



# Longfellow House Bulletin

Volume 10 No. 2

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

December 2006

## Special Anniversary Issue

### Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Turns 200

February 27, 2007, marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of America's first renowned poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Throughout the coming year, Longfellow NHS, Harvard University, Mount Auburn Cemetery, and the Maine Historical Society will collaborate on exhibits and events to observe the occasion. (See related articles on page 8.)

On February 24 the Longfellow House and Mount Auburn Cemetery will hold their annual birthday celebration, for the first time with the theme of Henry Longfellow's connections to abolitionism. Both historic places will announce their new status as part of the NTF.

The U.S. Postal Service has announced that it will issue a Henry W. Longfellow commemorative first-class stamp in 2007.

### Longfellow House Bulletin Turns 10

With this issue, the *Longfellow House Bulletin* completes ten years of publication. Conceived in 1996 by Diana Korzenik, first president of the Friends of the Longfellow House, as essential to the Friends' mission, it has informed both the public and researchers about the House collections and activities. Under the editorial guidance of scholars Ruth Butler and Marilyn Richardson, the *Bulletin* came to focus on breaking news at the House supplemented by supporting research articles in thematically related issues. Jim Shea and Glenna Lang continue the endeavor.

The *Bulletin* is produced twice a year cooperatively between the Friends of the Longfellow House and the National Park Service. All back issues of the *Bulletin* for use as records and research tools can be found on the websites of both the Friends and the National Park Service.

## House Selected As Part of Underground Railroad Network to Freedom

The Longfellow National Historic Site has been awarded status as a research facility with the National Park Service's Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (NTF) program. This program serves to coordinate preservation and education efforts nationwide and link a multitude of historic sites, museums, and interpretive programs connected to various facets of the Underground Railroad.

This honor will allow the LNHS to display the Network sign with its logo, receive technical assistance, and participate in program workshops. Sites, programs, and facilities listed in the NTF are eligible to

apply for grants dedicated to Underground Railroad preservation and research.



This new national Network also seeks to foster communication between researchers and interested parties, and to help develop state-wide organizations for preserving and researching Underground Railroad sites.

Robert Fudge, the Chief of Interpretation and Education for the Northeast Region of the NPS, announced the selection of the Longfellow NHS for the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program on September 19 at the House.

(continued on page 2)

## Longfellow's 200th Birthday Celebration

Longfellow NHS has worked with Houghton Library at Harvard University on a major exhibition called "Public Poet, Private Man: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow at 200," which opens on January 16. To keep them safe from fire, the Longfellow family trust deposited many of Longfellow's papers from the House at Harvard in 1956. Objects still at the House will be on view as well. Longfellow scholar Christoph Irmscher has written an illuminating catalog.

Displaying more than forty of Henry's and his family's drawings from the House, the Maine Historical Society will host a special exhibition on the Longfellows as artists. It opens on February 16.

The bicentennial gala event will take place on Sunday afternoon, March 25 at

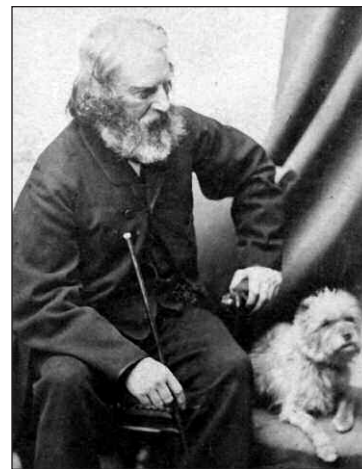


Photo of Henry with Trap, 1864

Harvard's Sanders Theater where the Boston Landmarks Orchestra will accompany a reading of "Paul Revere's Ride." On Sunday, June 24 the Wayside Inn in Sudbury will host a jazz brunch with garden tour and poetry readings, including Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn."

For information on all these events and more, go to [www.longfellow200.org](http://www.longfellow200.org), a website posted by the Longfellow Bicentennial Committee. It lists an array of concerts, lectures, readings, and educational programs for students and teachers.



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All images are from the Longfellow National Historic Site collections, unless noted otherwise.

Sheri Jackson, NPS Northeast Regional Coordinator, had previously visited the House to learn more about its connections to abolitionism and had encouraged the staff to apply.

“We are very honored,” said NPS Superintendent Myra Harrison, “to have this important aspect of the site’s story recognized. People will see Longfellow in a new light, and it will bring new audiences here.”

The research facility at the Longfellow NHS includes an extensive archive with the papers (and corresponding finding aids) of Henry W. Longfellow, his wife Fanny, his brother Samuel, and his daughter Alice Longfellow—all of whom held strong anti-slavery sentiments. In addition and of particular interest are the papers of Richard Henry Dana Jr., a Boston lawyer and abutting neighbor of the Longfellows, who defended fugitive slaves and their rescuers. Many historic and rare books on this subject are in the Longfellow family library and are available to researchers.

Through his painstaking work cross-referencing account books with letters at Harvard’s Houghton Library and journal transcripts in the House archives, Museum Manager of the LNHS Jim Shea has begun to get a clearer picture of Henry’s involvement with the Underground Railroad. “There is a treasure trove of information here,” said Shea, “just waiting for other researchers to put together. We hope to encourage more researchers to use our archives to explore this connection further.”

Archives at both Houghton and the House contain many records of Henry Longfellow as an active abolitionist and participant in a network to aid freedom seekers. Account books provide evidence of Longfellow’s financial contributions to former slaves and the abolitionist cause. His journal entries and letters provide further specific

information about these contributions and also demonstrate his interest in court cases involving freedom seekers and his close ties to many other abolitionists, such as Charles Sumner and James Russell Lowell.

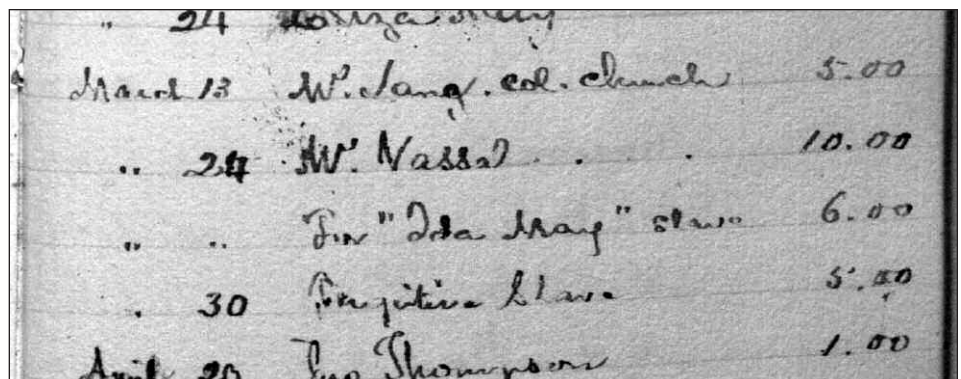
The NTF sees the Underground Railroad as far more than a network of hiding places for fugitive slaves. The Underground Railroad, in the broader sense, refers to the struggle of enslaved African Americans to gain their freedom by escaping bondage and to all those who assisted this cause through donations of money or goods, such as food or clothing, or provided shelter. While some efforts were spontaneous acts of kindness, others were deliberate and organized.

Candidates applying for NTF status may come from within or outside of the NPS. A regional coordinating committee reviews and votes on applications twice a year, and the public is invited to attend. In fall 2006 the regional coordinator accepted twenty-five listings into the Network, including two from Cambridge: the Longfellow NHS and Mount Auburn Cemetery.

Other sites in the Boston area also in the Network to Freedom are the Joshua Bowen Smith House in Cambridge and the Jackson Homestead in Newton.

