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THE VASSALL-CRAIGIE-LONGFELLOW HOUSE OF 1759:

FROM COLONIAL AMERICA TO

THE COLONIAL REVIVAL AND BEYOND

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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ABSTRACT

THE VASSALL-CRAIGIE-LONGFELLOW HOUSE OF 1759: FROM COLONIAL AMERICA TO THE COLONIAL REVIVAL AND BEYOND

By John Hebble

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2014

Major Director: Dr. Charles Brownell, Professor, Department of Art History

The Longfellow House in Cambridge, Massachusetts is one of America's best known historic homes. Built in 1759 by Major John Vassall, the grand house exemplified Colonial English tastes and was at the center of a cycle of Colonial Royalist mansions. After the American Revolution, however, the house quickly became a symbol of American patriotism. Occupants ranging from General George Washington and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow each added to the legacy of the house. Early in the nineteenth century, the Longfellow House's distyle portico-pavilion traveled to Canterbury, Connecticut, becoming a colloquial house-type. Aided by its connection to General Washington and its appearance in two World's Fairs, the house gained further popularity around the American Centennial. This thesis provides the most expansive history of the house's impact on American architecture to date and is the first to connect the house to both the Greenhouse at Mount Vernon and Connecticut's "Canterbury Style."

INTRODUCTION

For over a century, the Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House (or simply, the Longfellow House) in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Figure 1) has been considered one of the preeminent historical sites in the United States. Often thought of as a Palladian or Georgian building, it occupies a key spot in the pantheon of historic New England architectural treasures, while also being one of the most widely recognized and well regarded homes in the country. Despite its academic stature, however, the scholarship on the Longfellow House is startlingly insubstantial, as historians often base assumptions regarding its architectural lineage and legacy on broad interpretations of the house, all while ignoring the complex stylistic origins of its various pieces and elements. These origins, when examined more closely and carefully, can offer a wealth of clues and help historians see past the pervasive misconceptions surrounding the house, and establish a new legacy for the house as a bridge between British tastes of the eighteenth century and American patriotic rhetoric of the nineteenth, twentieth, and even twenty-first century.

In order to better situate the Longfellow house within the history of American architecture, it is necessary to first look at the historical precedents crucial to any study of architecture in colonized North America. Many of the first houses in America echoed the styles and aesthetic sensibilities of the buildings they were already familiar with. As the first European settlers soon discovered, the North American climate varies greatly between geographic regions.

American architecture thus became synthesis of various elements of the Western tradition, all adapted to suit the unique qualities of a given area.¹

American architecture, being primarily born from European examples, owes its heritage to the classical tradition. Within this tradition, the chief ornamental elements are the sets of orders derived from ancient Greek and Roman sources. The Longfellow House, as this thesis will explore, has complex roots that represent both the essential elements of classicized Western architecture and the ways that these elements have been shaped and modified over time.²

This thesis will provide an overview of the history of the Longfellow House from 1759 to the present. The history of the house has traditionally revolved around the major figures that occupied it, however this study will shed light on both the little-known occupants of the house and the social factors that impacted the reception and interpretation of the design from the eighteenth century to the present. One of the most misunderstood aspects of the house is its entrance façade. Traditionally, it has been thought of as a Palladian or a Georgian element, but its true architectural genealogy reveals a past more deeply rooted in English tastes of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth century.

The Longfellow House has two distinct phases in its history. First, it belonged to a set of colonial buildings commissioned by wealthy and prominent Royalists stretching from Maine to Manhattan. Their tastes, echoing the English gentry, were deeply shaped by the construction

¹ This idea, that American domestic architecture builds off of familiar forms, is explained by historian Gerald Foster. Please see: Gerald Foster, *American Houses: A Field Guide to the Architecture of the Home* (New York: Mariner Books, 2004), viii-ix. This issue is also explored in relation to the North American climate in Leland M. Roth, *American Architecture: A History* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001), 13-14.

² The classical origins of American architecture is masterfully explained in James Kornwolf and Georgiana Kornwolf, *Architecture and Town Planning in Colonial North America*, Volume 2 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 36-63.

boom occurring in London and the surrounding countryside following the Great Fire of 1666.

Second, the Longfellow House was at the forefront of the construction of an “American” identity from the late-eighteenth to the early-twentieth centuries, completely transitioning from British Royalist icon to one of American patriotism. Shortly after the American Revolution, the façade’s design quickly found its way across the United States—including previously unrecognized examples in Canterbury, Connecticut and the Greenhouse at Mount Vernon—growing in popularity and becoming a nationally important piece of Americana.

A HISTORY OF THE HOUSE AND ITS INHABITANTS

THE VASSALLS: 1759-1775

In 1759 Major John Vassall (1738-1797) built a grand estate on eighty-seven acres of Cambridge land. Vassall, whose family was one of the most affluent in Colonial New England, owed much of his wealth to successful Jamaican sugarcane plantations. A graduate of Harvard College, he was exceptionally well educated and well connected in the Colonial Massachusetts gentry. The land upon which the Longfellow House now stands was inherited from his father, and the original house on the site was torn down to make room for new construction. Vassall spared no expense in creating a home for his wife Elizabeth and their young family.³

Overlooking the Charles River, Vassalls' house sat elevated on a terraced plot of land (Figure 2). Both the home, which was quite ornately detailed and decorated for the time, and its grounds—which make up a substantial portion of present-day Cambridge—were particularly impressive examples of wealth and refinement in the Colonies. Painted a pale yellow with white trim, the house was remarkably similar to its current condition—minus the side porches and rear addition. The entrance façade, which looks as it did in 1759, is commonly thought of as the most recognizable feature of the house. A monumental order of four pilasters runs across the façade.

³ Catherine Evans, *Longfellow House Historic Landscape Report* (National Park Service, 1993), 1. Much of the history of the home covered in this report comes from the foundation set by Harry Longfellow Dana, whose meticulous documentation of the house and the various people who lived there has proven invaluable. It is no stretch to say that Dana's work is still echoed and felt in any study of the house to this day.

The two pilasters at the corners are pulled in from the edge. The two at the center form a portico. Topping the center of the façade is triangular pediment with a lunette window.⁴

The front door (Figure 3), which has eluded scholars for nearly a century, illustrates a principle to be expanded upon later—in its original conception, the Longfellow House did not conform to any one particular style or template. The door features two corner-scrolls. Two boxed-out elements appear at the interior corner, while a simple centered decoration fills the space above the entrance. This design is featured in both Batty Langley's *City and Country Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Designs* (1740) (Figure 4) and James Gibbs' *Book of Architecture* (1728) (Figure 5). The Longfellow House appears to be the first house in Colonial Cambridge to use this door design. Unfortunately, there are no other details that strongly point to either Gibbs or Langley as the source, and no records specifically relating to its design or construction exist.⁵

The interior of the house continues its exterior display of wealth and Colonial “taste.” The house was set up in a two-story, four-room central passage plan (Figure 6). This layout provided a symmetrical front façade, with two rooms on either side of the central hall. The rooms to either side of the central front staircase are lavishly decorated. For example, the ladies' parlor, which is to the left of the front entrance, shows the intricate woodwork and elaborate wall panels. The central hall is notable not only for its finely constructed staircase, but for its architecturally

⁴ Ibid, 5.

⁵ The only mention of the Longfellow House door as a discrete unit is in the notes of Harry Dana Longfellow. It is tentatively attributed to Langley, yet no further investigation appears in his research. The formal comparison can be seen when comparing Plate 105 from Gibbs—see: James Gibbs, *Book of Architecture, Containing Designs of Buildings and Ornaments*, London, 1728, reprint, (New York: Dover Publications, 2008)—and Plate 32 from Langley—see: Batty Langley, *The City and Country Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Designs, or, the Art of Drawing and Working the Ornamental Parts of Architecture* (London: S. Harding, 1756). Since there is no extant record of Vassall's library, any attribution to either Gibbs or Langley would be largely circumstantial.

advanced layout. The staircase seen when entering through the front door conceals a back staircase used by the serving staff.⁶

The Longfellow House is sometimes attributed to the architect Peter Harrison. Proponents of this idea point to the fact that Harrison was in Cambridge between 1759 and 1761 during the construction of Christ Church, a landmark that still stands today. Furthermore, Major John Vassall was tightly connected to the congregation of Christ Church. While there does seem to be some plausibility to the idea that Harrison had a hand in designing the Longfellow House, it is an idea that is entirely unsupported by documented evidence. The data that does point to a Harrison attribution is circumstantial, and the architect—whatever his involvement ultimately was—should not be interpreted as the lone source of the Longfellow House’s design.⁷

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: 1775-1781

In 1774, Colonial America was on the eve of revolution. That year, Major John Vassall signed a farewell address to Governor Hutchinson, firmly solidifying his status as a Royalist. This, in turn, did not win any favor with the local populous, which increasingly viewed Hutchinson and his supporters with disdain. Soon after, the climate for Royalist families in Massachusetts began to take a turn for the worse. Mobs of angry citizens forced the Vassall family to flee to Halifax in September 1774. From there, they were able to cross the Atlantic and

⁶ Alice Mary Longfellow, “Research Notes on Original Details of Longfellow House.” The plan is also discussed by in *Architecture and Town Planning* when dealing with Colonial house-types in New England. Please see: Please see: Kornwolf, *Architecture and Town*, 989-990.

⁷ This idea is most passionately argued in John Fitzhugh Millar’s *The Architects of the American Colonies*. Though he attributes much of Colonial America to Peter Harrison, there is little evidence—and fewer citations—that enforce these claims. Please see: Millar, *The Architects of the American Colonies* (Massachusetts: Barre Publishers, 1968). The Longfellow House appears as both a discrete study, [page], and as part of the author’s table of Harrison attributions.

live comfortably in England. While Major John Vassall never led troops in the subsequent war, he did contribute financially to the British effort.⁸

The time immediately after the Vassalls' departure is relatively undocumented. What little records there are point to the house being used to informally quarter troops. The Vassalls intended to leave the home under the care of two slaves, a married couple by the names of Tony and Cuba Vassall. In 1775, the newly appointed Commander of the Continental Army, General George Washington (1732-1799), was given the Vassall estate to use as a headquarters during the Siege of Boston. Spending just under a year in the house, Washington commanded troops from its grounds, living and working in the once-Royalist mansion.⁹

NATHANIEL TRACY: 1781-1786

After the revolution, Nathaniel Tracy (1751-1796) purchased the house and its grounds. A wealthy merchant, Tracy greatly contributed to the American war effort as a privateer. Living with his wife, Mary Lee, Tracy used the house to hold extravagant dinner parties and lodge guests he wished to impress. Despite his large holdings of land (both in Cambridge and in Newburyport, Massachusetts), Tracy was forced to sell off most of his property in 1786 to pay off debts.¹⁰

⁸ Robert Cameron Mitchell, *The Historical Significance of The Longfellow House as Washington's Headquarters, During the Siege of Boston, 1775-1776*. This was a report made possible by the Longfellow House and the National Park Service. See also: J. L. Bell, *George Washington's Headquarters and Home*, 2012. The National Park Service has expertly documented the use and habitation of the home during the American Revolution.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ The first major acknowledgment of Nathaniel Tracy and Thomas Russell came from Henry "Harry" Wadsworth Longfellow Dana. While both were featured in his notes and in unpublished manuscripts, they did not find their way into many histories of the house. Dana's notes, letters, and essays are now held in the Longfellow House archives, please see: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana (1881-1950) Papers, 1744-1972 (Bulk Dates 1850-1950), LONG 17314.

