argand lamps, named for the Swiss chemist and inventor, Ami Argand, and imported from Europe in great numbers at the turn of the century. By the 1820s



they were being manufactured in America. After a decade in the House, the Longfellow's began to phase out oil-lamps. In his November 1, 1852 journal entry, Henry pronounced, "All things in confusion with carpenters putting gas pipes in the house." In both November and January he wrote of driving to town with Fanny to buy gas chandeliers. When

the new fixtures were first turned on early in the new year, Henry's comment suggests he was somewhat taken aback. "Lighted up with gas for the first time this evening," he wrote on January 21, 1853. "It had a ballroom look—the house had—and made me quite restless."

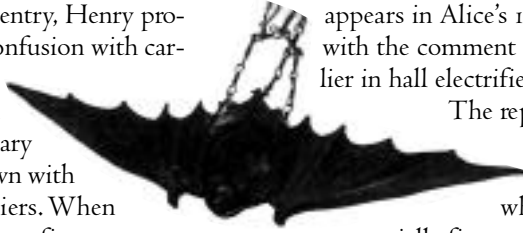
Around 1912, Henry Ford is said to have encouraged Alice to introduce electricity into the House. The first modest step was probably the installation of electric gas igniters on lamps in the front and back halls. That device, with a thin wire connected to batteries in the cellar, generated a spark which set the gas aflame. More elaborate electric wiring began in the 1920s. As was often the case, many older fixtures were not removed, but were converted to the technology of the time, sometimes with significant modifica-

tions, sometimes more subtly. One of the gas chandeliers which had so startled

Henry when it was first illuminated, appears in Alice's 1930s inventory with the comment "Gas Chandelier in hall electrified about 1930."

The report also notes a number of fixtures

which are especially fine examples of their type. And there is the occasional touch of eccentricity, such as the American figural cigar lighter lamp Henry describes—without further comment—in a January 16, 1847 journal entry: "Aunt Sam gave me a present; a peasant boy holding a lantern; and a hollow tree near him full of cigars." Others—the early nineteenth-century "Grecian" three-arm whale oil Argand chandelier of brass and glass, or the circa 1850s "fish tail" gas burner—are identified as "extremely rare...and quite valuable" and include recommendations for restoration and display. And then there are the singular pieces which immediately evoke the memory of a particular member of the



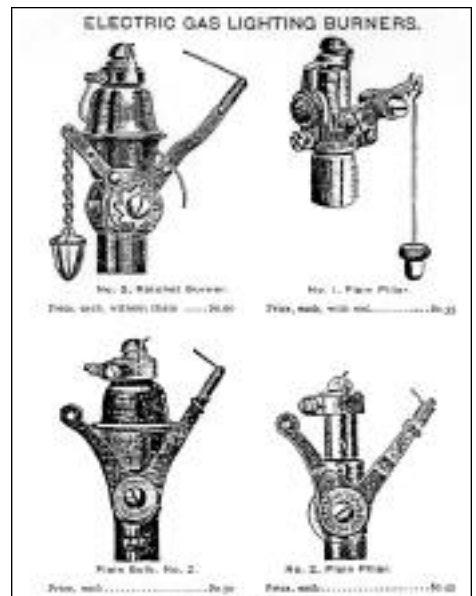
## Recent Discoveries in the House

While packing books for the House rehabilitation project, the staff rediscovered numerous historically important items. They identified through bookplates several school books owned by Fanny Longfellow's brother Thomas Gold Appleton when he was a student in the 1820s at the Round Hill School in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Also, the staff found a volume chronicling the Saxons with the bookplate of Edward Gibbon dated 1790. Gibbon (1737-1794) was an English historian well known for his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Henry Longfellow was traveling in and around Lausanne, Switzerland, at the time that Gibbon's library was being sold there and may have purchased this volume then.

Tucked away on the shelves of Charlie's bedroom were a pair of copper bookends decorated with a hammer and sickle relief, which once belonged to H.W. L. "Harry" Dana. (For information about Dana's interest in Russia, see article on page 5)

The staff was delighted to come upon a rare volume from 1636 containing thirty-six original etchings by French printmaker Jacques Callot and printed by Israel Henriet. Henry Longfellow had signed the inside cover and dated it "Rome, January 18, 1869."



family, such as the bronze suspended oil lamp in the form of a flying bat which Charley brought back from Japan.

This comprehensive *Historic Lighting Report for the Longfellow House* by J. Craig Maue and Daniel Mattausch adds yet another layer of depth and discernment to our understanding of the House's history and enables us to offer visitors ever richer interpretations of aspects of that history. The report is available at the House.

## New Architectural Tour of the Longfellow House

Until recently, interest in the House has centered on the its residents and social history, but on October 6, the History of Boston Architecture class from Harvard University was treated to a newly developed tour focusing on the architecture of the House by Site Manager Jim Shea and Museum Educator Nancy Jones.

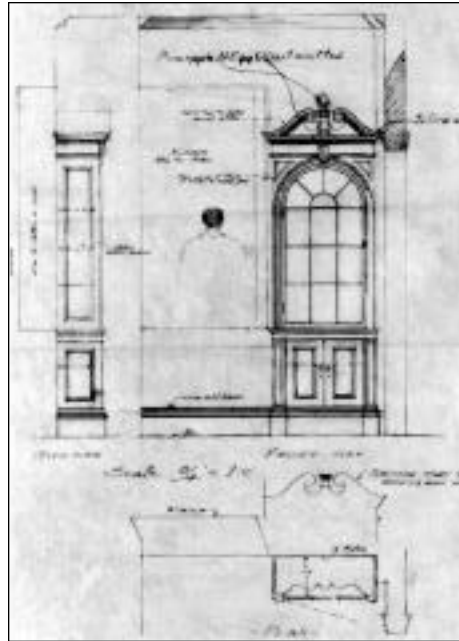
The House's current stripped-down circumstance—while furnishings are packed and stored during the rehabilitation of the House—provided an excellent opportunity to examine the architecture. The students were able to walk through previously inaccessible rooms and passageways, view the servants' third-floor quarters, and enter the small back bedrooms, dressing rooms, and baths usually closed to visitors.