Shea mused enthusiastically: “Being included in the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom will open up a new frontier for us. Henry Longfellow was among the first international figures associated with [abolitionism]. It will be great for people to learn more about this aspect of the man.”

Because of Longfellow’s involvement with the Underground Railroad and the number of his abolitionist friends whom he met with in the House, the Longfellow NHS will apply in January to the NTF to be included as a site in addition to its new status as a facility. (See related articles throughout this issue of the *Bulletin*.)



Entries in Henry Longfellow’s account book on page entitled “Money given, 1855,” showing donations to Mr. Lang’s colored church, Mr. Vassall (see page 7), Ida May (a generic reference to a slave), and a Fugitive Slave

## Interview with a Friend...Meet Christoph Irmscher, Scholar

Author of *Longfellow Redux*, published by the University of Illinois Press in August 2006, Christoph Irmscher is a Professor of English at Indiana University in Bloomington. He is currently putting the finishing touches on his book-length catalog to accompany the upcoming Longfellow bicentennial exhibit, which he curated, at Harvard University's Houghton Library.

**Longfellow House:** Can you tell us a bit about your educational background?

**Christoph Irmscher:** I wrote my dissertation on William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, T.S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound—four iconic modernist poets—about ways in which they represent the poet's work in their poetry. It was published as a book in Germany. I was pretty much a Modernist. After receiving my Ph.D. in Germany and teaching there for at least a year, I came to Harvard as a research fellow to write a book on nineteenth-century nature writing, which was a secondary interest of mine. My mentor for the fellowship was Daniel Aaron. I worked with him for two years.

**LH:** As a person born and raised in Germany, how did you become interested in Henry Longfellow?

**CI:** Prof. Aaron is one of the great names in American Studies. He had written on Longfellow. In 1993 I read one of his essays, an introduction to an edition of *Hiawatha*, a poem that I, in grad school, had heard terrible things about as part of the imperialist nineteenth-century enterprise to remove all Indians—basically a colonialist poem. Aaron's was a very different picture of Longfellow, a mixture of praise and skepticism, but something that gave me an indication that this was more complicated.

I started reading *Hiawatha*, and I was struck by how evocative and lyrical it was. I felt as if previously I had been deprived of a significant piece of American literary history. Also, while researching Audubon's *Mississippi River Journal* in Houghton, I read *Evangeline* and saw how powerful Longfellow's landscape descriptions were, even though he had never seen Louisiana.

**LH:** Where did you go from there?

**CI:** I began to realize there were untapped resources at Houghton—Longfellow's manuscripts, his artwork—which I don't think anyone before me had seriously looked at. The drawings seemed to express what I found interesting about Longfellow: his transnational commitment. All the while, I kept reading more Longfellow.

**LH:** Have you learned anything new about him since you wrote *Longfellow Redux*?

**CI:** I wasn't aware of the extent of Longfellow's transnational contacts—such as Hans Christian Andersen in Denmark—but my overall understanding of Longfellow has not significantly changed. Doing research on the artifacts that I picked for the exhibition has enhanced my knowledge of Longfellow in many ways.

**LH:** Did you come across material associating Longfellow and abolitionism?

**CI:** One really interesting item for me was a transcript he wrote of a sermon in 1848 when he was vacationing in Pittsfield,



Massachusetts. He listened to an African American preacher named Hunt at the Abyssinian Church and transcribed what he heard. When you read it, you can hear the preacher's voice—a very vernacular interpretation of the story of Noah, very evocatively done—describing how people don't believe Noah and mock him. It shows how serious Longfellow's interest was in these issues.

Other really interesting items are the account books, where you find that with some regularity Longfellow donated money to African American churches in the U.S. and Canada. You see him donating money over many, many years to these churches. He obviously felt that something vital was going on there. It's quite a big deal for somebody of his background in Portland, who wasn't exposed to racial issues, to step out of his immediate circle and develop an interest in these things. In Longfellow's life, you see a *continuing* devotion to the cause of black liberation during reconstruction. Even in the last month of his life in 1882,

there is a three-dollar donation to a "Negro church." Also, we see from his account books that, even though Josiah Henson visited him once, his commitment to him continued over the years. It's not over with that visit. Henson is in Canada starting that church, and Longfellow remains invested.

**LH:** Why hasn't Longfellow been more widely thought of as an abolitionist?

**CI:** He was politically one of the most progressive New England writers, except that he believed in keeping his political opinions limited to his personal encounters. In his personal life he was outspoken and quite firm in his convictions. However, he was convinced that poetry was a civic duty and should not be colored by specific political views. There are exceptions, such as his *Poems on Slavery*. He was one of the most pacific poets—committed to non-violence—of the nineteenth century, as well as one of the most tolerant on race.

His commitment [to racial equality] continued after *Poems on Slavery*. You find so many references to him in African American newspapers—it's quite striking to see how Longfellow's name was synonymous for them with commitment to anti-slavery issues. It was a name they felt comfortable in using. After he died, the *Christian Recorder* printed a short but very moving little note. They said "his influence was always given on the side of liberty." I was also surprised by the number of instances of Longfellow's name being mentioned in slave narratives.

**LH:** Given Longfellow's huge popularity in his time, to what do you attribute the decline of his image in the twentieth century?

**CI:** I think, to a large degree, the birth of the English department contributed to his decline in popularity. The kind of literature Longfellow wrote was not intended to be overanalyzed and treated as the possession of the few. It was meant for the masses, to be read and understood by many people. Longfellow saw to it that so many of his books were available in editions that were affordable. He was a poet of the people.

As a Modernist, I was less disposed to be interested in the nineteenth century. Ezra Pound felt writing poetry was something that you do for members of your coterie, not something that is supposed to be accessible to as many people as possible. English departments, traditionally, have been more interested in poetry that requires you to do a lot of work to understand it fully. Longfellow speaks to us immediately.

## Something for the Great Cause: The Influence of Longfellow's *Poems on Slavery*

Henry Longfellow's grandson and family historian Henry W. Longfellow (Harry) Dana left notes for a lecture he gave in 1940 called "The Negro in Literature: The Last Hundred Years in America." Dana began by citing his grandfather's "desire from the age of 17 to do something 'for the great cause of Negro Emancipation.'" This desire was "rekindled by Freiligrath in Germany and Dickens in England."

Following an extended correspondence, Longfellow met Ferdinand Freiligrath, the German revolutionary poet and translator of many of Longfellow's works into German, on his six-month European tour in 1842. Freiligrath vociferously opposed slavery and expressed his radical political views in his poetry.

Charles Dickens, the British novelist renowned for exposing social injustices, began his tour of America in Boston in late January 1842. During his two weeks in Boston, Dickens spent time with Henry Longfellow and dined with him at the House. Later that year, Longfellow visited Dickens in London.

After reading Dickens's manuscript of *American Notes*, Longfellow wrote to his friend Charles Sumner from Dickens's study on October 16, 1842: "I have read Dickens' book. It is jovial and good natured, and at times very severe. You will read it with delight and, for the most part, approbation. He has a grand chapter on Slavery. Spitting and politics at Washington are the other topics of censure [sic]. Both you and I censure them with equal severity, to say the least."

At Sumner's request, Henry agreed to write and publish a set of anti-slavery poems: "Write some stirring words that shall move the whole land. Send them home and we will publish them."

During a violent storm at sea on his return to America, Longfellow wrote seven poems, including "The Quadroon Girl," "The Slave Singing at Midnight," and "The Witnesses." In a letter to Freiligrath, January 6, 1843, he described the event: "...thus 'cribbed, cabined and confined' I passed fifteen days. During this time I wrote seven poems on slavery. I meditated them in the stormy, sleepless nights, and wrote them down with a pencil in the morning. A small window in the side of the vessel admitted light into my berth; and there I lay on my back, and soothed my soul with songs."

