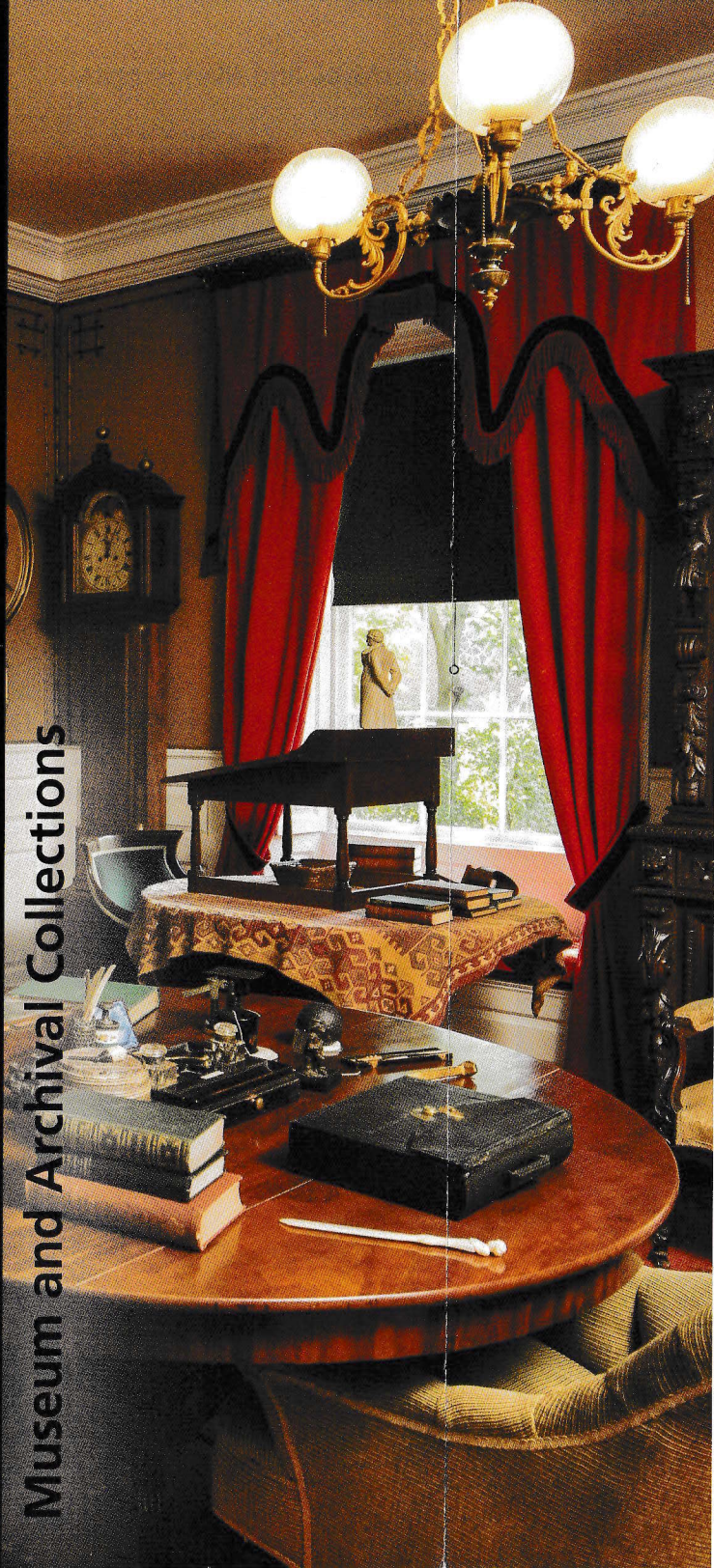


# Longfellow House— Washington's Headquarters

## Museum and Archival Collections

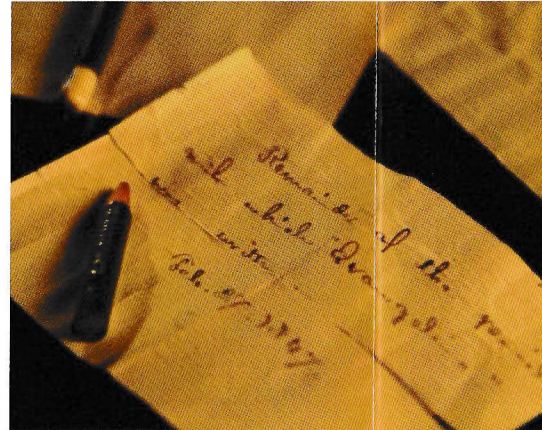


National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Historic Site  
Massachusetts