Both Shea and Jones pointed out the structural changes to the House over time and elements of the House's three main architectural styles. The original Vassall house was built in 1759 possibly by Peter Harrison who designed other symmetrical, pedimented, and pilastered, mid-Georgian buildings in Cambridge, including the Apthorp house and Christ Church. When Craigie bought the House in 1790, he added the side porches and the rear ell and decorative elements such as plaster swags, and lighter dentils around the dining room ceiling characteristic of the Federal period. In 1885 Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow, Jr. (the poet's nephew) added the second-floor veranda and the kitchen porch carefully following the Colonial Revival style, which mimicked the spirit but not necessarily the proportions of Georgian architecture. In 1917 he designed some interior built-in cabinets as well (see illustration on this page).

The tour guides spoke of the importance of architecture to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, as seen in his poem "Michael Angelo" in which he wrote, "Ah, to build, to build! That is the noblest of all arts." In fact, there were several architects in the poet's family: William Pitt Preble Longfellow, Henry's nephew, was the first editor of *The American Architect and Building News*. Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow, Jr., became a draftsman for H.H. Richardson and a prominent architect in his own right. Longfellow's grandson, Richard Henry Dana IV designed the Yale University campus in China and also worked in the Colonial Revival style.

*Henry W. Longfellow's Journal,*  
November 19, 1849:

*In the evening, to the sound of wind and rain upon the casement, F[anny] read to me Ruskin's Seven Lamps of Architecture, one of the most remarkable books of the time. What a magnificent breadth and sweep of style in the elevated passages! It is Jeremy Taylor come back again to preach to us.*



Drawing for the Colonial Revival corner cupboard between the parlor and dining room of the Longfellow House, by A.W. Longfellow, Jr., 1917

## Rehabilitation Update

The Longfellow House has been closed to the public for about a year now for extensive rehabilitation. The following list details where we are in the process:

- The packing and moving of the museum collections have been completed.
- The museum archives will be moved to and open for researchers at the Charlestown Navy Yard, Building 107, in the Boston National Historic Park, this December and January.
- Bids on construction have been received and a decision as to contractor is pending.
- Construction work could begin as early as mid-January 2000.
- Once construction begins, the House will be completely closed down and some staff relocated to Building 107. There will be an off-site office next door at the Episcopal Divinity School, and some NPS staff on site to monitor the rehab work.
- During construction, programs will continue, but at other locations. Our mailing address will remain the same.
- Construction is expected to take twelve to sixteen months, with six additional months needed to put the House back together. If all goes as planned, we will reopen in spring 2002.
- You can stay up-to-date on the rehabilitation progress by visiting our Web site at: [www.nps.gov/long](http://www.nps.gov/long) or E-mailing us at: [frla\\_longfellow@nps.gov](mailto:frla_longfellow@nps.gov)

## Upcoming Events

**Holiday Remembrances of the Longfellos.** On December 17th, a holiday reading in nineteenth-century costume by members of the NPS staff at 3 P.M. at the Cambridge Homes, 360 Mt. Auburn Street, Cambridge.

**"Once in a Millennium" Architectural Tours.** Special architectural tours of the House by reservation only for members of the Friends of the Longfellow House will take place on Saturday December 18th from 1 to 4 P.M.

**Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Birthday Celebration.** On Saturday February 26, 2000 at 10 A.M., celebrate the poet's 192nd birthday with a wreath-laying and reception at Mount Auburn Cemetery. This annual event is co-sponsored with the Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery.

**Winter Offerings.** January through March the Longfellow NHS offers four programs at the location of your choice to groups and organizations:

- *Reminiscences of the Longfellow Family*, a costumed performance in prose and poetry
  - *How Noble an Inheritance*, slide talk on the history of the Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House
  - *So Speak to Me of Artists and Art*, slide talk on the Longfellows' art collection in the House and their love of art and architecture
  - *From Mt. Vernon to Brattle St.—Alice Longfellow, Preservationist*, slide talk on her active role in assuring the preservation of both George Washington's and her family's house.
- Call (617) 876-4491 for more information and to reserve a time.

## Spotlight on an Object

In each issue of the newsletter, we will focus on a particular object of interest from the Longfellow House collection.

This time our spotlight shines on an 1883 chromolithographed stationery box, a miniature replica of the Longfellow House. The roof is a hinged lid which opens to store stationery, and the chimneys hold stamps. The box measures eight inches high with a six by nine inch base.

Printed by the famous Louis Prang Company of Boston on paper over cardboard and wood, the box is complete with yellow clapboards, green shutters, and white trim. Outside the door, surrounded by creeping vines, stands a bearded man in a black hat and coat. The image may have been suggested by a photo of the poet and his daughter Edith. On the inside of the lid, we find Longfellow and his three daughters grouped in front of a fireplace and a verse from "The Children's Hour."

The box once belonged to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's children and grandchildren. Both the Fogg Art Museum, in 1995, and the National Museum of American Art, in 1998, have borrowed this charming item for exhibition.



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Make checks payable to:

*Friends of the Longfellow House*

105 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

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Special area(s) of interest in the Longfellow House: \_\_\_\_\_

- I would like someone to call me about volunteer opportunities.

*Contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.*

Friends of the Longfellow House  
105 Brattle Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

