

Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site Archival & Museum Collections Summary

The artifacts and manuscript collections of Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site reflect the accumulation of generations of inhabitants, their varied intellectual pursuits, and their desire to preserve and memorialize the past.

Museum collections complement each other, giving the collections depth and exceptional research value. They reveal the major themes of the site: Colonial and Revolutionary War history, literary history, arts patronage and education, and historic preservation.



Fine Arts Collections

The fine arts collection showcases the tastes and interests of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807- 1882), his wife, Frances Appleton (1817-1861), and their children. Major fine arts collections include the sculpture collection of Longfellow's close friend, Charles Sumner, and the art collection of Fanny Longfellow's brother, Thomas Gold Appleton. Artists represented include: John Kensett, Eastman Johnson, William Morris Hunt, George Healy, Thomas Crawford, John Gadsby Chapman, Benjamin Champney, and Winkworth Allen Gay. Also included are works by earlier American masters, such as Washington Allston, Gilbert Stuart, and Mather Brown. Of particular note for their fine quality are thirteen crayon portraits by Eastman Johnson, commissioned by Henry Longfellow of his family and friends in 1846.

In addition to the American artists, well-known nineteenth-century English, German, and Italian born artists are represented in the collection, including Albert Bierstadt, Jean Baptiste Camille Corot, Myles Birket Foster, Eugene and Jean Baptiste Isabey, Samuel Prout, Friedrich Overbeck, Pierre Jules Mene, Lorenzo Bartolini, and Jacques Louis David (att. to). A 1664 church interior by Dutch painter Daniel de Blicck is included in the collection, as well. Most of the collection is personal in nature – gifts from the artists the family met or knew, or purchases made during their travels.

Historic Furnishings and Decorative Arts

The historic furnishings and decorative arts in the museum collections date from the late eighteenth to early twentieth centuries. Henry and Fanny Longfellow acquired the majority of furnishings in the house. Like many early collectors, the Longfellow acquired antiques not for aesthetic or investment purposes, but rather for historical reasons. The Longfellows' collection of colonial pieces and Washingtonia reveals their reverence for the past. For them, having old-fashioned furnishings in the house stimulated their awareness of America's past. This interest

in antiques is just one aspect of a spirit of nationalism in the country, the same nationalism that prompted writers such as Longfellow in the antebellum decades to plead for the creation of an independent literature.

Joining their love of American history, the Longfellows also took delight in the international literary and artistic traditions. The furnishings and decorative arts in the house reflect the family's international taste, including collections of nineteenth-century Asian ceramics and furniture, and eighteenth-century pieces from Germany, Holland, and France. The house retains most of its elegant light fixtures and wallpapers dating from Henry and Fanny Longfellow's early years of residency, in the 1840s. In fact, underneath the 1844 parlor wallpaper is a late eighteenth-century Chinese wallpaper. The collection also contains over a thousand textile fragments, which provide a chronology of costume and interior decorating styles, from the 1840s until the 1950s. Other noted textiles include Henry and Fanny Longfellow's clothing and Charles Longfellow's Civil War uniform.

Asian Collections

The Japanese and Chinese collections at Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site reflect generations of interest in Asian art, culture, and literature. The Longfellows' Asian collections are significant because of their provenance and context, and provide insights into the importance of international art to one nineteenth-century family. Many of the Chinese ceramics in the house are import ware, collected by Henry and Fanny Longfellow in the 1840s-1850s.

Charles Longfellow (1844-1893), Henry and Frances Appleton Longfellow's oldest child, collected a wide range of ceramics, textiles, paintings, and bronzes during his twenty-month sojourn in Japan, from June 1871 until March 1873, shipping over twenty crates of furnishings and decorative arts home to his family in Cambridge. A year after his return, Charles and his cousin Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow Jr. decorated his sitting room in the Longfellow House with many of his finds, covering the ceiling with Japanese fan-shaped paintings, and displaying prints and furniture in the room. The Longfellow House's Japanese collections reflect transformations in both Japanese and American culture. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japanese culture became increasingly Westernized. In turn, late nineteenth-century Americans' lives were transformed by the increased availability of Japanese imports, travel, and participation with Asian economies. A "Japan craze" spread through Boston and beyond in the 1870s-1890s.