THOMAS RUSSELL: 1786-1791

Following the sale of the house in 1786, Thomas Russell became the owner of the formal Vassall estate. Russell was a merchant operating out of Boston and had considerable wealth. Not much is known about this time in the house's history, except that neither Tracy nor Russell made any substantial changes to the structure of the building.¹¹

THE CRAIGIES: 1791-1841

Andrew Craigie (1754-1819), the first Apothecary General of the United States, came into ownership of the house in 1791. Russell, much like Tracy before him, was forced to quickly sell the property to cover debts. Craigie soon expanded both the house and its surrounding grounds (Figure 7). By 1793, the house became known as the "Craigie Castle," a half-mocking, half-sincere poke at just how opulent the estate had become. The additions made in this time nearly doubled the size of the house, adding two side porch-piazzas and an entire rear section (Figure 8).¹²

Craigie's porches can best be understood as a blending of African and European forms in America. Despite the horrors of slavery, Africans brought into the United States helped profoundly shape the architecture of the young country. This connection is more widely explored in the American South, where plantation homes and their surrounding structures have long been

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Craigie's additions are well documented by both Alice Mary Longfellow and Harry Dana Longfellow. As such, this is generally the most historically understood period of the house's history after Longfellow's ownership and General Washington's occupation. Please see: Evans, *Longfellow House Historic Landscape Report*, 1993. The Craigie family has also received some scholarly attention in regard to medical history. See: Frederick Haven Pratt, *The Craigies: A Footnote to the Medical History of the Revolution* (Cambridge: The Cambridge Historical Society, 1942). Aside from generally surveys, this was the last major study of Andrew Craigie.

seen as a site of architecture synthesis. In fact, as historian John Michael Vlach writes, "...we can expect to accurately understand southern plantation landscapes only if the contribution of slaves are acknowledged and included. To study these places without including the slaves' perspectives would not only be inadequate, it would be futile." Vlach's assertion can be taken one step further—it is impossible to fully understand American architecture without acknowledging the various threads of origin found in any one style, region, or group.¹³

In the North, the Longfellow House also pulls from aspects of both European and African tradition, and the porches added by Craigie aid in the telling of this story. The long porch plays a crucial role in American architecture. Historian Jay Edwards theorized that the porch is a result of, as he calls it, "external modular expansion." In this understanding, both climate and site factor into the inclusion of a porch. Craigie's addition of the two side piazzas can thus be understood as both a method of climate control and as a way to create new functional space. The letters of John Singleton Copley, the preeminent Boston-based American portrait painter, explain that they provide refuge from the fluctuating New England climate. He writes, "...the Peazas [sic] are so cool in summer and Winter break off the storms so much that I think I should not be able to like an [sic] house without". For someone with as much money as Craigie, stylish comfort was of paramount importance.¹⁴

The porches, unlike complete rooms, would not require a radical restructuring of the

¹³ John Michael Vlach, *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 1-2.

¹⁴ Copley is quoted from a letter to Henry Pelham, dated August 3, 1771. It is now housed in the Massachusetts Historical Society. The phrase "external modular expansion" appears in Jay Edwards, "The Evolution of a Vernacular Tradition," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, Volume 4 (1991), 82. For a more focused discussion of the piazza, please see: Jay Edwards, "The Complex Origins of the American Domestic Piazza-Veranda-Gallery," *Material Culture*, Number 21 (Summer 1989), 5-9.

existing floor plan or foundation. His additions in the back of the house, however, substantially altered the footprint of the building. Fortunately, the rear wing only affected the rear of the original Vassall-era design—its central structure, including its elaborately decorated rooms and sophisticated two-stair hall remained intact. Furthermore, the iconic entrance façade remained unchanged.

Craigie, much like the former owners of the house, was plagued by debts. Despite a relatively successful sugarcane business, his income was not able to support such a fantastically large estate. By the time that Craigie passed away in 1819, his widow inherited both the house and a large financial deficit. She soon opened the home to lodgers, many of whom were connected to nearby Harvard University.¹⁵

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW: 1837-1882

In 1837 Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) arrived in Cambridge. As a professor of Modern Languages at Harvard University, Longfellow moved into the “Craigie Castle” partially due to its connection to American historical figures and due to its prime location near Harvard’s campus. It is no stretch to say that Longfellow adored the house. Often inviting other major figures of the time to see his lodgings, Longfellow wrote fondly of both the house and Mrs. Craigie’s hospitality.¹⁶

¹⁵ Catherine Evans, *Longfellow House Historic Landscape Report* (National Park Service, 1993),

¹⁶ Longfellow was enamored of both the house’s history and the people associated with it. His letters can now be found in the Longfellow House archives under Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) Family Papers, 1768-1972 (Bulk dates: 1825-1950), LONG 27930, 3, I.

In 1843, after firmly establishing himself as an American literary icon, Longfellow married Frances “Fanny” Appleton. Her father, an immensely wealthy textile merchant purchased the home and presented it to the young couple as a wedding present. The house, now solely in Longfellow’s hands, became a Cambridge institution. The poet hosted prominent politicians, writers, and philosophers—with the history of the house (especially its connection to General Washington) usually becoming the focal points of these visits. Longfellow, who considered himself quite the preservationist, did little to change the structure of the house. Instead, he opted to accentuate the colonial past of the home through furniture and historic paintings, sketches, and busts.¹⁷

ALICE MARY LONGFELLOW: 1882-1928

After Longfellow’s death in 1882, Alice Mary Longfellow (1850-1928) (his oldest daughter) became the primary caretaker of the house. After graduating from Radcliffe College, she took an interest in the history and preservation of the Longfellow House. Active as a member of the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Massachusetts Historical Society, Alice Mary Longfellow spent most of her life doing philanthropic works. As a founding member of Historic New England, she wrote one of the most detailed histories of the house ever compiled. This manuscript, despite its exceedingly high quality, has never been published.¹⁸

¹⁷ *Longfellow House National Historic Site: Comprehensive Interpretive Plan*, Department of the Interior: National Park Service Document, December 2004, 8.

¹⁸ I am deeply indebted to the Longfellow House and the National Parks Service for allowing me access to the notes and manuscripts of both Mary Alice Longfellow and Harry Dana Longfellow. As both studies of the house remain unpublished, their work (conducted c.1920 and c.1940 respectively) has yet to be incorporated into any major academic projects concerning the Longfellow House.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW DANA: 1917-1950

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana (1881-1950), or Harry Dana, moved into the Longfellow House in 1917. He and Alice Mary Longfellow lived together in the house until her death in 1928, after which Harry continued to care for the home. The pair of Alice Mary Longfellow and Harry Dana proved to be an incredibly powerful force in the documentation and preservation of the house. Harry, Like Alice Mary, wrote extensively on the history of the house. He presented his findings on multiple occasions to the members of the Cambridge historical society, although very little of his work was formally published. Perhaps his greatest contribution to the history of the site was his expansion of the “archives”—collecting anything that related to the Longfellow House.¹⁹

LONGFELLOW HOUSE TRUST: 1913-1972

The Longfellow family—both in recognition of the house’s great historical importance and its sentimental value as the beloved residence of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow—established an Indenture of Trust, creating the Longfellow House Trust. This formally gave the Trustees control of the preservation and interpretation of the site. Shortly after the creation of the trust, Longfellow Memorial Park was established in 1914. The park, directly across from the entrance of the house attempted to preserve the view of the Charles River. Management of the house and grounds passed from Alice Mary Longfellow to Harry Dana in 1928. Throughout the twentieth

¹⁹ Ibid.

century, the house continued to grow as an historic resource and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.²⁰

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: 1972-PRESENT

The Longfellow House was acquired by the National Park Service in 1972 and has been open to the public since 1974. Today, the National Park Service notes that the site has an extremely high visitor satisfaction rate and is very well respected and well regarded as a national historic landmark.

²⁰ *Longfellow House National Historic Site: Comprehensive Interpretive Plan*, Department of the Interior: National Park Service Document, December 2004, 9.

AN ANALYSIS OF STYLE: COLONIAL ARTISAN MANNERIST PALLADIANISM?

THE DISTYLE PORTICO-PAVILION

Architecturally, the Longfellow House's most defining feature is its slim central portico and triangular pediment on the entrance façade (Figure 9). This feature, which is usually thought of as variation on a Palladian or Georgian portico, is in fact a unique façade-type. The *distyle portico-pavilion*, of which the Longfellow House is a particularly note-worthy example, most likely arrived in America via Colonial Boston. The architectural lineage leading up to its arrival in New England, however, is not as clear as its supposed singular Palladian origins. Since roughly the American Centennial, the Longfellow House—and by extension, its until-now-unidentified distyle portico-pavilion—has been grouped with American interpretations of Palladio's designs, and yet its true origins are far more complex.²¹

Before investigating the origins of the Longfellow House façade-type, it is necessary to first identify and define the distyle portico-pavilion. This detail is most easily characterized by a narrow set of pilasters, columns, or engaged columns, which are centrally located and support a triangular gable (Figure 10). The tight flanking of the central doorway creates a remarkably sleek design that helps to accentuate the verticality of the structure. At the top of this central portico is

²¹ For an extensive overview of the Longfellow House's place in architectural literature, please see *Appendix A*.

a triangular pediment. A lunette window in the pediment is a common feature of the distyle portico-pavilion, but other decorative details may be substituted. Often, as with the Longfellow House, there is a second set of complimentary pilasters, engaged columns, or (especially in brick adaptations) quoins, pushed to the ends of the façade. In the case of the Longfellow House, these complimentary pilasters are slightly offset from the direct edge of the façade; however, this placement is not necessarily dictated by the style.