Upon their publication in December

1842, Longfellow received impassioned reviews, both positive and negative. Despite the outcry among some segments of the population, Longfellow stood behind his poems. Within a few weeks of publication he wrote to his father: "Some persons regret that I should have written them, but for my own part I am glad of what I have done. My feelings prompted me, and my judgment approved and still approves." Longfellow allowed the New England Anti-Slavery Tract Society to reprint and distribute these poems for free, for which



Charles Sumner and Henry Longfellow, 1863

they expressed much gratitude.

W. Ware's review of *Poems on Slavery* in the *Christian Examiner*, January 1843, was among the favorable: "Especially happy are we to be able to count one of Mr. Longfellow's genius and celebrity among those friends of universal liberty, who are willing to speak their word in its behalf. In this little book of poems he has spoken with feeling, with truth, and eminent poetic beauty."

Poet and abolitionist John Greenleaf Whittier felt *Poems on Slavery* had "been an important service to the Liberty movement" and inquired as to whether Longfellow would be a candidate for Congress on the Liberty Party ticket. "Our friends think they could throw for thee one thousand more votes than any other man."

Longfellow responded to his request in September 1843: "It is impossible for me to accept the Congressional nomination you propose.... Though a strong anti-slavery man, I am not a member of any society, and fight under no single banner. I am much gratified that the *Poems on Slavery* should have exercised some salutary influence; and thank you for your good opinion of them. At all times I shall rejoice in the progress of true

liberty, and in freedom from slavery of all kinds; but I cannot for a moment think of entering the political arena. Partisan warfare becomes too violent, too vindictive, for my taste; and I should be found a weak and unworthy champion in public debate."

Harry Dana observed that there had been "Indignation in the South and in the conservative North against these poems" and that they were "Omitted from the Philadelphia edition of Longfellow." A letter from Rufus Wilmot Griswold, editor of *Graham's Magazine*, to Henry W. Longfellow, January 7, 1843, explained this: "I thank you for the *Poems on Slavery*. That last word never is seen in a Philadelphia magazine. You will understand therefore the reason of the brief notice I have made of it. Mr. Graham objected even to publishing the title of the work!"

In a journal entry on August 1, 1846, H.W. Longfellow recorded: "The mail brings me an *Anti-Slavery Standard*, with a long and violent tirade against me for publishing the *Poems on Slavery* in the cheap edition,— taken from a South Carolina paper. How impatient they are, those hot Southrons. But this piece of violence is quite ridiculous...."

By 1862, during the Civil War, the editors of the *Evening Post* reflected on Longfellow's *Poems on Slavery* written two decades earlier and characterized it as "The Poet's Warning." They wrote: "The poet of the people often becomes the seer—prophesying that which will come.... Our popular and much beloved American poet Longfellow is no exception to this rule, for though he wrote little upon the subject of slavery, what he wrote is full of the pathos of genuine feeling and pregnant with prophetic truth. In 1842—twenty years ago—his discerning eye foresaw the inevitable result of that institution of American slavery which was the black spot on the escutcheon of our republican government, and which he felt would in time, if not erased, be the instrument of final decay. His words, clothed in harmonious and appealing melody, were, however, unheeded, until the black spot spread into a cloud of portentous dimensions, and broke over the land in a storm of blood and desolation. It may not be inappropriate at this time to recall to our memory one of his most touching and emphatic poems ["The Warning"]." (For full text of "The Warning" see page 9.)

## Longfellow's Outrage at the Fugitive Slave Law

The passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850 enraged Northern whites, and turned even moderates into activists. It deeply affected Henry Longfellow and his close friends, among them Charles Sumner and Richard Henry Dana Jr. This federal law required residents in free states to aid in arresting runaway slaves. Those who helped escaped slaves faced a \$1000 fine, six months in jail, and possible charges of treason. The law also established a separate legal system to process accused fugitives.

Both free blacks and former slaves fled their homes since they had no legal right to plead their cases under the Fugitive Slave Law. Abolitionists and ordinary citizens organized committees, raised funds, and assisted the Underground Railroad. Boston emerged as a center for resistance to this law.

Longfellow wrote of his meeting the escaped slave Ellen Craft. Passing for a white man, she had traveled north to freedom with her husband pretending to be her slave. On February 12, 1850, Henry recorded in his journal: "Went to Miss Bremer's. . . While I was there, Ellen Craft came in,— the slave woman who ran away disguised in man's clothes as a young master, her husband going as her slave. When Miss Bremer told me who it was, and spoke of man's clothes, Ellen hung her head and said she did not like it mentioned,— and 'some people thought it shocking.' Miss Bremer laughed at this prudery, as well she might; and we both urged her to be proud of the act."

Longfellow's journals show that he had carefully tracked several of the fugitive slave cases in Boston and decried the city for its tolerance of such injustices. On October 26, 1850, he railed: "The slave-hunters are in Boston. I hope they will be imprisoned, as they deserve. What a disgrace this is to a republic of the nineteenth century."

On October 27, 1850, he noted: "Sumner at dinner. The Fugitive Slave, Craft, has got a warrant against his pursuers, and had them arrested for slander in calling him a thief, the damages laid at ten thousand dollars. They found bail. This is a good beginning. I hear they will be drummed out of town."

And on February 15, 1851: "A fugitive slave, or a man accused of being one, escaped today from the court room during the recess, aided by other blacks. Very glad of it. This government must not pass laws that outrage the sense of right in the community."

On April 4, 1851, he wrote: "There is much excitement in Boston about the cap-

ture of an alleged fugitive slave. O city without soul! When and where will this end? Shame, that the great Republic, the 'refuge of the oppressed,' should stoop so low as to become the Hunter of Slaves!"

Two days later Longfellow remarked: "Sumner came not withstanding the rain. He says that Charles G. Loring is to defend the fugitive Simms [sic]. They want to get a

**CAUTION!!**  
**COLORED PEOPLE**  
**OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,**  
You are hereby respectfully **CAUTIONED** and advised, to avoid conversing with the **Watchmen and Police Officers of Boston,**  
For since the recent **ORDER OF THE MAYOR & ALDERMEN,** they are empowered to act as **KIDNAPPERS** AND **Slave Catchers,**  
And they have already been actually employed in **KIDNAPPING, CATCHING, AND KEEPING SLAVES.** Therefore, if you value your **LIBERTY,** and the **Welfare of the Fugitives** among you, *Shun* them in every possible manner, as so many **HOUNDS** on the track of the most unfortunate of your race.  
**Keep a Sharp Look Out for KIDNAPPERS, and have TOP EYE open.**  
**APRIL 24, 1851.**

chance to argue the constitutionality of this infamous Fugitive Slave Law."

On April 29, 1854, Longfellow cheered his friend on: "Sumner is still going from town to town stirring the hearts of men with his noble words on Slavery. God speed him."

In a letter to Charles Sumner, June 2, 1854, Longfellow praised him and the work of their mutual friend Dana: "To-day is decided the fate of Burns, the fugitive slave. You have read it all in the papers—the arrest, the trial, etc. Dana has done nobly; acting throughout with the greatest nerve and intrepidity. Fanny joins me in congratulations on your noble position and labors. It is a great thing in one's life to stand so long and unflinching in the range of the enemy's artillery."