In addition, the site holds a rich collection of high-style kimono, obi, and other Japanese textiles, including custom-designed costumes for Charles Longfellow to wear. The site holds over 350 photographs of Meiji-era Japan, including rare photographs of the Ainu people.

Library (estimated 11,000-12,000 volumes)

The collection includes books reflecting Longfellow's international academic interests, as well as family books. Of note are the books in over a dozen languages, including Finnish, Danish, German, Latin, Greek, Spanish, French, and Russian. Significant volumes include numerous folios printed by Giambattista Bodoni, illustrated atlases of China, Africa, and Asia from the 1670s, Gustave Dore's illustrated works of Dante, and a 1496 Venetian edition of Plutarch. The book collection includes over five thousand volumes owned by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and bearing his bookplate or signature.

Family Artwork, c. 1836-1900

Includes several hundred drawings made by Henry and Frances Longfellow's children, documenting the development of art education, and issues important to mid-nineteenth century childhood. The collection also includes sketchbooks, drawings, watercolors and oils by Ernest Longfellow, who became a professional artist, and his cousin, Mary King Longfellow, also an accomplished artist. Included as well are some sketches by both Fanny and Henry Longfellow, his brothers Alexander and Samuel Longfellow, and other family members and friends.

Print Collection

The collection includes a diverse assortment of lithographs, etchings, engravings, wood block prints, and other types of prints and printing plates, is varied in subject and date. It ranges from pages of the Nuremberg Chronicles printed in 1493 to twentieth-century prints and includes scenes of Europe, reproductions of artworks in galleries and museums, portraits of notables, and fashion plates from magazines. Many of the prints were collected by Longfellow and his family and consequently reflect the interests, social associations, and taste of a Victorian New England family. Prints related to the life and career of Henry Longfellow are heavily represented, including portraits of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, views of the Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House, and illustrations for Longfellow's poems.

Archives and Manuscript Collections (450+ linear feet of papers, c. 1650-2007)

One of the strengths of Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site, the extensive archives and manuscript collection provides a rare opportunity to study the everyday lives of nineteenth-century Americans and also illuminates the world of American literary culture that developed in the nineteenth century.

Collections Related to the Longfellow Family

Wadsworth-Longfellow Family Papers, 1610-1971 (bulk dates 1745-1950) (28 linear feet)

Papers consisting of correspondence, journals, land records, and other documents related to two prominent New England families whose most famous descendant is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882). Highlights of the collection include the letters of Peleg Wadsworth (1748-1829) and his son-in-law Stephen Longfellow (1776-1849) written to their families while they served as U.S. Congressmen, and letters and journals kept by Henry Wadsworth (1785-1804) while serving on the USS *Constitution* and USS *Chesapeake*, 1803-1804. Extensive genealogical material documents the family history of the Wadsworths and Longfellows.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Family Papers, 1815-1972 (30 linear feet)

A collection of correspondence, journals, research notes, and collected materials related to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and his children's and siblings' families. Highlights include a small group of Henry Longfellow's correspondence, contemporary newspaper accounts of Longfellow, letters discussing family members' activities, and childhood mementos of growing up in Craigie House. The papers of Henry's sister Anne Longfellow Pierce (1810-1901) document her life in Portland, Maine and her stewardship of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House there, which she donated to the Maine Historical Society as a memorial to her brother. The papers of Edith Longfellow Dana (1853-1915) and Anne Allegra Longfellow Thorp (1855-1934) provide insight into their youth in the Craigie House, travels, and contributions to the formation of the Longfellow House Trust, the preservation society dedicated to preserving the Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House. Their childhood papers include homemade newsletters

and “literary journals” with their original short stories. The papers of Henry’s nephew William Pitt Preble Longfellow (1836-1913) document some of his work as an architect, editor of *The American Architect and Building News* and professor of architectural design at MIT.