PALLADIO AND THE LONGFELLOW HOUSE

Simply put, neither a direct template nor a convincing antecedent design can be found in Palladio's *Four Books of Architecture*. Palladio's masterful treatise was originally published in 1570, and quickly became one of the most widely studied and copied architectural texts in western history. Buildings like the Villa Cornaro (Figure 11), originally constructed between 1553-1554, exemplify Palladian design and help to draw a clear distinction between orthodox Palladianism and examples like the Longfellow House. Wholly separate from the distyle pavilion-portico, Palladio's *tetrastyle portico-pavilions* (Figure 12) (like the one found on the Villa Emo of 1559) or *hexastyle portico-pavilions* (Figure 13) (like the Villa Cornaro's) are entirely too wide to serve as a reasonable template for the Longfellow House.²²

²² One of the best texts on Palladio is Bruce Boucher, *Andrea Palladio: The Architect in His Time* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994). It is now in its second edition, printed in 2007. While a graduate student at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, historian Delores Hayden submitted the paper "A Comparison of the Villa Emo at Fanzolo and the Vassall House in Cambridge, Massachusetts" (December 5, 1967). Since then, a copy has been housed in the Longfellow House archives, and its ideas have found their way into many of the National Park Service's subsequent publications. While Hayden does an excellent formal analysis of both the Longfellow House and the Villa Emo, she concludes that the builder(s) of the Longfellow House must not have properly understood Palladian architecture, since it does not appear to come from one of Palladio's designs.

ARTISAN MANNERISM AND THE LONGFELLOW HOUSE

Artisan Mannerism, a style first identified by the eminent architectural authority Sir John Summerson, originated in seventeenth-century Britain. Spreading from the circle surrounding Inigo Jones, the founder of British Palladianism, Artisan Mannerism was perpetuated primarily by skilled craftsman rather than architects. A highly idiosyncratic style, Summerson asserts that Artisan Mannerism provided a comparatively high level of liberation of design coming off of the preceding Jacobean architecture. The houses built for William Newton on London's Queen Street (1637, now demolished) provides an excellent example of the Artisan Mannerist style (Figure 14). Describing the fourteen houses, Summerson writes, "The Queen Street houses...had Corinthian pilasters, rising from first-floor level to an eaves cornice; there were coupled pilasters at each party wall, so as to give the houses separate identities." Summerson goes on to note that the giant order, or pilaster which runs through multiple stories, became a common element in Artisan Mannerist construction.²³

One of the first American ancestors of the Longfellow House also helps to connect its design with seventeenth century British tradition. The Longfellow House's design, and specifically its entrance façade, is unthinkable without considering the grandest house in Colonial Boston, the Foster-Hutchinson House of 1690-1692 (Figure 15). Like the houses on Queen Street, the Foster-Hutchinson House features a giant order, with one pilaster in from each end and a pair of pilasters grouped tightly at the center. The Longfellow House and the Foster-

²³ For the standard source on Artisan Mannerism, please see John Summerson, "Architecture and the Artisan 1615-75," *Architecture in Britain 1530-1830*, Ninth Edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993). 142-156. This text was first published in 1953 by Penguin Books Ltd. For the quote regarding the Queen Street houses, please see Summerson, *Architecture in Britain*, 150.

Hutchinson House also share angle-volute Ionic capitals and a broken entablature. In fact, the only major difference between the Longfellow House and the Foster-Hutchinson House is the absence of the distyle portico-pavilion's distinctive triangular pediment.²⁴

THE ENGLISH BAROQUE AND THE LONGFELLOW HOUSE

In addition to Artisan Mannerism, the Longfellow House is also more deeply rooted in the English Baroque, the antithesis of orthodox Palladianism. Created and popularized by Christopher Wren (1632-1723) and his followers, English Baroque architecture enjoyed a relatively short lifespan in seventeenth-and-eighteenth-century Britain. It is also notable for being the first widespread movement in which the distyle portico-pavilion was prominently featured. Drawing from a fast span of styles, English Baroque architecture was in no way an orthodox Palladian movement. Wren and his followers created dynamic and highly ornamented structures (Figure 16). In fact, as architectural authority Kerry Downes writes, "In effect, Wren and the English Baroque architects were ready to look at anything, from Greek to Gothic."²⁵

Perhaps even more formative to the lineage leading up to the Longfellow House was the English Provincial Baroque. Following the Great London Fire of 1666, Baroque detailing and design gained in popularity as Sir Christopher Wren rebuilt the English capitol. Shortly thereafter, England (and London in particular) experienced a boom in construction between 1680

²⁴ Abbott Lowell Cummings, "The Foster-Hutchinson House," *Old-Time New England*, Volume 54, Number 3 (January-March 1964), pages 59-76.

²⁵ For the quote, please see: Kerry Downes, *English Baroque Architecture* (London: A. Zwemmer Ltd, 1966), 3.

and 1730. Following the initial explosion of the domestic style through urban townhouses, Provincial Baroque country houses remained popular outside of London (Figure 17).²⁶

One of the finest Baroque architects to spring from the country house boom was Nicholas Hawksmoor (1661-1736). Achieving a considerable architectural pedigree, he worked as a clerk under Sir Christopher Wren and later collaborated with Sir John Vanbrugh (1664-1726). His Northamptonshire country house, Easton Neston (Figure 18), is a supreme example of both Hawksmoor's work and English Baroque architecture. Designed in 1702, the grand country house was commissioned by Sir William Fermor (1648-1711). Like the Longfellow House, Easton Neston prominently features the distyle portico-pavilion. Unlike other examples, however, in which the distyle portico-pavilion encases the central entrance, Easton Neston's use of the motif occurs on its side façades (Figure 19).

In spite of its unusual location, the parallels between Easton Neston's North and South side façades and the Longfellow House's entrance façade are quite clear. Easton Neston features two sets of angle-volute Ionic pilasters: one set pushed to the edges of the façade, and the other narrowly flanking a central window. Above the central pilasters is a broken entablature and triangular pediment. Easton Neston's features were not peculiar for the time—the distyle portico-pavilion was a standard feature of the English Baroque both in London and in the surrounding countryside.²⁷

²⁶ The explanation of the Provincial Baroque is a synthesis of the Downes' section titled "The Diffusion of English Baroque: Patrons and Architects." Please see: Downes, *English Baroque*, 11-14.

²⁷ Hawksmoor has been extensively studied by Kerry Downes as part of the Studies in Architecture series, edited by Anthony Blunt and Rudolf Wittkower. Please see: Kerry Downes, *Hawksmoor* (London: A. Zwemmer Ltd, 1959). The most recent major study of Hawksmoor was done by Vaughan Hart for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art. Please see: Vaughan Hart, *Nicholas Hawksmoor: Rebuilding Ancient Wonders* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002). Discussion of Easton Neston begins on page 105 of the text.

Perhaps the best-known antecedent of the Longfellow House, another product of the Baroque construction boom incorporates a modified distyle portico-pavilion. Buckingham House (Figure 20), which is now known throughout the world as Buckingham Palace, is an exquisite building befitting its current purpose—the residency of the British monarch. While it has been heavily modified since the eighteenth century, the core structure dates back to 1702 and is the product of William Talman (1650-1719) and William Winde (1645-1722). Like Easton Neston, the distyle pavilion-portico does not appear on the entrance façade of the main structure. Buckingham House features two flanking wing buildings, and those wing buildings feature slim central recessed entrances acting as a stylized distyle portico-pavilion. Located in Westminster, this house was hard to miss in such an important part of London.²⁸

CONTEMPORARIES OF THE LONGFELLOW HOUSE

By the second half of the eighteenth century, the distyle portico-pavilion was poised to make its first true appearances in the American Colonies. In 1754, the Lindens (also known as the King Hooper House), was built in Danvers, Massachusetts (Figure 21). The similarities to the later Longfellow House are numerous and evident. Instead of the central pilasters of the Longfellow House, the Lindens features a distyle portico-pavilion with engaged Corinthian columns and decorative quoins at the corners of the entrance façade. Resting atop the orders is a triangular pediment, punctured by a centered window. The Lindens is now located at 2401

²⁸ One of the most complete histories of Buckingham House is H. Clifford Smith, “Buckingham Palace,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, Volume 101, Number 4900 (1953), pages 451-464. More recently, the building has been re-evaluated as a marker of the changes in English society over the past three centuries. Please see: Edna Healey, *The Queen’s House: A Social History of Buckingham Palace* (New York: Pegasus, 2012).

Kalorama Rd. in Washington, DC. Now a key part of Washington's Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District, the house was moved to its current location in 1935.²⁹

In the years following the construction of the Longfellow House—just five years after the construction of the Lindens—a cycle of subsequent houses sprang up across New England. Like classical musical compositions in the same period, the study of the Longfellow House's contemporaries is the study of theme and variations. The houses span from New York to Maine; and just like the Longfellow House, they are exemplary of the tastes of wealthy English patrons.

In 1760, Lady Pepperrell (1708-1789), widow of Sir William Pepperrell (1696-1759), built a home in Kittery Point, Maine (Figure 22). Her late husband, who was a loyal English subject and the only American to be honored with the title of "Baronet," left her with a sizable sum of money. Like the Longfellow House, a giant order of pilasters tightly flanks a central entrance. Decorative quoins run the length of the edges of the façade. The door is an adaptation of the same design used at the Longfellow House—this time incorporating a fish motif (Figure 23). Above the door, two angled-volute Ionic capitals support a broken entablature and triangular pediment. In a variation of the typical distyle portico-pavilion's decorative elements, the Lady Pepperrell House's pediment is accentuated with the date of construction in place of a lunette window.

The interior of the Lady Pepperrell House is similar to the Longfellow House. Both follow a rather remarkable center hall plan (Figure 24). Two rooms on either side flanked both front and back staircases—a highly advanced design for eighteenth century America. Much like the Longfellow House, the rooms are spacious, and feature large windows. Upon entering, one

²⁹ For more information on the Lindens, please see Kornwolf, *Architecture and Town Planning*, 1001.

comes to the staircase—in a design very similar to the one found in the Longfellow House—and the wealth of Lady Pepperrell is immediately apparent. Though officially unsubstantiated, local legend holds that the patron of the house imported craftsmen from England to ensure the finest quality work and fashionable details.³⁰

Another house constructed by a loyal subject of the Crown was the Apthorp House, which, like the Longfellow House, is found in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Figure 25). Sometimes referred to as the East Apthorp House, it was built for the Reverend East Apthorp (1733-1816) in 1760. After studying in Oxford, East Apthorp built his home one year after moving back to the Colonies. The Apthorp House is an extravagant residence built by a member of one of the wealthiest families in Massachusetts.³¹

East Apthorp was the fifth child of Charles Apthorp, a wealthy Boston merchant. In 1761, he married into the prominent Hutchinson family by way of his wife, Elizabeth. In the same year, East Apthorp, an Anglican deacon, opened Christ Church in Cambridge. Christ Church would quickly become one the main social spaces of the Massachusetts Royalist gentry.³²

The exterior of the Apthorp House is a near-exact copy of the Longfellow House. A set of giant pilasters form the base of the central distyle portico-pavilion, with a matching set of pilasters slightly pulled in from the edges of the entrance façade. Like the Lady Pepperrell House, the Apthorp House incorporates a slight variation on the Longfellow House door (Figure

³⁰ Kornwolf, 1000.

