



LONGYEAR MUSEUM



REPORT TO MEMBERS

FALL/WINTER 2013

Recovering the Original • Transformations at 8 Broad Street, Lynn

Letter from the Executive Director

Preservation and education. These two words may best sum up Longyear's work at this time. Preserving an accurate historical record of the Discoverer, Founder, and Leader of Christian Science is at the core of all we do on a daily basis. But it's not preservation for preservation's sake — but preservation for the sake of education — that those who have contact with Longyear may leave with a deeper understanding of the life and work of Mary Baker Eddy.

This issue of *Report to Members* celebrates a major effort in preservation and education: the restoration of the Mary Baker Eddy Historic House in Lynn, Massachusetts. What a joy it is to announce the completion of this project, thanks to the dedicated work of countless individuals. Much appreciation is extended to the Longyear Trustees for their vision and encouragement at every step, and to each member of the restoration team including past and present Longyear staff, preservation architects and consultants, contractors, engineers, and skilled tradesmen. And a special thanks to our worldwide membership whose support has made everything possible. In particular, we are grateful for generous gifts from the Jean and Willard Garvey Trust (interior restoration) and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Chadwick and the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund (exterior restoration). What a team! Gary Wolf's article is a wonderful summary of our six-year restoration journey. Stephen Howard, Martha Cummings, and Sara Chase shed light on some of the fascinating details encountered along the way.

But the work in Lynn is not yet finished. The Curatorial staff is currently working with Amaze Design to develop an exhibit for the first floor of the house. The exhibit is designed to help our visitors better understand crucial events during Mrs. Eddy's time in Lynn, including the publication of *Science and Health*, founding the church, establishing the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, and her marriage to Asa Gilbert Eddy. The staff is delighted to be working again with Amaze, the firm that designed the Museum exhibits in the Mott and Patzlaff galleries. The Lynn exhibits are scheduled to open in spring 2014.

In this issue, you'll also find photos of some of our spring and summer programs. Even when school is out, Longyear's educational work continues!

With much appreciation to each and every one of you,

Sandra J. Houston

Sandra J. Houston

President and Executive Director

June A. Austin, C.S., Retires from the Longyear Board of Trustees

After thirty-five years as a Longyear Trustee, June A. Austin, C.S., retired this spring. At a gathering held in June's honor, Board Chairman Ellen Williams commented, "You have helped guide Longyear through its most productive period, the move from Mrs. Longyear's mansion to a new purpose-built museum. You've seen our historic house collection grow from five houses to eight, as we added Concord, Lynn, and Chestnut Hill to the collection. And you've prayerfully supported each new publication, exhibit, and video."

During her tenure, June served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees and President of the Longyear Foundation. She also was chairman of the committee that oversaw the development of the exhibits for the new museum.

Reflecting on her years on the Board, June said, "My life has been blessed beyond measure by my association with Longyear. It's been a great privilege to work with sincere Christian Scientists whose love for our Leader has been their inspired motivation. I'm more than grateful for having had this joyous experience."



Recovering the Original

by Stephen R. Howard

In the Middle Ages, expensive parchment was occasionally reused by erasing and writing over the original text.¹ Sometimes it is possible, through careful work and analysis, to recover the original writing, and the document's first message can be read afresh.

A house, too, may be “written over” as subsequent owners change wallpaper and color schemes. The changes may, however, go deeper: doors may be moved, walls torn down, staircases relocated. Like a rewritten medieval parchment, the house's original message becomes obscured, unreadable, forgotten.

Such was the case with Mary Baker Eddy's former home in Lynn, Massachusetts. In as brief a span as fifteen years after she and Asa Gilbert Eddy had moved from 8 Broad Street, significant rewriting of their former home began as new owners replaced gas lighting with electric.

More substantial changes followed, reflecting the changing uses of the structure. On the first floor, three rooms were merged into one to serve as a Christian Science Reading Room. Staircases were moved, altering appearance and traffic patterns. The second floor was radically revised into a warren of rooms. Even the third floor, with its noted skylight room, saw the hallway widened and a new wall added, dividing the large front room and separating the pair of windows overlooking Broad Street. A measure of the grace and beauty of the home, together with the logic of its original floor plan, vanished.

Faced with the fact the structure itself was not accurately communicating Mrs. Eddy's history, Longyear Museum knew that, if possible, it had to bring the floor plan and finishes more into line with what she had known.

Restoring authenticity to this historic site thus became an ethical as well as an educational responsibility. At the heart of Longyear's restoration project lies a commitment — not to things as such nor even to social or architectural history — but a commitment to authenticity, a commitment to presenting Mrs. Eddy's life history with accuracy based on evidence.