Frances Elizabeth Appleton Longfellow Papers, 1825-1961 (5 linear feet)

The papers of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s wife: a skilled artist, art collector, and insightful commentator on nineteenth-century Boston literary culture. Fanny Longfellow’s papers include her sketchbooks, made as a teenager on trips across the United States and Europe, her diaries detailing her educational philosophy when raising her children, and letters documenting her interaction with intellectuals of the day, including Fanny Kemble, Julia Ward Howe, and Charles Sumner.

Alice Mary Longfellow Papers, 1850-1965 (20 linear feet)

The eldest daughter of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Alice’s papers reveal her interest in preservation and education. Correspondence documents her support of women’s education and Native American and African-American students, including work with the Radcliffe College and the Tuskegee and Hampton Institutes. In addition, Alice served on the Board of Directors of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities and the Mount Vernon Ladies Association. Also included are her numerous articles, logbooks of travels abroad, photographs, and personal correspondence documenting her work to preserve her family’s home as a museum.

Charles Longfellow Papers, c. 1844-1893 (8.5 linear feet, 1695 photographs)

The papers of Henry and Fanny Longfellow’s oldest son includes several dozen journals and diaries chronicling his world travels including Japan, China, India, and Russia. Of special interest are the several hundred photographs of Charles Longfellow’s travels to Russia, India, Cambodia and the South Pacific during the late 1860s to 1880s. Rare photographs of Meiji-period Japan taken between 1871 and 1873 include photographs of the Ainu tribe.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana Papers, 1744-1971 (114 linear feet)

The papers of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana (1881-1950), grandson of both H.W. Longfellow and Richard Henry Dana, Jr., reflect the diversity of his personal interests and prolific literary output. Harry Dana acted at the Longfellow House’s first curator, and did extensive research and writing about Revolutionary-era Cambridge, Longfellow’s life and works and the history of the Dana and Longfellow families. Dana believed strongly in workers’ education; he helped found the Boston Trade Union College and lectured at other workers’ schools. A socialist and pacifist, Harry traveled extensively in the Soviet Union and became an expert on Russian theater.

Dana’s “Miscellaneous Famous People” collection includes documents he purchased related to historic figures, including George Washington, King George III, Charles Sumner, Julia Ward Howe, and James Russell Lowell.

Postcard Collection of the Longfellow Family, c. 1870-1970 (2,700 items)

This collection consists of picture postcards received by members of the Longfellow family, or blank postcards collected by them. They represent scenes from around the world, views of the Longfellow House, and subjects such as fine arts and theater.

Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow, Sr. Family Papers, 1730-1950 (11.75 linear feet)

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's brother Alexander worked for the U.S. Coast Survey and his papers record much information about that work and the scandals in the organization. Also included are a journal and letters documenting his trip to South America as secretary to his uncle, Captain (later Commodore) Alexander Scammell Wadsworth in 1833-1834.

Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow Jr. Papers, 1864-1979 (6.5 linear feet)

Noted Colonial Revival architect and partner in the firm of Longfellow, Alden & Harlow, one of the founders of the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts, and active in the Marine Museum of the Bostonian Society, "Waddy's" papers reflect his interests in architecture and boats. His papers consist of correspondence and scrapbooks with a number of photographs, including some of European architecture and of his own commissions.

Mary King Longfellow Papers, 1855-1946 (5.5 linear feet)

The Mary King Longfellow (1852-1939) Papers hold diaries, correspondence, and images related to her daily activities and relationships with the family of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Rev. Samuel Longfellow Papers, 1792-1963 (12.75 linear feet)

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's youngest brother and biographer, Samuel was a Unitarian minister and author of many hymns still in use today. His papers document his belief in Transcendentalism and include correspondence with Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bronson Alcott, and others. He was also interested in photography and experimented with salt-print photographs while a student at Harvard in 1839 with his Harvard roommate Edward Everett Hale, and with daguerreotypes in 1843 while a teacher for the Dabney children in the Azores.