After the Fugitive Slave Law was passed, Longfellow's account books report numerous donations throughout the 1850s given directly to free or educate individual slaves and their children. They also include entries for contributions to organizations and schools to help freedom seekers, and to those offering them shelter. Dozens of entries show that Longfellow gave amounts

ranging from \$2 to \$50, roughly equivalent to \$48 to \$1200 today.

On at least two occasions Longfellow contributed \$10 to Mary Elizabeth Wormeley, who raised money to buy the freedom of slaves. On July 29, 1853, he wrote to her: "I am ashamed to send you so small a sum as the inclosed for an emergency so great as the one you mention. If necessary I will double the amount; and if time presses, and donors reluctant, be kind enough to let me know it. I am very glad you have undertaken this business. I am sure you will carry it through triumphantly; and the bitterness of begging will be lost in the sweetness of giving."

Three days later she responded that she had received from many people a total of \$1,441. "I shall free Evelina and her younger children and Sarah's husband," she said. "Three of John Gorden's children will be left behind. May the Father of the fatherless save them from the fate hanging over them."

In June 1857 Longfellow's account book shows that he gave "Mrs. Hillard for Slaves \$5.00." It was well known that Susan Hillard, wife of Henry's long-time friend George Stillman Hillard, secreted fugitive slaves in the attic of her house on Beacon Hill. Longfellow surely knew this and supported her efforts with a monetary donation. Mr. Hillard was a United States commissioner whose business it was to issue warrants to marshals for the capture of runaway slaves. Their neighbor, Rev. James Freeman Clarke, believed that Mr. Hillard knew of his wife's concealment of slaves but never interfered.

Longfellow longed for an end to the Law. His June 29, 1854, journal entry read: "News from Washington of a fierce debate in Congress on a repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law, in which Sumner takes a conspicuous part, and does himself much honor."

Longfellow summed up his attitude towards the Fugitive Slave Law in his journal on April 29, 1858: "Dine with the Club. Felt vexed at seeing plover on the table this season, and proclaimed aloud my disgust at seeing the game-laws thus violated. If anybody wants to break a law, let him break the Fugitive Slave Law. That is all it is fit for."

By December 2, 1859, Longfellow saw a brighter future: "This will be a great day in our history; the date of a new Revolution,— quite as much needed as the old one. Even now as I write, they are leading Old John Brown to execution in Virginia for attempting to rescue slaves! This is sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind, which will come soon."

## A Gathering Place for Outspoken Opponents of Slavery: So

### Charles Sumner

Charles Sumner grew up and lived for many years on the “back side” of Beacon Hill, home to many former and fugitive slaves and free blacks, who formed a supportive community. Sumner knew this community well and became close friends with a number of the leading black abolitionists in Boston. After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 and because of his activity in the anti-slavery movement, many wealthy Boston families turned against him, including Longfellow’s father-in-law, the textile-manufacturing magnate Nathan Appleton. In 1848 Sumner denounced, in his often-quoted words, the “unhallowed union” between “the lords of the lash and the lords of the loom.”

Sumner was Longfellow’s closest friend and most frequent visitor to the Longfellow House for almost thirty-five years. He was first elected to the U.S. Senate from Massachusetts in 1851 and remained there until 1874. Sumner and other friends sat in Longfellow’s study to hear the announcement of his election as the abolitionist candidate. Longfellow recorded in his journal: “The papers are all ringing with Sumner, Sumner!... Meanwhile the hero of the strife is sitting quietly here, more saddened than exalted.” When not in Washington, D.C., Sumner spent most Sundays or entire weekends with the Longfellow family.

Sumner was a leader in the anti-slavery movement both in Massachusetts and throughout the nation. He was an ardent abolitionist senator who attacked the Fugitive Slave Law and denounced the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. On May 19-20, 1856, Sumner delivered his passionate anti-slavery speech known as “The Crime Against Kansas.” Two days later on the floor of the Senate, South Carolina Congressman Preston S. Brooks beat him senseless with a cane. Sumner never fully recovered. As a confidant of Abraham Lincoln, Sumner was influential in encouraging him to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, a presidential order declaring freedom to all slaves in the Confederate states not already returned to Union control.



### Julia Ward Howe

Most famous for writing the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910) was a reformer and writer and the wife of Samuel Gridley Howe. Both spent much time at the House and were good friends with the Longfellows.

Howe became interested in social causes, particularly abolitionism and women’s suffrage. Although her husband disapproved of her working outside the home, he relied heavily on her contributions as a writer and editor for the *Boston Commonwealth*, the daily newspaper of the Boston Emancipation League for which he was the publisher. (Henry Longfellow’s account book shows that he gave ten dollars to the Emancipation League on February 17, 1863.) She was the first woman elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, an honorary society begun in 1904 which chooses the most exceptional artists, writers, and composers in America and was then considered the highest recognition.



### Samuel Gridley Howe

Doctor and first director of the Perkins School for the Blind, Samuel Gridley Howe (1801-1876) became a leading abolitionist in New England. With his wife Julia Ward Howe, he published the abolitionist daily *Boston Commonwealth* from 1851 to 1853. Howe was an active member of the Free-Soil Party and the New England Emigrant Aid Company, an organization started to secure Kansas as a free state following the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska act in 1854.

With growing tensions over the issue of slavery in the country, Howe joined with five other Boston-area men to help arm and fund the activities of abolitionist John Brown in Kansas. “The Secret Six,” as they were later named, disbanded following Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry. Dr. Howe helped found the Emancipation League, a group which supported the enlistment of black soldiers in the Civil War and promoted black education afterwards.

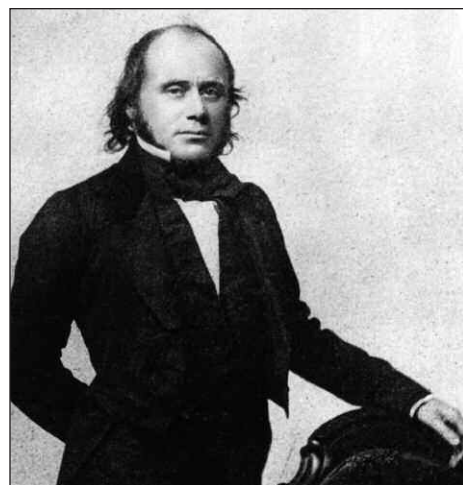
### Richard Henry Dana Jr.

Richard Henry Dana Jr., an attorney and author of the novel *Two Years Before the Mast*, defended many African Americans who fought their return to slavery under the Fugitive Slave law. He also defended those who helped these African Americans. Dana refused fees for most of this work. In his later years he remarked that his involvement in this cause represented the “one great act” of his life.

Dana and his family were intimate friends with the Longfellows as well as backdoor neighbors throughout the 1850s. Henry Longfellow’s daughter Edith married Dana’s son Richard Henry Dana III. At Longfellow’s House the attorney and the poet must have shared their news and views on the abolition of slavery, as evidenced by Longfellow’s journal entry on January 2, 1863: “Beautiful as yesterday... R.H. Dana [Jr.] came in the evening, and talked of the president’s Proclamation, in his own clear way.”

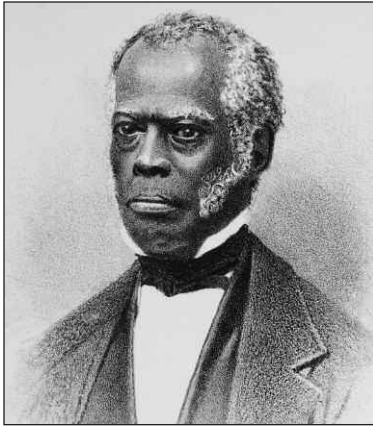
Dana was one of the foremost attorneys representing fugitive slaves in the 1850s. After gaining recognition as one of the most prominent members of the Suffolk bar, he became associated in 1848 with the Free Soil movement, which opposed the expansion of slavery into the territories. He played a major part in their Buffalo convention that year. As a result of this, the Boston circles in which he had been reared shunned him, but it brought him the cases of the fugitive slaves Shadrach Minkins, Thomas Sims, and Anthony Burns, and that of Shadrach’s rescuers.