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Henry Longfellow carefully saved ten pencil stubs, rolled inside notes identifying the poems they had been used to write. Here is the "Remains of the pencil with which 'Evangeline' was written."

In 1879, Cambridge children presented Longfellow with a chair made from the wood of the "spreading chestnut tree," which he had immortalized in "The Village Blacksmith."



NPS / DAVID DALY

In 1848, Fanny Longfellow recorded, "A stormy, dripping Xmas... In evening a child's party of the family & a Xmas tree, very pretty... with gifts for young & old & sparkling with colored candles... Erny [had] a man walking selling buttermilk in a barrel..."



NPS / FRANK RUGGLES



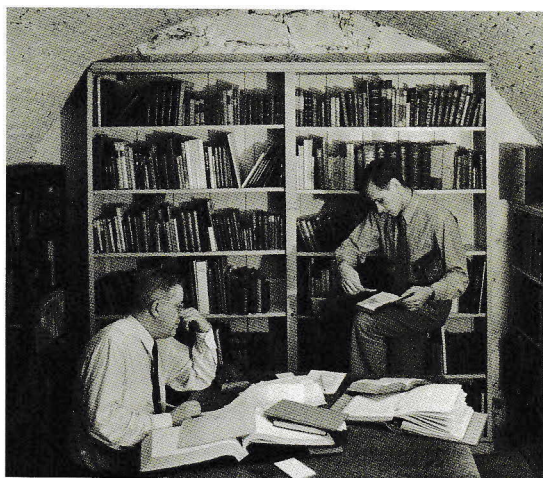
NPS / DAVID DALY

Though his study table held other inkwells with sentimental associations, this porcelain inkwell was the poet's favorite, used with a quill pen.

In 1972, the descendants of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow donated his house and its contents to the National Park Service. The contents form the core of the rich museum and archival collections held by the site, including fine artwork, furnishings, decorative arts, artifacts from Japan, an exceptional library, and personal papers. The museum and archival collections complement each other, allowing park staff to tell rich stories about many objects and giving the collections even greater research value.

## Collections Policy

The collection continues to grow, largely through donations. Collecting is limited to objects with a direct provenance to the Longfellows' residency and papers of family members for whom the park is the major repository.



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The poet's grandson, H.W.L. Dana, built the collection and encouraged its use by scholars. The collections today are actively used by researchers studying literary criticism, art history, education, 20th-century labor struggles, and more.

## Research Appointments

The archival and museum collections are open to the public Monday through Friday by appointment. Researchers are encouraged to start their search by consulting finding aids to the archival collections, available on the park website.

For appointments, assistance, and information, contact the curatorial staff at:

Longfellow House—Washington's Headquarters NHS  
105 Brattle Street, Cambridge MA 20138  
Telephone: (617) 491-1054  
Email: [LONG\\_archives@nps.gov](mailto:LONG_archives@nps.gov)  
Web site: <http://www.nps.gov/long>

## Historical Collections

This broad category encompasses the furniture, decorative arts, and personal items throughout the house, from ornately carved bookcases and mahogany bedroom sets to baby shoes and ball gowns.

The furnishings and decorative arts in the house reflect the Longfellow family's tastes and class status. They selected imported antique furniture with an appreciation for its historical connections. On their marriage, the poet and his wife received a dining set and silverware service for 24. Henry Longfellow collected bric-a-brac and souvenirs related to his poetic works and to the legacies of other authors.

The Longfellows' oldest child, Charles, lived in Japan from 1871 to 1873 and accumulated a significant sub-collection of Japanese artifacts. He collected a wide range of ceramics, prints, paintings, bronzes, and textiles including kimono and customized costumes.