³¹ The wealthy Royalists in Massachusetts—and really all of New England—were heavily intermarried and frequently ran in the same social and religious circles. To say that the Apthorp family was wealthy is also to say that they are tightly connected to most, if not all, of the other major Colonial families of the day. It is no accident or surprise that architectural ideas would pass between them.

³² Kornwolf, 1000.

26). Above the entrance, two angled-volute Ionic capitals support a broken entablature and a triangular pediment. The interior is, once again, remarkably similar to the Longfellow House. Also a center hall plan, the Apthorp House is lavishly decorated, complete with elaborate front staircase—identical to its counterpart at the Longfellow House. Furthermore, the Apthorp House uses the same blue Delft tiles as the Longfellow House in its finely decorated fireplaces.

Unlike the Longfellow House, the Apthorp House has an upper story that extends past the pediment. While it is now one of its defining features, it is a later addition to the house. One known illustration of the house in its original form is known to survive (Figure 27). The minutely detailed elevation, showing a two-story home modeled after the Longfellow House, was drawn by the great academic and future president of Yale Ezra Stiles (1727-1795) in 1761. Born in North Haven, Connecticut, Stiles traveled throughout colonial New England. Trained in both law and theology, Stiles was well known for his involvement in both the Colonial academic world and the revolutionary cause. It is not known why Stiles drew the Apthorp House over the course of his travels, but it suggests a principle—traditionally in North America, one of the standard building practices was to model new construction on standing buildings, and this design seems to have been well traveled.³³

Shortly after the Cambridge Apthorp House was completed, Charles Ward Apthorp (1729-1797), the older brother of Reverend East Apthorp, built his own Apthorp House (Figure 28). Charles Ward Apthorp's New York house has since been destroyed, but it provides a key link to English Baroque tastes. The structure, which features yet another variation on the distyle

³³ *Historic Guide to Cambridge*, Assembled and Edited by the Massachusetts Daughters of the American Revolution: Hannah Winthrop Chapter (Ithaca: Cornell University Library), 75-78. See also: Wendell D. Garrett, *Apthorp House, 1760-1960* (Cambridge: Adams House, Harvard University, 1960).

portico-pavilion, was constructed in 1764. Its connection to the Longfellow House has remained unarticulated, though it shares many stylistic similarities. A set of giant pilasters is pushed to the edges of the entrance façade, while another set of pilasters tightly flank a central entrance. Angled-volute Ionic capitals top the pilasters. Resting atop the central orders is a triangular pediment—this time with a solid entablature—punctured by a centered lunette window.³⁴

The most striking feature of the Apthorp House is also the most dissimilar with the Longfellow House. The central entrance to the house is recessed with a Palladian window situated above the doorway. This motif—recessed entrance surrounded by a distyle portico-pavilion—belongs to the line of descent from Buckingham House. This is a previously unexplored connection to English design. Upon his return to New York, Charles Ward Apthorp constructed an interpretation of one of the most visible homes in eighteenth century London. Both buildings feature a recessed entrance as a distyle portico. A central triangular pediment flanked by dormer windows caps both. These elements, being part of Baroque vernacular, come from the fashions of wealthy English patrons.

ROYALIST PATRONS IN NEW ENGLAND

Perhaps just as important as the physical links between the houses stemming from the Longfellow House is the link between the patrons and builders. In these early examples of the American distyle portico-pavilion, the patrons are loyal English subjects. The builders of these homes, having strong ties to the crown and considerable wealth, were interested in keeping the best British traditions alive in the colonies. Architecture was no exception.

³⁴ In some literature, Charles Ward Apthorp's surname is recorded as "Apthorpe." The two spellings of the name seem to be interchangeable, with "Apthorpe" merely being a common misspelling.

In his study of loyalism in Massachusetts, James Stark names Hutchinson, Apthorp, and Vassall as some of the colony's most prominent supporters of the King. One of the most striking aspects of any study of colonial New England is just how interconnected wealthy, land-owning families were. Henry Vassall, Major John Vassall's uncle and neighbor, married Penelope Royall in 1741. Isaac Royall, Sr., father of Penelope Royall, was also wealthy and powerful supporter of British rule in New England. Mary Hirst, who would later be known as Lady Mary Pepperrell had very strong family ties to Boston. Her grandson, William Pepperrell, was educated at Harvard (as were all the Pepperrell men) and eventually wed Elizabeth Royall, granddaughter of Isaac Royall, Sr.. The aristocratic families of Colonial New England were tightly interwoven, and ideas—including architectural designs—flowed freely thorough the Royalist social circle.³⁵

INDEPENDENCE AND THE LONGFELLOW HOUSE

After the American Revolution, most Royalists in New England were forced to flee. Many of their homes, including the Longfellow House, simply passed to new, American owners. While the houses may have started out as a reflection of decidedly British tastes, the end of the eighteenth century saw the beginning of the Longfellow House's transition from Royalist to Patriotic icon. As a site so closely linked to General Washington and the Siege of Boston, the most famous inhabitant of the Longfellow House was also responsible for bringing the design to the South.

³⁵ James Henry Stark, *The Loyalists of Massachusetts and the Other Side of the American Revolution* (Boston: WB Clarke Co., 1910), 60. These connections are further substantiated through letters between prominent New Englanders. These can be found in the collections of the Cambridge Historical Society, the Boston Historical Society, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the Boston Public Library. I thank each institution for allowing my access to their resources.

Completed in 1787, roughly a decade after Washington had spent time in Cambridge, the Greenhouse at Mount Vernon shows a striking resemblance to the Longfellow House (Figure 29). A small, brick building, the Greenhouse at Mount Vernon incorporates a variation of a distyle portico-pavilion. An exercise in simplicity and reduction, two central pilasters extend from simple bases. The pilasters are capped with Doric capitals supporting a perforated triangular pediment with broken entablature. It is no stretch then to say that Washington took the Longfellow House's design to heart and brought it back with him to Virginia.³⁶

³⁶ One of the most recent texts on Mount Vernon is Joseph Manca, *George Washington's Eye: Landscape Architecture and Design at Mount Vernon* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012). The greenhouse at Mount Vernon was first connected to the Longfellow House in a paper, "The Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House of 1759: Colonial...Palladianism," presented by the author at Virginia Commonwealth University's *Traditions IV—The 20th Annual Symposium on Architectural History and the Decorative Arts* in 2012.

THE PATRIOTIC LONGFELLOW HOUSE: COUSINS AND DERIVATIVES ACROSS AMERICA

THE CANTERBURY STYLE

As the eighteenth century drew to a close, the Longfellow House was a building in transition. The additions made by Andrew Craigie were exceedingly lavish and helped solidify the home's status as one of the finest in Massachusetts. Despite the new construction, however, the Longfellow House's entrance façade, with its distinctive distyle portico-pavilion, continued to hold the fascination of eighteenth century architects and patrons alike.

One of the first true nineteenth century aftershocks of Longfellow House was felt in Canterbury, Connecticut. Settled on land originally part of neighboring Plainfield, Canterbury was officially made Connecticut's thirty-eighth town in October 1703. Land disputes, conflicting property claims, and particularly harsh winters hampered the initial development of the town—two decades after breaking away from Plainfield, Canterbury's population was recorded at scant 68 land owners. Thanks, in part, to the construction of a succession of meetinghouses necessitated by the Great Awakening, Canterbury attracted more and more residents as the eighteenth century wore on. By 1756 the town's population soared to 1,260, and it would continue to climb, hitting 2,450 residents by 1775.³⁷

³⁷ "Historic and Architectural Survey of Canterbury," Canterbury Historical Society, April 1992.

Canterbury, now a prototypical New England town, boasts a thriving tourism industry, driven by picturesque views of eastern Connecticut, quaint bed and breakfasts, and historic homes. Literature on these homes is mostly restricted to either local guidebooks and regional travel companions or documents prepared for the National Register of Historic Places. Recurring throughout both contemporary commercial and scholarly descriptions of Canterbury is the prevalence of the “Canterbury Style,” a house-type seemingly specific to the New England town of the same name. Houses in the Canterbury Style typically feature a set of engaged columns or pilasters at either end of the entrance façade, another set of engaged columns or pilasters narrowly flanking the entrance, a central Palladian window above the door, and a triangular pediment punctured with a lunette window. Like most New England houses from the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century, Canterbury Style houses sport clapboard exteriors.³⁸

One of the first houses constructed in the Canterbury style was the Captain John Clark House of 1802 (Figure 30). It is a good example of both the distyle portico-pavilion and Connecticut’s regional variations on the New England template. Local history suggests that Thomas Gibbs, an architect from neighboring Plainfield, designed the Captain John Clark House, however the evidence for this connection is purely anecdotal. Nominated in 1970, the Captain John Clark House was documented for the National Register of Historic Places. According to the nomination form, the house is typical of the “so-called ‘Canterbury Style.’” Furthermore, the building is listed as an example of the “Georgian Style.” While the National Register documents

³⁸ Ibid.

do little to clarify the architectural origins of the house, they do prove that the Canterbury Style was a recognized classification with Georgian associations as early as 1970.³⁹

Near the Captain John Clark House is the Prudence Crandall House—perhaps the finest example of the Canterbury Style (Figure 31). It was originally built circa 1805 for Elisha Payne. Like the Captain John Clark House, it is believed to have been built by Thomas Gibbs. The house’s most famous owner, Prudence Crandall, was a pioneer in education, co-founding the Canterbury Female Boarding School in 1831. Now the official “Connecticut State Heroine,” Crandall reopened her school as Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies and Little Misses of Color, offering integrated education more than a century before the landmark Supreme Court decision, *Brown v. Board of Ed.* Like the Captain John Clark House, the Prudence Crandall House was also nominated for inclusion in the National Historic Register in 1970. It is classified as a “notable example of what has been termed the ‘Canterbury type.’”⁴⁰

Both the Prudence Crandall House and the Captain John Clark House were featured in The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs. The study, titled “Old Canterbury on the Quinnebaug,” Roughly a century old, the White Pine Monographs do little to clarify the history of these houses—in fact, both houses are attributed to an architect simply identified as “Dyer,” while the Captain John Clark House is dated to circa 1790. While the author, Richard H. Dana, Jr., does not explicitly identify the Canterbury Style, he does hint that there is a unique set of

³⁹ “Captain John Clark House,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1970, 3. Courtesy of the National Park Service.