Despite Dana’s four-hour speech defending Burns, he lost the case. On the night following Burns’s surrender in May 1854, Dana was brutally assaulted on the Boston streets.



# Home of the Many Abolitionist Visitors to Longfellow's House

## Lunsford Lane



Longfellow's journals reveal that he received at least one visit from Lunsford Lane (1803-?), a successful business man and outspoken author who had been born a slave in Raleigh, North Carolina.

In 1835 Lane was able to purchase his own freedom with money he earned on the side from various enterprises. He then opened a store and purchased a house in Raleigh. Because of growing hostility towards free blacks, in 1840 Lane had to flee to the North, leaving his wife and children behind. Eventually he earned enough money to purchase their freedom as well.

In the early 1840s Lunsford Lane moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts. He became an active member of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Founded in Philadelphia in 1833 and led by William Lloyd Garrison, the society considered slavery illegal, not only under the U.S. Constitution but also under natural law.

In 1842 Lane wrote an account of his life comprehensively titled *The Narrative of Lunsford Lane, Formerly of Raleigh, N.C. Embracing an Account of His Early Life, the Redemption by Purchase of Himself and Family from Slavery, and His Banishment from the Place of His Birth for the Crime of Wearing a Colored Skin*. "Published by Himself" in Boston, it sold many copies in America and England.

In a journal entry on March 22, 1855, Longfellow noted: "Lundy Lane and old Mrs. Vassall (born a slave in this house in 1769) came to see me. And stay so long that [Boston publisher James] Fields is driven away." Mrs. Vassall was one of the daughters of Tony and Cuba Vassall, slaves of the original builders of the House, John and Elizabeth Vassall. The Vassalls lived in the House from 1759 to 1774 before fleeing to England on the eve of the American Revolution.

## Harriet Beecher Stowe

Harriet Beecher Stowe was best known as the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, first published weekly as a serial in *The National Era* in 1851. Her best-seller infuriated Southerners by focusing on the cruelties of slavery, particularly the separation of families.

Longfellow raved about her book in his journal on February 24, 1853: "Mr. and Mrs. Stowe came to dinner. . . . How she is shaking the world with her Uncle Tom's Cabin! At one step she has reached the top of the stair-case up which the rest of us climb on our knees year after year. Never was there such a literary coup-de-main as this. A million copies of a book within the first year of its publication."

Stowe was one of the early (unsigned) writers for the *Atlantic Monthly* whose stated goal was to cast "the light of the highest morals." She spoke against slavery all over the United States and Europe. After meeting President Lincoln, she reported that he remarked, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war."

## Josiah Henson



Born into slavery in 1789 in Maryland, Josiah Henson fled to Canada where he founded the Dawn Institute, a settlement house which taught trades to fugitive slaves. A Methodist preacher, he traveled throughout the United States and Great Britain lecturing against slavery. With the underground railroad he assisted over two hundred slaves in their flight to Canada.

Longfellow's journal entry of June 26, 1846, vividly describes Josiah Henson's visit to the House: "In the evening Mr. Henson, a Negro, once a slave, now a preacher, called to get subscription for the school at Dawn, in Upper Canada, for education of blacks. I had a long talk with him, and he gave me an account of his escape from slavery with his family." Longfellow's account books record that he gave money to "Father Henson" many times over the next thirty years.

Three years after Henson's visit to the House, he published his autobiography entitled *The Life of Josiah Henson*.

Harriet Beecher Stowe modeled her Uncle Tom character on Henson.

## James Russell Lowell

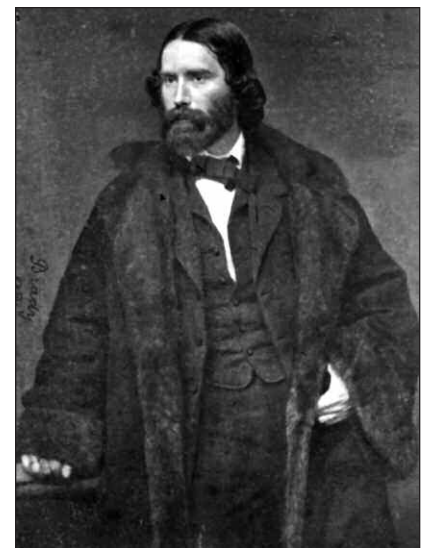
Cambridge native and Brattle Street neighbor of the Longfellos, editor, poet, and diplomat James Russell Lowell (1819-1891) remained a life-long friend of Henry Longfellow and often visited him at the House.

In 1855 Lowell succeeded Longfellow as Professor of Modern Languages at Harvard University, and in 1857 he was the first editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine. Later in life he served as American Minister to Spain and Great Britain.

Lowell wrote many articles and poems upholding the principles of abolitionism. His poems may have been inspired by his wife, Maria White Lowell, who strongly opposed slavery as well. In 1845 he became a regular editorial writer for the *Pennsylvania Freeman*, a fortnightly journal devoted to the anti-slavery cause. In spring of 1848 he agreed to contribute either a poem or a prose article each week to the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* of New York.

"Mr. Lowell is one of the most rabid of the Abolition fanatics; and no Southerner who does not wish to be insulted, and at the same time revolted by a bigotry the most obstinately blind and deaf, should ever touch a volume by this author," wrote Edgar Allan Poe in his 1848 review of Lowell's *The Biglow Papers*.

His poem called "The Present Crisis," written in 1844, provided inspiration at the time and for years to come. In 1910 the leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People chose to call their new publication "The Crisis" after Lowell's poem.



## Harvard's Houghton Library Exhibition: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow at 200

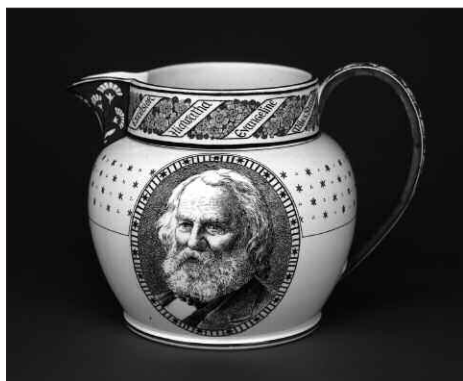
As part of the Longfellow Bicentennial celebration, Harvard University's Houghton Library has organized a commemorative exhibition called "Public Poet, Private Man: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow at 200." It will run from January 16 through April 21, 2007.

According to Leslie Morris, Curator of Modern Books and Manuscripts at Houghton, it "offers an innovative view of the poet's connection with his audience, and his efforts to give an international dimension to American literature. Using manuscripts, drawings, and photographs from Longfellow's papers at the Houghton Library and the Longfellow National Historic site, a portrait of professional author, devoted friend, and loving family man emerges, bringing humor and humanity to our view of this American icon."

The exhibition will be displayed in eight flat glass cases, each considering a theme from Longfellow's life, further elucidated in exhibition curator Christoph Irmscher's companion catalog. Viewed together, Irmscher explains, the carefully chosen items reveal how the supposedly "private" aspects of [Longfellow's] life constantly intersected with the more public aspects of his understanding of authorship, his collaborative projects, and his commitment to his readers."