Scraps of paper dating to the early 1880s were found behind door hinges at 8 Broad Street, Lynn.



Door hinge with a scrap of Mrs. Eddy's professional card used as a shim.

How great a difference this could make became strikingly apparent to me on a cold day this past winter. The second-floor layout had been restored to its original configuration. For the first time in many decades, one could stand in the parlor and see down the whole length of the house to the kitchen. The architectural drawings had prepared me intellectually for the restored layout. But they had not prepared me for the cheer, the coziness, and the expanse I felt as sunlight and warmth streamed into that series of rooms in an unbroken view — a view that undoubtedly Mrs. Eddy herself had seen, a view that said “home!”

The restoration of 8 Broad Street also brought to light documentary evidence of the Eddys' residence there. Removing a door from its hinge, an attentive workman noticed a scrap of printed card stock. Recognizing its potential for historical value, he carefully saved it and alerted Longyear's Curatorial Department. Over the next days, more scraps of printed cards were discovered in other door hinges, all on the second floor, which had been home to Asa Gilbert and Mary Baker Eddy.

Precisely trimmed to fit the hinges, the cards have lost much of their printed text. But what remains is significant: One side gives Mrs. Eddy's name, the other her address. A bit of remaining text establishes that the cards were printed sometime between June 1880 and the end of 1881.²

Examination of an identical card in a private collection supplies missing information, such as the original size of the

cards and their complete text.³ The front of the card reads:

MARY GLOVER EDDY,
Teacher of
Metaphysical Science, or Christian Healing,
NO. 8 BROAD STREET,
LYNN, MASS.

The other side reads:

TO THE PUBLIC

To the many inquiries — are Richard Kennedy, Daniel H. Spofford and Edward J. Arens, practising or teaching Christian Science or your Metaphysical System of Treating Disease? We regret to be obliged to reply, they are not, as a whole, and the tendency is to subvert christian [*sic*] healing.

Messrs. Spofford and Arens have been expelled from our Christian Scientist Association. Mr. Kennedy was never admitted to membership.

M. B. GLOVER EDDY,
Author of “Science and Health.”

We do not know when these cards were repurposed as door shims: Was it while the Eddys lived there, or did a later resident find the cards abandoned and turn them into shims? In either case, these cards, their presence unsuspected for over a century, are unique: They are printed evidence, found within the house itself, directly linking it to the time when the Eddys lived there.

The following articles in this issue of *Report to Members* describe other discoveries at 8 Broad Street, Lynn, as layers of later “writing” were removed from the house so that its original message could speak afresh to modern visitors.

Stephen R. Howard is Director • Curator of Longyear Museum.