Longfellow Family Photograph Collection, 1845-1972 (5,769 items)

The Longfellow Family Photograph Collection holds photograph albums and loose photographs owned by or associated with members of the Longfellow family including Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow Sr. and their children. Professional portrait photographs in the carte-de-visite and cabinet card format comprise a large portion of the collection. Members of the family took photographs of their relatives and homes. Subjects include the Wadsworth-Longfellow House in Portland, Maine, Wadsworth Hall in Hiram, Maine, and the Stephen Longfellow House in Gorham, Maine.

Collections Related to the Dana Family

Dana Family Papers, 1661-1960 (72 linear feet)

Includes collected manuscripts, genealogies and research material of over five generations of the Dana family. One subcollection consists of records generated in researching and writing *The Dana Family in America*, a genealogy compiled by H.W.L. Dana and Elizabeth Ellery Dana. A second subcollection consists of collected family manuscripts, including some correspondence of Richard Henry Dana, Jr. (1815-1882), author of *Two Years Before the Mast*, and legal consultant in the litigation surrounding the Fugitive Slave Law, and some papers of Francis Dana (1743-1811), appointed minister to the court of Catherine the Great in 1781, and Chief Justice of Massachusetts from 1791-1806.

Dana Collected Correspondence Collection, 1808-1938 (43 linear feet)

The letters, primarily of women members of the Dana family, document adolescent life in

antebellum New England, including insights into boarding school life. Civil War-era letters record the poignant thoughts of young women experiencing the war through losses of friends and privations at home. A sizable portion of the collection includes correspondence generated by Elizabeth Ellery Dana (1846-1939), the sister-in-law of Edith Longfellow (Longfellow's second daughter). She was a prolific writer and historian, who published a British officer's 1770s diary, and wrote extensively on Revolutionary War history and the Dana family.

Richard Henry Dana III Papers, 1797-1947 (32.8 linear feet)

The papers of Richard Henry Dana III (1851- 1931) reveal a life of public service. The childhood friend of the Longfellow children and husband of Edith Longfellow, Dana was a lawyer who worked for the reform of the ballot system to make elections more democratic and reform of civil service to make democracy efficient. He was president of the New England Conservatory of Music, the Boston YMCA, and worked tirelessly on behalf of the Episcopal Theological Seminary. His papers include some of the records of his law practice, personal and business correspondence and much material related to civil service reform, including correspondence with his Harvard classmate, Theodore Roosevelt.

Elizabeth Ellery Dana Personal Papers, 1829-1940 (11.6 linear feet)

Elizabeth Ellery Dana (1846-1939) was one of the daughters of Richard Henry Dana, Jr. and Sarah Watson Dana. A lifelong resident of Boston and Cambridge, her papers reflect the life of a middle class woman from a well-known family during the second half of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. An interest in genealogy and family history, sparked when she was nineteen years old, continued her whole life as she gathered data for *The Dana Family in America*, which was not published until after her death. Most of her research and writing for this book is contained in the *Dana Family Papers* (see above), although her correspondence also reflects this interest. She collected the correspondence of her immediate family and it is believed she was responsible for the *Dana Collected Correspondence Collection* (see above). This collection contains correspondence, notes, journals, legal records and photographs.

Collections Related to the Appleton Family

Appleton Family Papers, 1752-1962 (9.3 linear feet)

This collection consists of personal materials, correspondence, official and legal documents of twenty-six members of the Appleton family, beginning with the papers of Nathan Appleton (1779-1861). Nathan Appleton was a prominent businessman and politician associated with the development of the textile mills in Lowell, Massachusetts, and father of Frances Appleton Longfellow, the wife of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Also included is a section of research material compiled by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana on his Appleton relatives, including genealogies.