Case 1, "From Portland to Cambridge," contains excerpts from letters and early photographs pertaining to Henry's childhood in Maine, his relationship with his parents, his marriage to Fanny Appleton, their early family life, and Fanny's untimely death.

Case 2, "Travel," begins with Henry's first European tour to learn languages and secure his position as professor of modern languages at Bowdoin College. It displays poetry, manuscripts, and pictorial documents from the rest of his peripatetic life, including some of his travel sketches.



Known as the "Longfellow jug" with excerpt from Longfellow's "Kéramos" and other poem titles, 1880

Cases 3 and 4, "Family" and "Friends," center on Henry's personal side, sometimes divulged in his poetry. Case 3 displays a little-known deleted stanza from "The Children's Hour." Case 4 shows a *carte de visite* with photographer Alexander Gardner's widely circulated double-portrait of Sumner and Longfellow, entitled "Politics and Poetry of New England." (See photo on page 4.)

"The Public Poet," Case 5, portrays the man who preferred speaking through his verse to speaking in public. His strong stand against slavery is displayed in an eight-page pamphlet containing seven of his anti-slavery poems reprinted in 1843 by the New England Anti-Slavery Tract Association.

"Longfellow's Readers," Case 6, conveys, according to Irmscher, that "Longfellow's

popularity—and therefore also his correspondence—exceeded that of any serious American poet before or after him."

Finally, in Cases 7 and 8 we observe "Longfellow as Translator, Longfellow in Translation" and his commitment to world literature. Fluent in nine languages and a reader of eight more, Longfellow translated and helped bring international literature, such as Dante's entire *Divine Comedy*, to Americans for the first time. He became an icon himself, as seen in the jug pictured below. It bears Henry Longfellow's famous poem "Kéramos" in which he declares that all people "Are kindred and allied by birth,/ And made of the same clay."

This and sixteen other items are on loan from the collections in the House.

## Maine Historical Society's Bicentennial Exhibition

"Drawing Together: The Arts of the Longfellows," an exhibition commemorating Henry's 200th birthday, opens on February 16 at the Maine Historical Society on Congress Street in Portland, Maine.

As a tribute to the poet, this new exhibition explores the lives of Henry Longfellow and his family through the art they created. Organized by museum curator John Mayer and guest curator Laura Fecych Sprague, it features works from the collections of the Maine Historical Society, the Longfellow National Historic Site, Houghton Library at Harvard University, and others. It will run through June 3, 2007.

Henry Longfellow has long garnered world attention for his literary talents, but many other Longfellows were extremely accomplished in their respective fields—from the cartography of Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow, Henry's brother, to the architectural history scholarship of William Pitt Preble Longfellow, Henry's nephew. Based on thousands of sketches, drawings, watercolors, and doodlings, "Drawing Together" explores the family's deep commitment to art of all types. A skilled visual artist himself, the poet was especially fond of drawing to teach, encourage, or entertain his children. The Longfel-

lows' strong inter-generational efforts are supported by dozens of drawings composed by parent and child together. Drawing was vital to Henry's son Ernest, who became a professional artist. The poet's niece Mary King Longfellow (1852-1945) grew up on South Street in Portland, trained at the Museum School in Boston, and was widely recognized as a skilled watercolor artist during the nineteenth-century.

This exhibit will feature a large number of little-known works, ranging from drawings of Tripoli made in 1804 by Henry Wadsworth, the poet's uncle and namesake, to sketches made by Henry Longfellow and his brother Alexander for and with their children. The Longfellows, keen observers of the world around them, created compelling, and often very humorous, works with rudimentary pencil and pen-and-ink. The objects in this exhibition reveal not only how drawing, painting, and other artistic pursuits were central to the Longfellows' daily lives but also reflect the rise of educational training in nineteenth-century America.

For more information about Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and his family, visit: [www.hwlongfellow.org](http://www.hwlongfellow.org), one of the most informative websites on this subject.



Henry W. Longfellow's drawing of his son Ernest reading, 1853



## Longfellow's Impact on Abolition in Latin America

As a Paterson fellow using the House Archives, Ivan Jaksic studied Henry Longfellow's contact with poets and scholars in Latin America and concluded that the American poet had provided support and inspiration to Hispanic abolitionists.

Longfellow was among a small group of Americans, including Washington Irving and George Ticknor—who pioneered the serious study of the Hispanic World in the nineteenth century. With the U.S. expansion south and west, and the Mexican-American War in the 1840s, interest increased in Hispanic studies and the Spanish language. As a professor of Spanish (among other languages) at Harvard, Longfellow was an early "Hispanist" and disseminated the yet-to-be discovered literature and history of Spain and its former colonies.

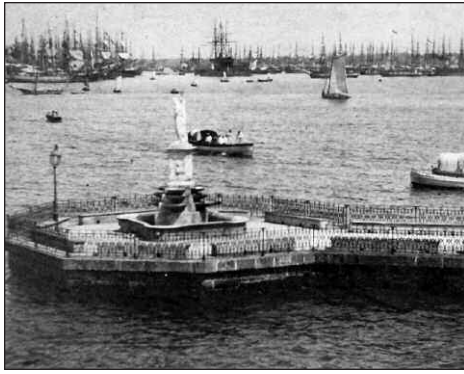
In his new book, *The Hispanic World in American History and Literature, 1820-1880*, Ivan Jaksic, professor of history at the Universidad Católica de Chile, argues that there were deep reasons for the nineteenth-century American fascination with Hispanic culture. Americans wanted to establish their own national culture and identity. Early Hispanists argued that Spain was a great example of a nation whose spirit of freedom led to its liberation from foreign (Islamic) occupation and to some of the greatest accomplishments in history, most notably Columbus's discovery of the New World.

These Hispanists were dismayed, however, that Spain's former religious tolerance had degenerated into Catholic persecution of Protestants and resulted in the bigotry and despotism that characterized imperial Spain until its collapse in the early nineteenth century. They felt Americans should treasure the values upon which their country was founded and never permit the dominance of one religion or condone the conquest of foreign territories. The collapse of Spain reminded Americans to reinforce values that fostered peace and prosperity.

These Americans strongly associated Catholicism with the despotism of imperial Spain and also with slavery. Spain had introduced slavery into the New World at the urging of key Church members, leaving a legacy

that the United States was yet to confront.

The pioneer Hispanists blamed Spain for the origins of the problem of slavery. Longfellow wrote the devastating tale "Torquemada" in 1862 to denounce the extremes of Spanish Catholicism. But the



Havana harbor, 1860, the Longfellow's photo collection

harsh realities of the current American slavery also upset him. As early as 1834, he was determined to do "what my feeble talent enables me in the cause of slave emancipation." In 1842 his most intimate friend, Charles Sumner, persuaded him to write *Poems on Slavery*, which reverberated around the world.

Longfellow said of his *Poems on Slavery* that "the spirit in which they are written is that of kindness—not denunciation—at all events not violence." This approach echoed most strongly among writers in Spanish America, especially Cuba. Many countries in the region had abolished slavery by mid-century, but Cuba had not. In fact, the flow of African slaves had increased during the nineteenth century, raising fears of either a Haitian-style rebellion or a takeover financed by the southern states.

Many Cubans, especially writers, sought Longfellow's advice on how to turn public opinion against slavery. Sophia Willard Dana Ripley introduced him to the young Cuban Nicolás Vinageras, who gave the poet many of the Cuban books that are still in his library today. The brothers Antonio and Eusebio Guiteras from Matanzas visited him in 1849. "Both are very agreeable," he wrote in his journal, "and are Cuban Anti-Slavery Men!" Longfellow provided such visitors and correspondents with samples of his poetry, some of which were subsequently printed in Cuba. Given the censorship and political turmoil there, Cubans found Longfellow's poetry a safe way to express their patriotic feelings.