⁴⁰ “Prudence Crandall House,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1970, 2-3. Courtesy of the National Park Service.

houses in the region. Most surprisingly, however, is that despite over thirty years of academic research, the group of houses in Canterbury remains unassociated with the Longfellow House.⁴¹

THE COLONIAL REVIVAL

The Longfellow House grew to national prominence around the same time as Americans began looking back to their past. The Longfellow House quickly found itself at the forefront of the Colonial Revival. Not solely restricted to architecture, the Colonial Revival was an all-encompassing national movement. The Longfellow House was most certainly a direct beneficiary of this renewed interest in America's colonial past. By 1876, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow had lived in the Cambridge home for over three decades. As a prominent literary figure, Americans looked to Longfellow—and specifically to his historic house—for national aesthetic cues and tastes. Subsequently, the Longfellow House rose from local treasure to national landmark; it appeared on stereoscope images and post cards, all touting its importance as a quintessentially American house.

MARTHA J. LAMB

Around the same time as the United States Centennial, the first serious studies of the Longfellow House began. In 1878 the house was featured in *The Art Journal's* series "Homes of America." The article, "Some New England Houses" by Martha J. Lamb prominently illustrates the Longfellow House entry façade, as well as the staircase (Figure 32). In full antiquarian mode, the author ignored an analysis of style to give historic details. Lamb discusses the history of

⁴¹ "Old Canterbury on the Quinebaug," *White Pine Architectural Monographs*, Volume 9, Number 6 (1923).

loyalism surrounding the house, as well as the histories of its inhabitants. While the scope of her work was fairly limited, she did help establish the Longfellow House as one of the most patriotic sites in the United States.⁴²

When discussing the Longfellow House, Lamb begins by describing the physical details of the home and connecting them to lines from Longfellow poems. This reliance on Longfellow's history rather than the history of the home itself does present a few problems. In one particularly pervasive error, Lamb discusses the central passage, or entrance hall, which distinctively features a clock halfway up the stairs. Introduced as—and still commonly thought of as—a reference to Longfellow's, "Old Clock on the Stairs," it is sometimes cited as the clock that inspired the poem.⁴³

Though a fun story to tell, this assertion is incorrect. First appearing in the house in 1877, the clock is in fact a faux-colonial element added in the wave of colonial revivalism in the later half of the nineteenth century. In a moment of historical refection, the Longfellow House mythos acted as a popularizer while concurrently subscribing to the tastes of the era. Despite the fact that it did not have any true colonial roots, the clock on the stairs became a leitmotif of the Colonial Revival, an architectural movement that tried to reintroduce the design principles and aesthetics of eighteenth century America.⁴⁴

⁴² For original article on the Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House, please see: Martha J. Lamb, "Some New England Houses," *The Art Journal*, Volume 4 (1878), 101. Following the success of her articles, Lamb's series was turned into a book. I must thank VCU Library's Special Collections for acquiring Lamb's book to help me with my research.

⁴³ Lamb, "Some New England Houses," 133.

⁴⁴ For more information on the clock, please see: Sarah H. Heald, "To Keep Up the Delusion: Henry W. Longfellow's House and Furnishings and the Colonial Revival," *Re-Creating the American Past: Essays on the Colonial Revival* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006, 356-362.

THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893

In just under two decades following the American Centennial, the Longfellow House had become a fixture in American popular culture. In fact, the house proved to be so popular it appeared in one of the United States' greatest social and artistic achievements. In 1893 Chicago played host to one of the largest and most important World's Fairs in history—the World's Columbian Exposition. Architecturally, the Exposition was one of the most significant events of the nineteenth century. Notable structures included The Administration Building by Richard Morris Hunt, The Agricultural Building by Charles McKim, The Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building by George B. Post, and The Transportation Building by Louis Sullivan. Collectively known as the “White City,” the generally classicized buildings helped to usher in the City Beautiful Movement, in which the inclusion of monumental and harmonious structures became one of the chief aims of city planning.

Built by the firm of Peabody and Stearns, the Massachusetts State Pavilion incorporated various pieces of Massachusetts architectural highlights in its design (Figure 33). The distyle portico-pavilion takes its prominent place at the center of the entrance façade. At the right side of the building sits an extended porch, just like the one added to the Longfellow House by Andrew Craigie. In selecting Peabody and Stearns to design the Pavilion, Massachusetts entrusted their contribution to the World's Columbian Exposition to one of the state's best-known architectural duos. John G. Stearns and Robert Swain Peabody began their forty-year partnership after meeting in the office of Ware and Van Brunt.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ The Massachusetts State Building was detailed extensively in visitor's guides to the exhibition. See: John Flinn Joseph, *World's Columbian Exposition* (Chicago: The Columbian Guide Company, 1893), page 155 and Richard J. Murphy, *World's Columbian Exposition* (Chicago: Union News Company, 1893), page 30.

THE COTTON STATES INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION OF 1895

Two years after appearing in Chicago, a more direct interpretation of the Longfellow House was featured in Atlanta's Cotton States International Exposition of 1895 (Figure 34). Sponsored by the Massachusetts state government, the building was intended to bring the best of New England architecture to the South. While the architect of the "Craigie House" (as the replica was called in Atlanta) remains unknown, photographs of the site exist and show the formal connections to the Cambridge house. From its choice spot in Piedmont Park, the Craigie House played up connections to Washington and Longfellow, positing it as a truly American home. Notably, the house was built on a steep slope, with the back-end of the building supported by twenty-to-thirty- foot wooden beams.

Following the Exposition, the Craigie House was given to the Atlanta chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution who held meetings there until 1909. Today, the "Craigie House" sits in disrepair, though the building has been rendered wholly unrecognizable through extensive revision and reconstruction (Figure 35). In 1911, a new structure was built, supposedly incorporating materials from the original Massachusetts pavilion. If the second iteration of the Craigie House is meant to pay homage to the Longfellow House, it is a tenuous interpretation at best—the original New England clapboarding is now Southern redbrick, and the façade's distyle pavilion-portico has been erased in favor of a tetrastyle temple-front.

ADAPTATIONS OF THE LONGFELLOW HOUSE

Around the same time the Longfellow House's considerable rise in fame following its association with the Centennial celebrations in 1876 and its migration to Chicago in 1893 and

Atlanta in 1895, privately owned replicas appeared throughout the United States. The earliest known direct descendent is located In New Castle, Maine. Gladisfen, as it is known, was constructed in 1883 and designed by Henry Vaughn. In 1887, the design made it all the way to Evanston, Illinois, where a copy is known as Enfield Place. In 1893, a replica—possibly designed for Gov. Carrol Page—was constructed in Hyde Park, Vermont. In 1898, Crowell, Lancaster and Higgins, a firm from Bangor, Maine, built a version of the home. Now a fraternity house, it incorporates the distinctive distyle portico-pavilion, this time with a solid entablature. This exceptional example features an offset window in a touch of Victorian asymmetry. That same year, architect Joseph Vance designed a Longfellow House—including the grounds terraced landscape—in Great Barrington, Massachusetts

Into the twentieth century, the Longfellow House family continued to grow. In 1900, the Pierce House in Lincoln, Massachusetts was constructed as a nod to the Longfellow House. In 1906-1907, a three-fourths replica of the Cambridge home was built in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Originally built for Robert “Fish” Jones, it now houses the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, but was once a branch of the Minneapolis Public Library. Also in 1907, a version of the Longfellow House appeared in Plainfield, New Jersey. Shortly thereafter, a 1910 version with a slightly different entryway was built in Aberdeen, South Dakota, and a version in Lebanon, Tennessee was also constructed around the same time.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ “The Next Best-known House in America and Its Replicas,” Longfellow House Bulletin, Volume 3, Number 2 (December 1999), 2. I must also once again thank the staff of the Longfellow House for allowing me access to their archives. Included within are pictures and letters generously sent from visitors who know of (or even live in) replicas of the house. Please see *Appendix B* for a full map of the United States featuring these Longfellow House derivatives.

A very special derivative of the Longfellow house was constructed in 1894, by the architects Percy Griffin and T. Henry Randall. The Allison House (Figure 36) in Richmond, Virginia features all of the hallmarks of the Longfellow House façade: a pilaster at each corner, a pair of them at the center, and a central triangular pediment. The Allison House is notable, however, more for its material. A red brick building laid in a Colonial Revival Flemish bond, the house merges the northern design of the Longfellow House with the brickwork of Maryland and Virginia.⁴⁷

The Allison House represents the epicenter of a second generation of Longfellow House-inspired buildings. In Richmond, the style was morphed into a popular derivation on the Allison House plan. The grandchildren of the Longfellow House take the forms of townhouses with a three-fifths style interpretation (Figure 37) and those that break the façade into more easily incorporated pieces (Figure 38). Throughout Richmond, one can see the architectural reverberations of the Longfellow House and the Allison House—demonstrating the way that the façade type has grown and changed as it has moved across the United States.⁴⁸

PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE LONGFELLOW HOUSE

As the Longfellow House's presence in the United States grew geographically, so did its presence in the public discussion of American patriotism. From the mid-nineteenth century on, the house was featured on numerous stereoscope cards, as part of sets displaying the best of American architecture (Figure 39). Stereoscope images of the Longfellow House usually showed

⁴⁷ The locations of Longfellow House derivatives are illustrated in *Appendix B*.

⁴⁸ This information comes from a paper resulting from the collaboration of Ray Bonis, Charles Brownell, and the author titled "Griffin and Randall: American Masters." It was presented by the author at Virginia Commonwealth University's *Traditions IV—The 20th Annual Symposium on Architectural History and the Decorative Arts* in 2012.

one of the two most popular views of the house and grounds—a head-on shot from across the street presenting the viewer with a full view of the entrance façade, or an angled shot presenting the viewer with a better look at one of the side piazzas. Often, the stereoscope cards featured brief histories (with varying degrees of accuracy) that mostly discussed Washington and Longfellow.

Later, as more and more American families began to own automobiles, the Longfellow House took on a new role as one of New England’s premier educational tourist destinations. Maps distributed by early motorists’ associations featured pre-planned day or weekend agendas. Designed to bring families to the most historically significant sites in the United States, the maps often featured the Longfellow House as one of General Washington’s revolutionary residences and as a home to one of the United States’ greatest literary minds.

By the time that the Longfellow House had become a true tourist destination, the house was principally under the care of Harry Dana. An active historian and archivist, Dana embraced the Longfellow House’s national recognition. In June of 1930, a play—which he had written and would star in—titled “When Washington Came to Town” was performed on the front steps of the house (Figure 40). With a cast made up of amateur players from Cambridge and Boston, the performance was a “dramatization” of the Vassall family’s expulsion from the house.