Collections Related to the Longfellow House

Architectural Drawings, 1847-1936

Includes drawings and blueprints created by twelve different architectural firms, including A. W. Longfellow, Jr. (Henry's nephew and formerly an associate in H.H. Richardson's firm) and Ellen Shipman. The collection documents the historically sensitive changes made to the Craigie-Longfellow House, enabling it to become a historic house museum.

Longfellow House Trust Papers, 1852-1973 (15.6 linear feet)

Financial records, correspondence, administrative records and materials related to the management of the house as a museum. The papers reveal the developing preservation philosophy for one of the oldest historic house museums, and include logbooks noting the visits of many eminent guests to the Longfellow House, such as Paul Robeson.

Longfellow NHS Building and Grounds Photograph Collection, 1855-1970 (285 items)

A group of assembled photographic materials depicting interior and exterior views of the Longfellow House, also known as the Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House, 105 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Patricia R. Pratt Papers, 1759-1994 (4.8 linear feet)

This collection documents the grounds of the Longfellow House before, during, and after restoration by the Cambridge Plant and Garden Club in 1969-1972; ongoing maintenance of the Longfellow House and garden; and preservation and renovation of Longfellow Park.

The papers consist primarily of documentation generated by the Longfellow House and Garden Committee and the Longfellow Park Committee of the Cambridge Plant and Garden Club. The papers were assembled by Patricia Pratt while she was a member of that club. She served at times as president of the club and chairman of the Longfellow House Garden Committee.

Frederick Haven Pratt & Stephen D. Pratt Research Papers, 1783-1996 (2.5 linear feet)

These papers were generated as a result of research conducted by Frederick Haven Pratt, M.D. to publish *The Craigies* in 1942, and by his son, Stephen D. Pratt, to publish a new edition, *The Craigies: A Footnote to the Medical History of the Revolution* in 1996. These materials focus primarily on Andrew Craigie, Jr., the first Apothecary General of the United States and former owner/resident of the Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House. Included are some primary legal documents and correspondence of the Craigie, Foster and Haven families dating from 1783-1840.

Allen-Craigie Correspondence, 1797-c. 1941 (0.5 linear feet)

The Mary Allen (1779-1849) – Andrew Craigie (1754-1819) Correspondence is primarily composed of letters written by Allen, when a young woman, to her father Andrew Craigie, who owned the Vassall – Craigie – Longfellow House at the time. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow subsequently found the letters hidden in the cellar staircase of the House.

Other Collections

Art Reproductions Photograph Collection (143 items)

An assembled collection of photographic copies of works of art and scenery of landscapes and buildings, consisting mostly of nineteenth-century professional stock photography of European scenery, paintings, and sculpture purchased by the Longfellow, Dana, and possibly the Appleton families.

Washington Allston Materials as Compiled by H.W.L. Dana, 1868-1955 (18.8 linear feet)

This collection consists primarily of materials collected or produced by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana which deal with the life and works of Washington Allston (1779-1843), considered America's first Romantic artist. A small portion of the papers are notes and

correspondence of Harry Dana's father, Richard Henry Dana III, and of his aunt, Elizabeth Ellery Dana, which Harry incorporated into his own Washington Allston research papers. The historic library also includes approximately 50 books from Washington Allston's own library.

Unassociated Photographs (7 items)

Photographs, including an album, that were part of the collections of Longfellow House when the NPS assumed control in 1972. Their relationship to the persons and organizations whose records are in the archives is presently unknown. No connection to the Longfellow, Dana, and Appleton families or to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, Thomas de Valcourt, or the Longfellow House Trust was apparent to staff members.

Henry W. Longfellow Bicentennial Committee Papers (1 linear foot)

Materials related to the Henry W. Longfellow Bicentennial Committee and events held to celebrate the bicentennial of Henry W. Longfellow's birth in 2007. Includes posters, pins, buttons, and committee records.