The struggle to abolish slavery in Cuba was long and arduous and did not culminate until 1888. But the American poet Henry Longfellow had sensitized his Cuban counterparts about the serious moral and political consequences of retaining slavery and had given them the recognition and support they needed at a critical time.

### The Warning

*Beware! The Israelite of old, who tore  
The lion in his path,—when, poor and blind,  
He saw the blessed light of heaven no more,  
He shorn of his noble strength and forced to grind  
In prison, and at last led forth to be  
A pander to Philistine revelry,—  
Upon the pillars of the temple laid  
His desperate hands, and in its overthrow  
Destroyed himself, and with him those who made  
A cruel mockery of his sightless woe;  
The poor, blind Slave, the scoff and jest of all,  
Expired, and thousands perished in the fall!  
There is a poor, blind Samson in this land,  
Shorn of his strength and bound in bonds of steel,  
Who may, in some grim revel, raise his hand,  
And shake the pillars of this Commonwealth,  
Till the vast Temple of our liberties  
A shapeless mass of wreck and rubbish lies.*

—H.W. Longfellow, 1842

### Longfellow House in the Media

Bibliophile and author of *A Gentle Madness*, Nicholas A. Basbanes wrote an article on Longfellow's celebrity for *Smithsonian Magazine* to be published in January 2007 in honor of the poet's 200th birthday.

In October 2006 Oxford University Press published a newly rediscovered 1865 novel by Julia C. Collins called *The Curse of Caste; or the Slave Bride*, the first novel ever published by a black American woman. This new edition also includes her 1864 essay "Life Is Earnest," whose title and theme derive from Longfellow's "Psalm of Life."

Dr. Darshak Sanghavo recounted Fanny Longfellow's pioneering use of ether during childbirth in 1847 in an article entitled "The Mother Lode of Pain" featured in the *Boston Globe Magazine*, July 23, 2006.

*Henry W. Longfellow to Frances Farrer,  
May 8, 1862:*

*"... Of the civil war I say only this. It is not a revolution, but a Catalinian conspiracy. It is Slavery against Freedom; the north wind against southern pestilence. I saw lately, at a jeweler's, a slave's collar of iron, with an iron tongue as large as a spoon, to go into the mouth. Every drop of blood in me quivered! The world forgets what Slavery really is!"*

## Recent Donations

Victor Gulotta, former Friends board member and antiquarian book dealer, donated to the House a book from Fanny Appleton's library, with her signature and the date "Jan. 18th, 1841," two years before her marriage to Henry Longfellow.

Written originally in French by statesman and historian François Guizot, *Essay on the Character and Influence of Washington in the Revolution of the United States of America* was translated by Henry's friend George S. Hillard and published in Boston in 1840. This first edition included a translator's preface, which read: "The following Essay is a translation of the Introduction, by M. Guizot, to a French version of Spark's Life of Washington, and of selected portions of Washington's Writings, which has recently appeared in Paris, in six octavo volumes."

Frankie Wetherell, the poet's great-granddaughter, generously donated a number of items originally from the House. Among them were: a bureau scarf with Alice Mary Longfellow's monogram, "AML," and other linens, two cow bells on a leather strap and a small hanging scale from the Carriage House, and a silver serving bowl and spoon engraved on the side with "AAL" (Annie Allegra Longfellow, Henry's youngest daughter).

## Fellowships Awarded

The Friends of the Longfellow House awarded the Paterson Fellowship to Virginia Jackson, Associate Professor of English, Tufts University, who is working on her second book, tentatively titled *National Meter: Nineteenth-Century American Poetry in Public*. She writes, "My thesis for the book is based on Longfellow's experimentation with verse forms, his practices of translation, and his comparative pedagogy."

Charles C. Calhoun, author of *Longfellow: A Rediscovered Life* (Beacon Press, 2004), received the Friends' Korzenik fellowship to study Thomas Gold Appleton and the cultural and social life of Boston after the Civil War. Appleton was Fanny Longfellow's brother, a highly cultured patron of fine arts and an early American expatriate in France. Calhoun suggests that the conventional view of the late nineteenth century as years of decline for Boston is not the case, and that "in certain cultural and educational fields...Boston continued to lead the nation."

## Selected Entries from Henry W. Longfellow's Account Books

1850	October	African Newspaper	3.00
1851	June	Negro School Michigan	3.00
	June 13	Mr. Lang, negro Med. Student	5.00
1852	May	Colored church, Springfield	3.00
	October	Slave mother	2.00
1853	August	Miss Warmeter, for Slaves	10.00
	November	Mr. Still (Slave)	5.00
1854	Jan. 25	For Slaves	3.00
	Feb. 16	Slaves in Canada	5.00
	August 23	Mr. Spence Negro School	3.00
1855	March 24	Mr. Vassat	10.00
	April 29	Mr. Spence Afr. School	5.00
1856	March 28	Lundford Lane	10.00
	May	Rechurch in Kansas	10.00
	June 13	Anti-Slavery Tract Son	5.00
	June 15	Rechurch in Wash.	15.00
	June 20	Mech. Negro School	15.00
	September	Kansas	50.00
	November	Alec Pensit for Slaves	10.00
	November	Lord, the "Italian Prince"	20.00
1857	April	M. Wilson, Canada	5.00
	May	To free slave children	5.00
	Oct.	To free a slave	5.00

## Recent Visitors & Events at the House

People from all walks of life have always come to the Longfellow House for cultural activities. Today the House continues to host numerous people and events. The following items represent only a small portion of what has taken place here recently.

At the June 15th annual potluck, Longfellow NHS honored **William Ackerly** and **Frances Ackerly** for their contributions to the Longfellow garden restoration. Frances was also recognized for her many years of service to the House as a Friends of the Longfellow House board member and a volunteer in the House archives.

Harvard Museum Studies graduate student **Mirit Lerner Naaman** worked as an intern re-cataloging part of the House's historic book collection. With funds from the Friends, **Sharon Crapo** has worked under the Student Conservation Association program as an intern in the Longfellow garden alongside **Mona McKindley**.

At the Cambridge Senior Clearinghouse ceremony in June, Cambridge Mayor **Kenneth Reeves** presented awards to outstanding senior volunteers. **Mary Ann Parker** received an award for her service to the Longfellow House.

**Edie Bowers**, great-great-granddaughter of **Richard Henry Dana Jr.** and **Henry Longfellow**, brought her daughter **Allegra Griffiths** and ten-year-old granddaughter **Nathalie Dana Griffiths** of London to explore the House and archives, and look at family dolls, toys, and clothing. Nathalie especially loved the fancy dresses!

For "Family Days," the **Concordant Junior Volunteers** presented a living history program about the Longfellows and their friends during the Civil War. Re-enactors from the **Salem Light Infantry**, known as the **Zouaves**, set up camp to add another authentic touch. Over four hundred people participated in the festivities.

From September 1946 to March 1947 **Sylvia Maynard** lived in the attic of the House while attending Radcliffe College. She has recently returned to live in Cambridge. The staff interviewed her about her life in the House.

## Grandson Harry Dana Hoped for Book on Longfellow & Abolitionists

In a typewritten, single-spaced, nine-page letter on September 20, 1940, to Ulysses G. Lee Jr., Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (Harry) Dana spoke of both his grandfathers and their importance to the anti-slavery movement. One grandfather was Henry Longfellow, the other Richard Henry Dana Jr., defender of fugitive slaves. Harry hoped to persuade Lee—a Howard University graduate, professor of English, and author of African American studies—to collaborate with him on a book about this subject.