NPS / DAVID DALY, KATE HANSON PLASS

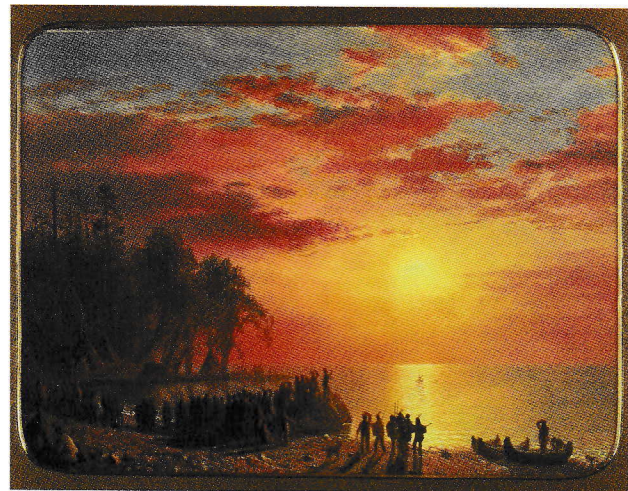
Among the historical collections are a kimono decorated with flowers and cranes, a Bohemian-style glass goblet, and the first shoes worn by the Longfellows' daughter Fan.

## Fine Art

Generations of the Longfellow family were active patrons of the arts. Among the works on exhibit are commissioned paintings, drawings, and sculpture by Gilbert Stuart, G.P.A. Healy, Lorenzo Bartolini, Eastman Johnson, and Rose Lamb. The family cultivated relationships with noted artists represented in the collection, including Albert Bierstadt, Florence Freeman, Thomas Crawford, and John Kensett.

Through lithographs, engravings, and other prints, the Longfellows collected scenes of Europe, reproductions of significant artwork, portraits of notables, and illustrations related to Henry Longfellow's life and poetic works.

The Longfellows' artistic talent is evident in the drawings they made of people and places significant in their lives. Two Longfellows—Henry Longfellow's son Ernest Wadsworth Longfellow and niece Mary King Longfellow—formally studied painting and earned reputations as artists.



NPS / FRANK RUGGLES

In Bierstadt's *Departure of Hiawatha*, the American landscape painter captured a scene from Longfellow's epic poem, *The Song of Hiawatha*. The artist presented this painting to the poet at a dinner in his honor in London, July 9, 1868.

## Archeology

Permitted archeology conducted on the grounds has uncovered artifacts that shed light on the history and prehistory of the landscape around the Longfellow House. Significant projects have included the excavation of trenches across the garden beds and paths and the identification of a colonial-era foundation in the forecourt area.



NPS / KATE HANSON PLASS

Fragments of tiles removed from fireplaces provide evidence of changes made in the house.

## Historic Library

The family's book collection of over 11,000 volumes reflects their appreciation for reading on a variety of subjects. Over 5,000 volumes in the collection bear the bookplate or signature of Henry W. Longfellow. These reflect his international academic interests, with works in 45 languages, including dialects, primarily English, French, German, and Italian.



NPS / KATE HANSON PLASS

Among the books owned by Henry Longfellow are a 75-volume set of the works of Voltaire. Like this set, many of his books have leather bindings with marbled and gilt details.

## Archives and Manuscripts

The park holds over 450 linear feet of documents and photographs. The core of the collections are the personal papers of four inter-connected families—the Longfellows, Wadsworths, Danas, and Appletons. These include the personal journals, writing, correspondence, photographs, and collected material of Henry W. Longfellow's extended family.

The papers reflect the varied interests and intellectual pursuits of the Longfellow family, including politics, literature, fine arts, education, historic preservation, and travel. They complement the museum collection, documenting the provenance and use of objects and artwork.

The park also holds related organizational records, including those of the Longfellow House Trust (1913-1974) and National Park Service management records, and assembled collections of historic photographs and architectural plans documenting changes to the house and landscape over time.



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Highlights include rare photographs of Ainu people collected by Charles Longfellow, the extensive travel journals of Fanny Longfellow, and letters signed by George Washington collected by H.W.L. Dana.