While “When Washington Came to Town” was meant as an entertaining event to draw the community to the Longfellow House, its script reveals a far more complex undercurrent of thought. By 1930, the Longfellow House was seen as essentially American; John Vassall may have built the home, but it was General Washington’s destiny to liberate it from British hands. Dana, despite his academic pedigree, loaded his play with reductive assumptions about the

history of the house. For example, in one scene in which an angry group of townsfolk are preparing to burn the house in 1775, the Reverend Nathan Appleton (played by the Reverend Ralph Baily) exclaims, “Stop, stop, my brothers! You know not what you do. This is our house now, why should we loot it? Rather let us keep it safe and sound, and when we have chosen a leader for our cause of freedom, let it be his house, and the Head-Quarters of his army.” This is met with a hearty “Hurrah!” from those identified only as “The Mob.” It is a stirring patriotic scene, but it is not grounded in any truth—in fact, the Longfellow House served a number of purposes before ultimately being used by General Washington (Figure 41).⁴⁹

These misconceptions continued well into the twentieth century, and in some ways, shaped the way the house is interpreted today. In 2004, the National Park Service prepared the Longfellow National Historic Site’s “Comprehensive Interpretive Plan.” Outlining way in which the house should be presented to visitors, it states that “...the site’s significance is found in its associations with General George Washington during the Siege of Boston (1775-1776) as his home and headquarters, as home to poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and family (1837-1950), and as one of the country’s finest examples of mid-Georgian architecture—associations which offer insight into many themes related to the country’s birth and evolving national identity.” While these themes certainly are important to the discussion of the Longfellow House, there is still much that can be done to restore the house’s first legacy—that of a decidedly British Colonial mansion.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, “When Washington Came to Town,” 1930. Original manuscript now housed in the Longfellow House archives.

⁵⁰ “Comprehensive Interpretive Plan,” Longfellow National Historic Site, Prepared by the Department of the Interior, National Park Service (December 2004), page 7.

THE ENDURING LEGACY OF THE DISTYLE PORTICO-PAVILION

Thanks to the efforts of the National Park Service, the Longfellow House now stands as one of the best preserved, well visited, and well recognized historic houses in the United States. Its most recognizable architectural feature—the distyle portico-pavilion—also enjoys a rich contemporary legacy in the United States. Within Cambridge, examples abound as the distyle portico-pavilion is a common motif on both public and domestic structures (Figure 42). Two examples of a reduction of the style can be found in Succasunna, New Jersey (Figure 43). Both buildings feature masonry faux-pilasters in the distinctive central-and-side arrangement with a triangular pediment. Recently built homes as far from Cambridge as California incorporate the distyle portico-pavilion, making it a truly national façade type (Figure 44).

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis was to answer two fundamental questions: “What is the Longfellow House?” and “Why is the Longfellow House important?” In doing so, it becomes necessary to tell the story of the house as a story of change. The Longfellow House has undergone a number of changes over the course of its existence. In the eighteenth century, Andrew Craigie added a rear wing and side piazzas merging American tastes with the early British Royalist design. In the nineteenth century, the house experienced a pronounced transition from relic of British rule in America to icon of American patriotism. In the twentieth century, the National Park Service took over stewardship of the house, preserving it and interpreting it for the public. These changes each added to the legacy of the Longfellow House.

The house, with its direct connection to figures like Washington and Longfellow, serves a dual role as both a fixture in the canon of American architectural history and as a patriotic symbol of Americana. Since the American Centennial, the Longfellow House has been widely discussed and yet lightly investigated. Despite the wave of “Longfellow-House-mania” that swept the country in the nineteenth century, the house remained astoundingly misunderstood. Often, the house was presented as an essentially American building, with little to no mention of its English roots. Its legacy demonstrates the correlation between cultural and architectural

history, as well as the ways in which American historians and the American public have sought a national identity.

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FIGURES



Figure 1: The Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

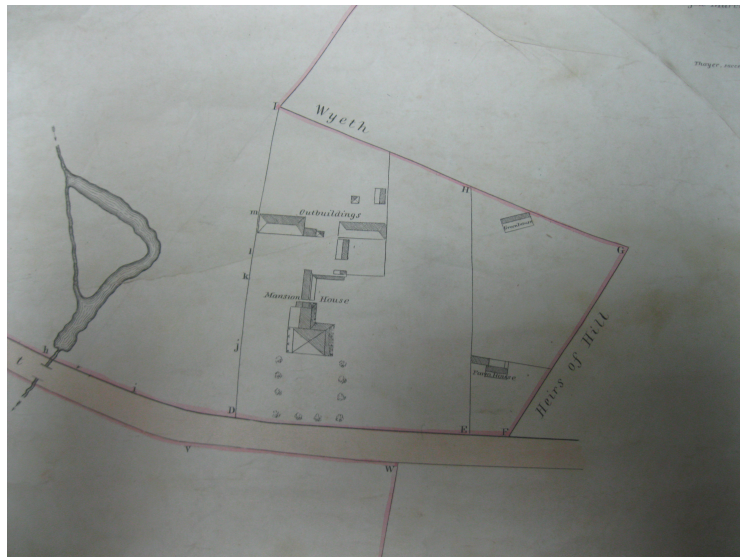


Figure 2: The Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow Estate and Surrounding Land. (Image Courtesy of the Boston Historical Society.)



Figure 3: Detail of the Longfellow House Front Door.

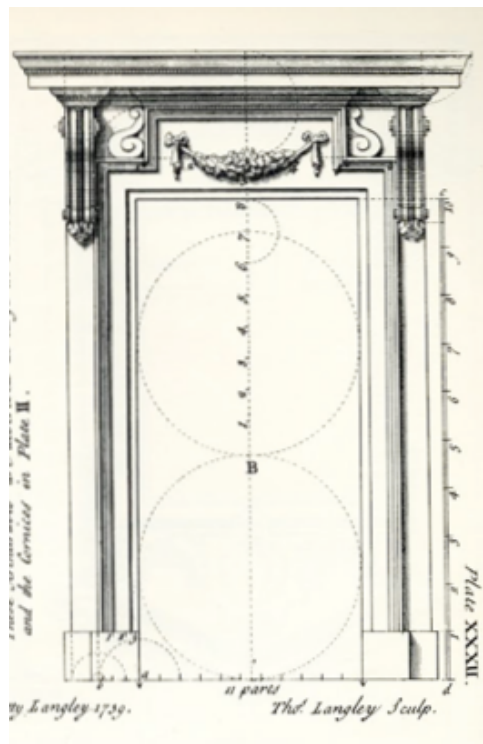


Figure 4: "Plate 32," Batty Langley, Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Designs.

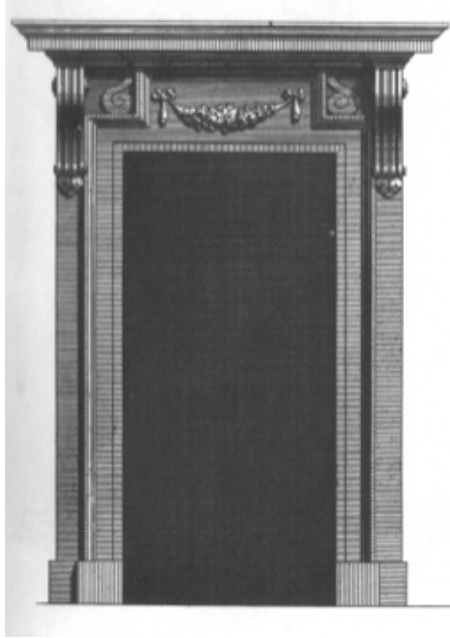
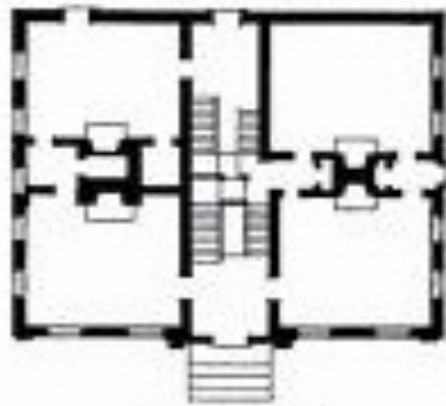


Figure 5: "Plate 105," James Gibbs, Book of Architecture.



John Vassall (Longfellow) house
Cambridge, Mass. 1799

Figure 6: Longfellow House
Floor Plan as built by Major
John Vassall. (Image reprinted
from Fiske Kimball, Domestic
Architecture of the Colonies and
of the Early Republic.)



Figure 7: The Craigie Estate and Surrounding Properties.
(Image Courtesy of the Cambridge Historical Society.)



Figure 8: Detail of the Longfellow House Porches, Added
by Andrew Craigie.



Figure 9: Detail of the Longfellow House Distyle Portico-Pavilion.



Figure 10: Model of a Typical Distyle Portico-Pavilion.



Figure 11: Illustration of the Villa Cornaro from Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books of Architecture*.



Figure 12: Model of a Typical Tetrastyle Portico-Pavilion.

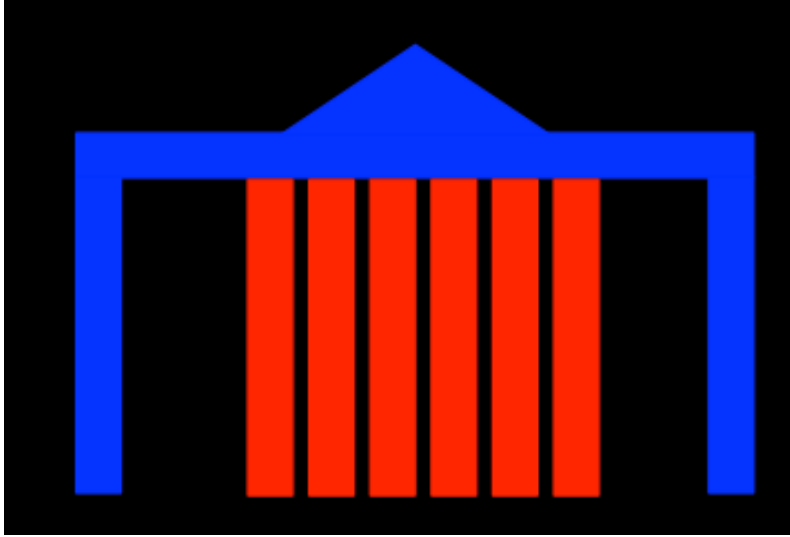


Figure 13: Model of a Typical Hexastyle Portico-Pavilion.