“This narrative could really be given an epic sweep,” Harry wrote to Lee. “It could begin with the influence of [William Pitt] Fessenden during Longfellow’s boyhood, about which I think you could find out a great deal more. It could then come down to the influence of Sumner and to the double influence during the trip abroad in 1842 of Freiligrath and Dickens, to . . . re-writing, still under their influence, the *Poems on Slavery* in their final form. It could then take up even more fully than you have the attack on these poems from the South. . . [and] Longfellow’s relations with the Abolitionists. I can give you much more material on William Lloyd Garrison, Harriet Beecher Stowe, etc.

“There would then come the 1850s, with a series of Fugitive Slave Cases. From the papers of my grandfather Dana, who was the lawyer defending Anthony Burns, I can give you still more unpublished material. Then in 1856 comes the brutal attack on Sumner in the Senate and lying here on the sofa in Longfellow’s House. So the story could proceed through the execution of John Brown in 1859, the election of Lincoln in 1860, the Civil War in 1861, on down to the Assassination of Lincoln in 1865.

“There is really the theme for a very impressive and moving book on the subject of the Anti-Slavery Movement as seen through the eyes of an important American poet. It is a story which could really mark grandly, if you only did not stop it and block the progress with irrelevant details.

“Indeed I wish I could persuade you as I tried to when I first wrote you two years ago, to agree that both you and I should collaborate on such a book.”

The project never came to fruition, but Harry left several thick files for it labeled “Poems on Slavery” in the House archives.

## Charlotte Cleveland: In Memoriam

Devoted and energetic member of the Board of the Friends of the Longfellow House from 1997 to 2004, Charlotte Cleveland was instrumental in so many of the Friends’ activities. Besides serving as its treasurer for five of those years, she helped with the annual Summer Festival, garden parties, mailings, and generally “picked up the slack wherever she saw it,” said her fellow board member Marilyn Richardson.

A political activist and humanitarian all her life, in 1994 Charlotte visited and aided Bosnian women in refugee camps in Croatia through knitting to relieve their stress and earn income. She was “passionate about politics,” said another board member Frances Ackerly, who had worked with Charlotte on a Cambridge City Council campaign. “I brought her to a Friends meeting very early on, and she wanted to come back for more.”

“Char was such a worker,” Frances Ack-

erly continued. “She always said ‘yes,’ and she was always willing to help.”

As seen in the photo below, Charlotte threw herself into the open-air Summer



Festival at the Longfellow NHS each year. “She was the Summer Festival,” recalled Friends’ founder Diana Korzenik. “She booked us all to sit at the Friends’ table in order to recruit new members. Char saw to it that there was food and that everyone was having a good time. And they certainly *did*, because of her spirit. I loved Char’s laugh, her great joy in the silliest of

things, and her absolute reliability.”

Even when her health was failing, she was the first to arrive for last June’s annual NPS-Friends event. Charlotte Cleveland died at the age of 79 on October 16, 2006. The National Park Service and the Friends plan to honor her with a special concert this summer as part of the Summer Festival.

### Recent Research at the House

*The Longfellow House archives contain over 700,000 manuscripts, letters, and signed documents and are used extensively by researchers from around the world. Here are a few recent researchers of the several hundred who use the archives annually.*

Charles Kaufmann, music director of the First Parish Church of Portland, Maine, (where the Longfellow family attended services) has scoured the archives’ large sheet music collection for Longfellow poems set to music. In 1878 the Hindu composer Sarindro Mohun Tagore sent from Calcutta to Longfellow his two Sanskrit settings of “The Psalm of Life” and “Excelsior.” A sitarist will accompany these for the choral concert Kaufmann is planning for Longfellow’s bicentennial in February.

For a book on the first girls’ school in America—the Moravian school in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Natalie Bock of Bethlehem combed the archives. Patriots’ daughters, including Mary “Polly” Allen, illegitimate daughter of pre-Longfellow resident of the House Andrew Craigie, had attended this school. Bock was delighted to find a copy of Polly Allen’s “journal,” a short account of her life, as well as other useful information in the Frederick Haven Pratt and Stephen D. Pratt Research Papers.

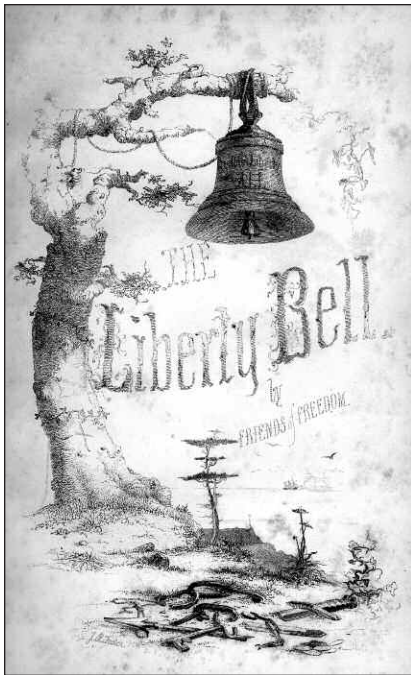
Don Matheson is writing an article on the staircase in Mrs. Samuel Appleton’s (Fanny Longfellow’s aunt) house at 53 Beacon Street, which was designed in 1855 by Nathaniel Bradlee. One of the variant sets of plans shows a three-story spiral stair that corresponds exactly with that shown in a House archives photograph of a painting of the older house at 37 Beacon Street. Matheson believes that the stair was moved and reused at 53 Beacon. He read Fanny Longfellow’s letters to locate her quote calling Aunt “Sam’s” house “a little birdcage of a house.” He feels it refers to the staircase.

## Spotlight on an Object

In each issue of the newsletter, we focus on a particular object of interest in the Longfellow House collection. This time our spotlight shines on the 1849 frontispiece of *The Liberty Bell*, an annual anti-slavery publication modeled on the fashionable gift books of the time. It was edited by Maria Weston Chapman.

Ten letters in the 1840s to Longfellow from Chapman show their close friendship. The Anti-Slavery Fair and sales of *The Liberty Bell* raised thousands of dollars for the abolitionist cause. Sisters Maria and Anne Chapman were the chief organizers of the fairs, popular Boston social events. *The Liberty Bell* appeared intermittently from 1839 to 1867.

As editor, Maria wrote many pieces herself and pressed three of her sisters into work. She also solicited contributions from such notables as Lydia Maria Child, Eliza Cabot Follen, Wendell Phillips, James Russell Lowell, and Harriet Martineau. Henry W. Longfellow received many such requests and often declined, but in 1845 and 1846 he wrote a poem for Chapman's abolitionist annual. His brother Samuel Longfellow also contributed to it in 1851 and 1856.



## Longfellow National Historic Site, National Park Service

Longfellow National Historic Site joined the national park system in 1972. Its many layers of history, distinguished architecture, gardens and grounds, and extensive museum collections represent the birth and flowering of our nation and continue to inspire school children and scholars alike. The Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House most notably served as headquarters for General George Washington in the early months of the Revolutionary War. It was later the home of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, one of America's foremost poets, and his family from 1837 to 1950.

*For information about the Longfellow House and a virtual tour, visit:*

[www.nps.gov/long](http://www.nps.gov/long)



## Friends of the Longfellow House

Since 1996, the Friends of the Longfellow House, a not-for-profit voluntary group, has worked with the National Park Service to support Longfellow National Historic Site by promoting scholarly access to collections, publications about site history, educational visitor programs, and advocacy for the highest quality preservation.

*To find out more about the Friends of the Longfellow House, visit:*

[www.longfellowfriends.org](http://www.longfellowfriends.org)

Friends of the Longfellow House  
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Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