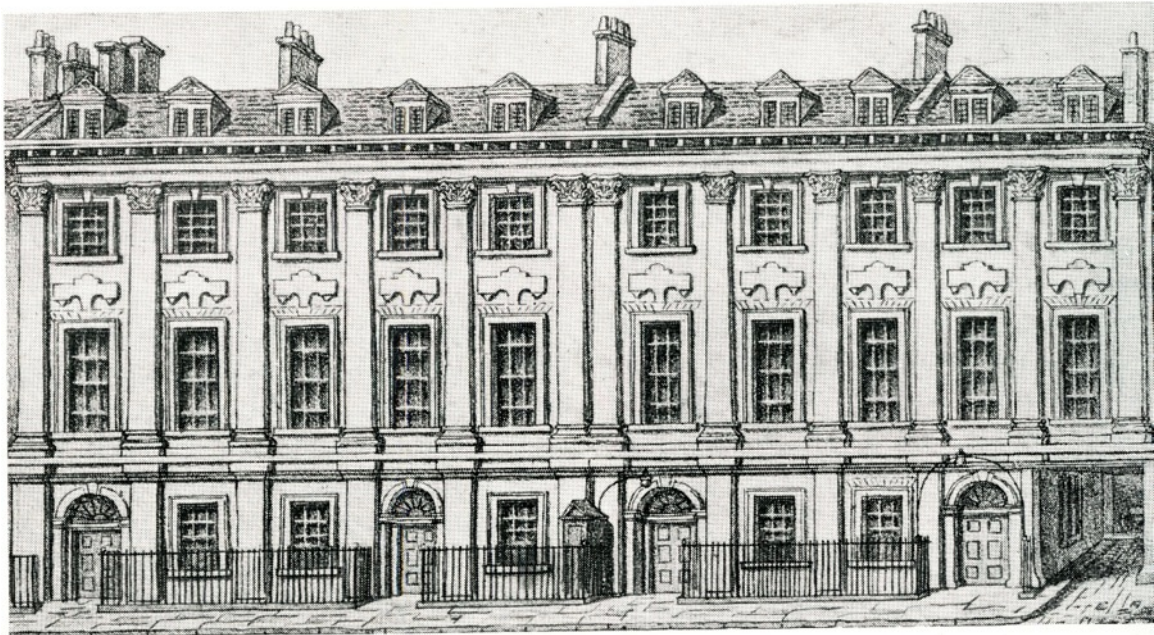


Figure 14: Illustration of the Buildings Along Queen Street, London.

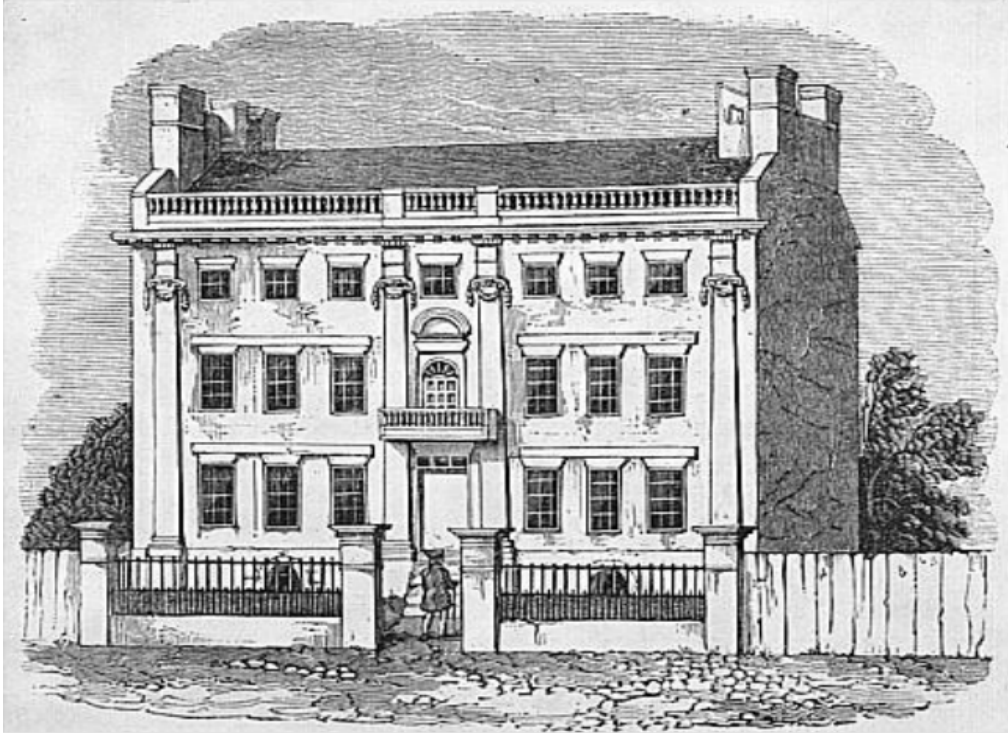


Figure 15: Illustration of the Foster-Hutchinson House, Boston.



Figure 16: Thomas Archer (attributed), Marlow Place, East Side, 1720.



Figure 17: Thomas White, Guildhall, Worcester (1721-1724).



Figure 18: Hawksmoor, Easton Neston, East Front.

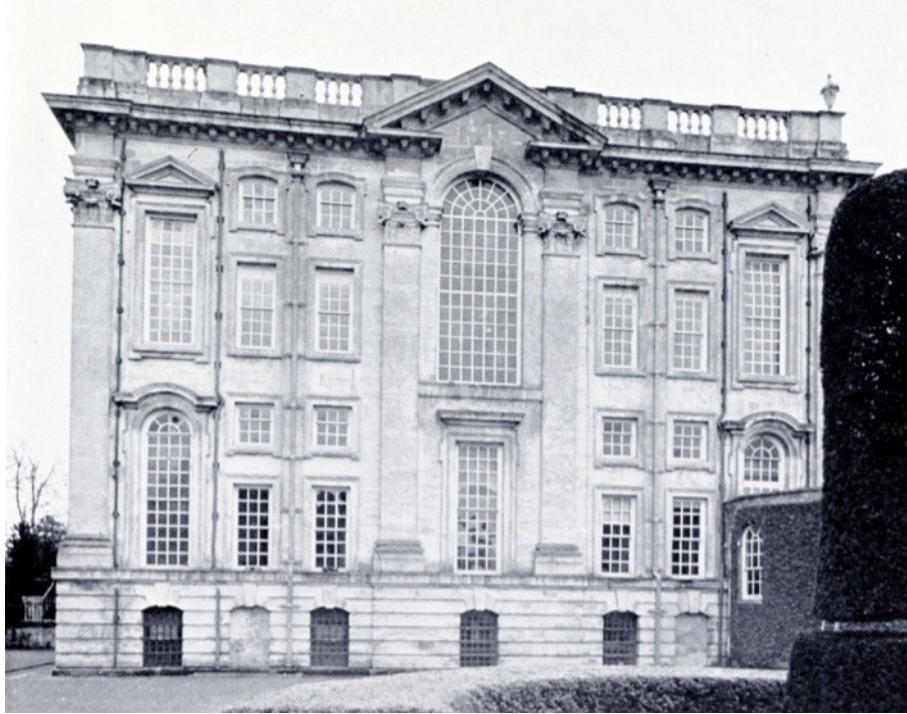


Figure 19: Hawksmoor, Easton Neston, North Front.

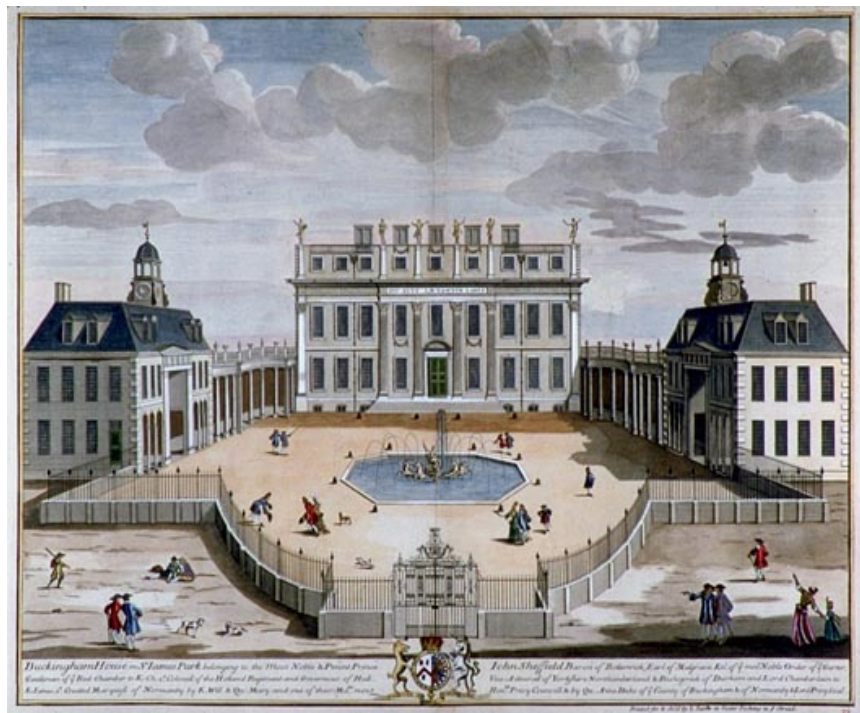


Figure 20: Buckingham House.



Figure 21: The Lindens, Danvers, Massachusetts.



Figure 22: The Lady Pepperrell House, Kittery Point, Maine.



Figure 23: Detail of the Lady Pepperrell House Front Door.

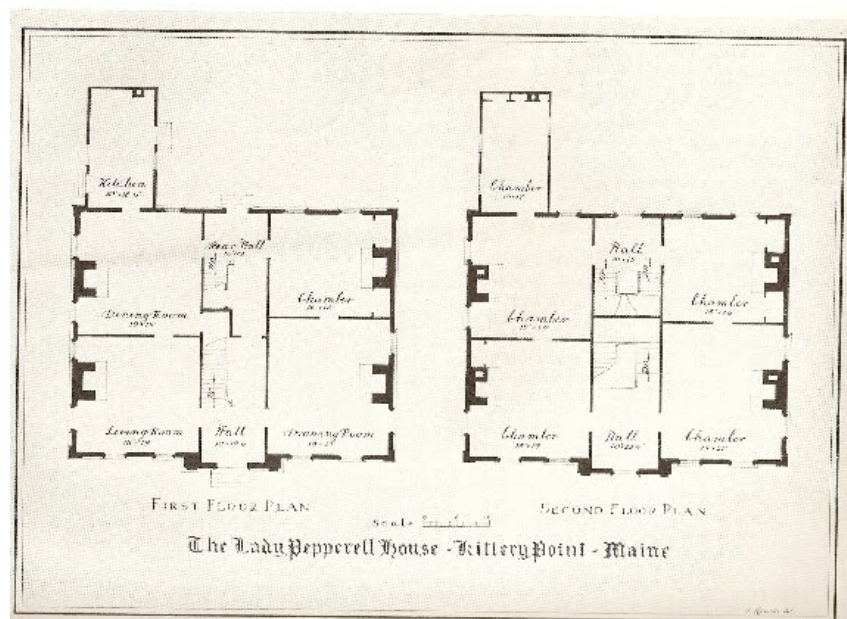


Figure 24: Lady Pepperrell House Floor Plan.



Figure 25: The Apthorp House, Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Figure 26: Detail of the Apthorp House Front Door.

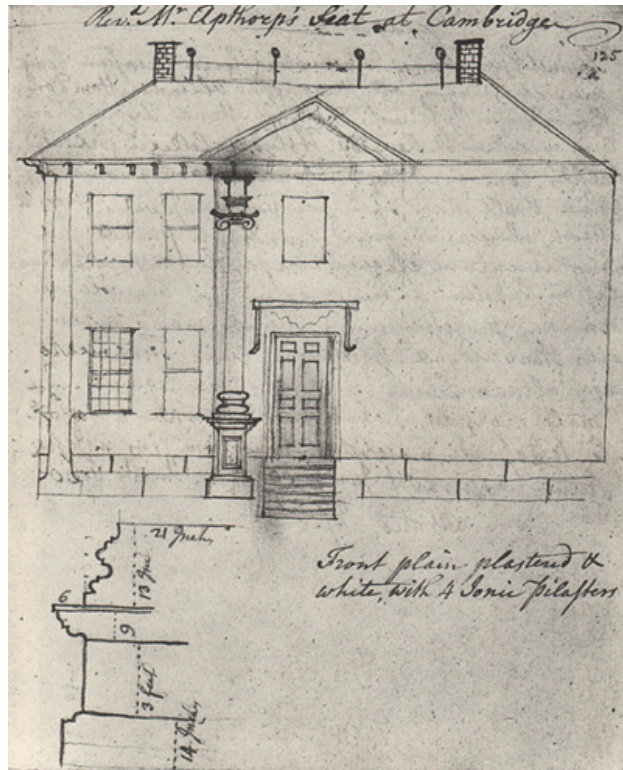


Figure 27: Ezra Stiles, "Drawing of the Apthorp House," 1761. (Image courtesy of The Gold Coaster, Alumni Magazine of Adams House, Harvard College.)

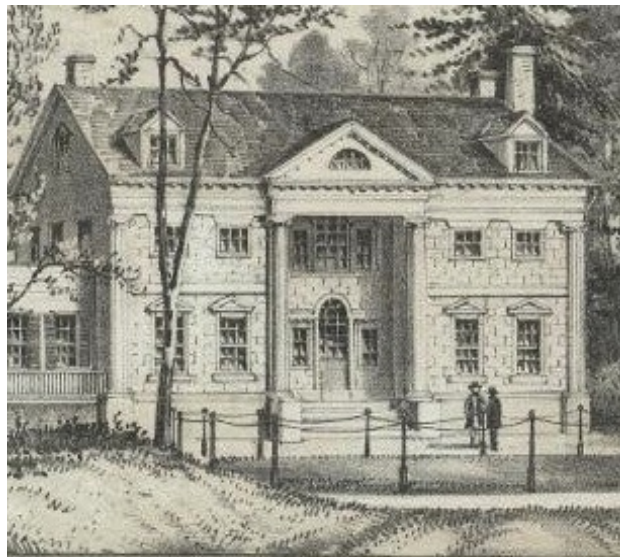


Figure 28: The Apthorp House, New York City, New York.



Figure 29: Washington's Greenhouse, Mount Vernon, Virginia. (Image Courtesy of Mount Vernon.)



Figure 30: The Captain John Clark House, Canterbury, Connecticut.



Figure 31: The Prudence Crandall House, Canterbury, Connecticut



Figure 32: Illustrations of the Longfellow House from Martha J. Lamb, "Some New England Houses."



Figure 33: The Massachusetts State Pavilion, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, Illinois.



Figure 34: The Craigie House (The Massachusetts State House), Cotton States Exposition, Atlanta, Georgia, 1895.



Figure 35: The Craigie House, Atlanta, Georgia, Present.



Figure 36: The Allison House, Richmond, Virginia.



Figure 37: 2200 Monument Avenue, Richmond, Virginia.



Figure 38: 3600 Seminary Avenue, Richmond, Virginia.



Figure 39: Nineteenth Century Stereoscope Cards Featuring the Longfellow House. (Image Courtesy of the National Park Service and The Longfellow House and Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site.)



Figure 40: Photograph of a Performance of "When Washington Came to Town," Showing the Vassall Family Crest Hung Above the Longfellow House Door. (Image Courtesy of the National Park Service and The Longfellow House and Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site.)



Figure 41: Photograph of a Performance of “When Washington Came to Town,” Showing the Arrival of the Continental Army to the Longfellow House. (Image Courtesy of the National Park Service and The Longfellow House and Washington’s Headquarters National Historic Site.)



Figure 42: The Cambridge Savings Bank, Located off of Harvard Square, Shows the Distyle Portico-Pavillion in Use in Commercial Space.



Figure 43: Building in Succasunna, New Jersey, Featuring the Distyle Portico-Pavilion.



Figure 44: David Beurgle, 77 Flood Circle, Atherton, California. Recently Built House in California Showing the Distyle Portico-Pavilion.

APPENDIX A:

SELECTION OF EXCERPTS REGARDING THE LONGFELLOW HOUSE FROM MAJOR TWENTIETH-CENTURY PUBLICATIONS

“The Vassal-Craigie-Longfellow house [sic] at Cambridge, Massachusetts, was built in 1759, and was the home of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow after 1837. This house was among the first to be designed with a deck on the roof surrounded by a balustrade. It is symmetrical in plan, and has a low porch at each end. The exterior is treated with pilasters, which extend from the ground line to the cornice. In the centre portion two pilasters are planted at the corners of a slight projection which terminates in a pediment in the roof. At each side of this pediment is a dormer window.”

—L. Eugene Robinson, 1917
Domestic Architecture (page 27)

“The most pretentious houses, as time went on, sought distinction rather by treatment with elements primarily formal in their very nature—“pavilions,” pilasters, and porticos.”

—Fiske Kimball, 1922
Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies (page 96)

“The central bay is projected in a pedimented pavilion, the edges of which are marked by a pair of Ionic pilasters; pilasters also mark the ends of the front. An addition to the back with porches has spoiled the unity of the house, but much of the original interior remains.”

—John Fitzhugh Millar, 1968
The Architects of the American Colonies (page 162)

“The Dutch Palladian type of house, with pilasters applied to a pedimented central pavilion, continued to be built in the late colonial decades. The Vassall-Longfellow House at Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Nanzatico in King George County, Virginia, are examples in New England and the South, respectively.”

—Marcus Whiffen, 1981
American Architecture (page 93)

“Note that the centered gable crowns a shallow projection set 9 inches forward from the front facade of the house. Two-story pilasters are added for decorative effect.”

—Virginia and Lee McAlester, 1984
A Field Guide to American Houses (page 150)

“About midcentury, a subtle change swept over high-style design, with growing reliance on the models published in James Gibbs’s *Book of Architecture* of 1728 and an increased quantity and density of decorative detail. Roofs tended to be lower in slope, with the upper edge capped by a decorative balustrade, adding a further horizontal emphasis. The most obvious visual change was the emphasis on the center of the facade, most often through the use of a central projecting pavilion, also derived from Gibbs, usually capped by a large pediment. Normally the edges of the projecting pavilion and the corners of the house were further emphasized by large quoins or colossal pilasters running up to the roof cornice. A splendid northern example is found in the John Vassal [sic] house of 1759, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, then a relatively quiet suburb of Boston. This incorporates a roof balustrade, central pavilion, crowning pediment, and tall Ionic corner pilasters... The projecting central pavilion and the framing corner pilasters mark this as a late Georgian design.”

—Leland M. Roth, 2001
American Architecture (pages 84-85)

“The house of the Jamaican planter Maj. John Vassall, built in 1759, well illustrates the more classical taste of mid-century.”

—James D. Kornwolf, 2002
Architecture and Town Planning (pages 989-990)

APPENDIX B:

MAP OF CONFIRMED LONGFELLOW REPLICAS



NAME	DATE	ARCHITECT	ADDRESS	TOWN	STATE	ZIP	NOTES
Un-named	1898	Joseph Vance	136 West Ave	Great Barrington	MA	01230	Includes terraced landscapes and Linden trees.
Un-named	c.1910	Unknown	1206 North Main St	Aberdeen	SD	57401	
Minneapolis Branch Library	1907	Unknown		Minneapolis	MN		Designed for Robert "Fish" Jones. Renovated by the Kodet Architectural Group.
H.C. Jewett Residence	1910	W.D. Swain		Aberdeen	SD	57401	Possibly the same as previous Aberdeen example.
Un-named	Unknown	Unknown	Chestnut St	West Newton	MA	02415	
Pierce House	1900	Unknown		Lincoln	MA		
Un-named	Unknown	Unknown		Lincoln	MA		Included in slides of Pierce House. Slight variations on façade suggests separate example.
Un-named	1893	Unknown		Hyde Park	VT		Possibly designed for Gov. Carol Page.
Un-named	2000	Unknown	28 Fairbanks Rd	Lexington	MA		Built for [by?] Matthew Thenen.
The Longfellow House Bed and Breakfast		Unknown	124 Park Avenue	Swarthmore	PA	19081	
Hansen Residence	Unknown	Unknown	460 Holland Ct	Lake Forrest	IL	60045	
Gladysfen	1883	Henry Vaughn		New Castle	ME		
Enfield Place	1887	Unknown		Evanston	IL		
The Magnolia	1927	Unknown		South Bend	IN		Copy of a Sears, Roebuck and Co. pre-made pattern. More examples possible.
Un-named	Unknown	Unknown		Freeport	IL		This replica is painted blue.
Un-named	Unknown	Higgins and Welch		Concord	MA	01742	Listed on Concord's "Lot 8" by Barret & Co. Real Estate for \$1,250,000.
Smith House	c.1910	Unknown	622 West Main St	Lebanon	TN		Originally built for Oscar Newton Smith (b.1870).
Un-named	1907	Unknown	Hillside Ave	Plainfield	NJ	37087	
Un-named	Unknown	Unknown	Crownshield St	Brookline	MA		
Craigie House	1895	Unknown		Atlanta	GA		Built as the Massachusetts State Pavilion for the 1895 Cotton States Exposition.
Un-named	1898	Crowell, Lancaster, and Higgins		Bangor	ME		Asymmetrical Victorian Windows.
Massachusetts State Pavilion	1893	Peabody and Sterns		Chicago	IL		Constructed for the World's Columbian Exposition

VITA

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