NOTES

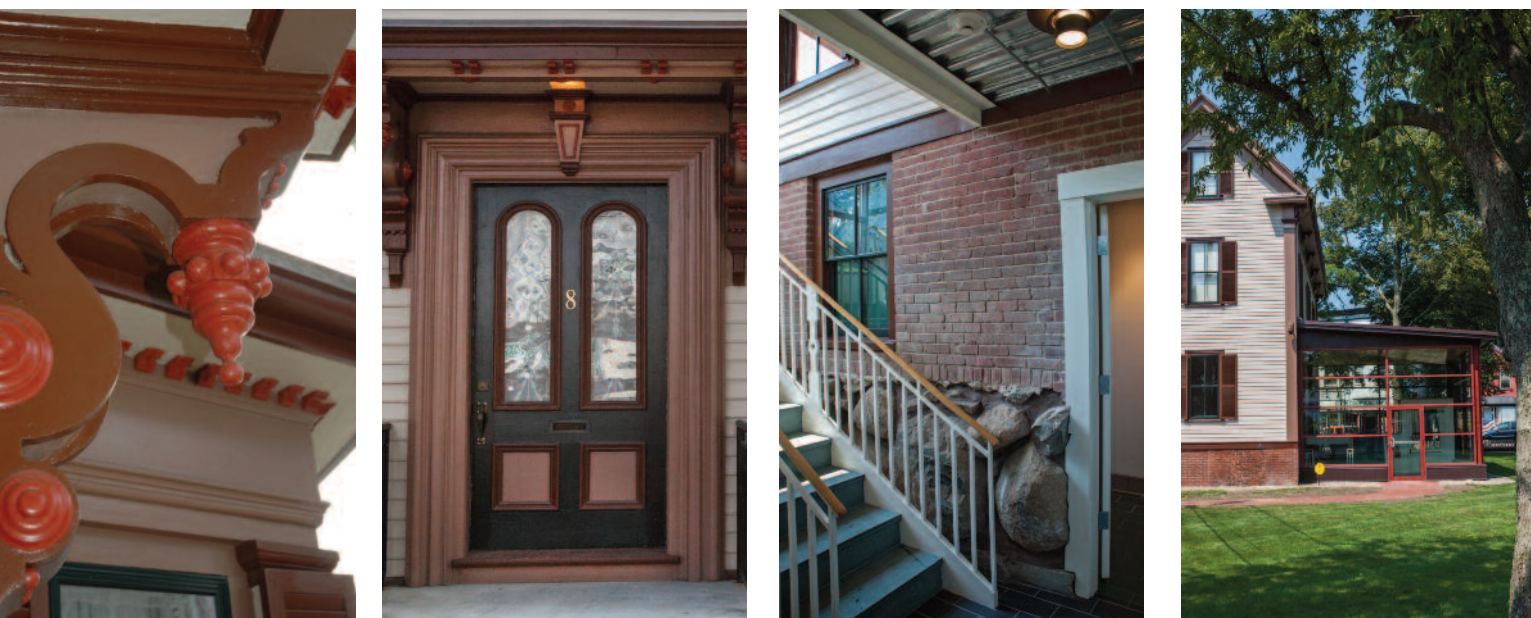
1. Called palimpsests, such manuscripts sometimes preserve the only known copies of ancient texts.
2. The text informs the public that Edward J. Arens had been expelled from the Christian Scientist Association. As the minutes of the Association record that the expulsion took place on June 2, 1880, the cards could not have been printed prior to that date. Mr. and Mrs. Eddy left 8 Broad Street in January 1882. The cards must thus have been printed between June 1880 and the end of 1881.
3. Our thanks to Longyear member Keith McNeil for furnishing an example of an intact card, thus providing the text quoted above. The original size of the cards was approximately 4¼” x 1¾” (approximately 10.8 cm x 4.5 cm).

Transformations at 8 Broad Street, Lynn

by Gary Wolf, AIA

Transformation is the goal, and joy, of architecture.





Views of 8 Broad Street, Lynn, after restoration and addition of accessible entry (far right).

Transformation is the goal, and joy, of architecture. Starting with an existing site, building, or space, a group of people works together through design and construction to give that place new life. Whether by means of new construction, renovation, or restoration — or a combination of these — the end is the same: not just to house new activities, but to create — or elicit — a sense of place, so that inhabitants, visitors, and even passersby recognize a change, an improvement, an enhancement, of the existing. In the best cases, that sense, whether momentarily or lasting, translates into an enhancement of our own lives.

Most of what we architects do every day in the service of such transformation does not involve grand design invention or continuous day-to-day outbursts of creativity. Our days entail such “ordinary” tasks as laying out walls, puzzling how to provide universal access into a building, detailing a window system, working out the rise and run of a stairway’s risers and treads, or reviewing conditions on site with the contractor. However, ideally, none of these mundane assignments is isolated from the rest; rather, they all make sense as part of a larger effort. And, in the best case, each decision contributes to — and is informed by — the transformation of a place, one that, subsequently, shapes our own experience.

These observations occur to me as an introduction to the story of our work with the Mary Baker Eddy Historic House

in Lynn, which began in 2007, when my office assembled for Longyear a multi-disciplinary professional team to study the Museum’s two “new” historic houses, 8 Broad Street in Lynn and 400 Beacon Street in Chestnut Hill. Readers of *Report to Members* and followers of the Museum’s website know that, since then, 8 Broad Street has undergone a multi-stepped process that has recently culminated in the transformation now visible. At the beginning, studies were undertaken to determine the house’s condition and to uncover its secrets. The structural framing was assessed; its systems identified. An interior investigation that was almost archaeological in its approach “peeled back the layers” to reveal long-lost flooring — unseen for over a century — forgotten colors, former stair shafts (seemingly too small for stairs), original wall and door locations, remnants of wallpaper, original heating ducts and registers, and fragments of built-in cabinets.

These discoveries enabled us to understand the changes that had occurred here over the decades; importantly, they helped us visualize this historic structure once again as a house, and as a colorful “modern” house of the time. A paradox of the building’s history was that many of the modifications to adapt the building — sometimes to help preserve or display it — had the effect of obscuring its identity as a home. Yet it was as a home — that of Mary Baker Glover, who became Mary Baker Eddy while living here — that it was witness to history in the making. If we could re-instate the rooms, the

Opposite: First-floor vestibule.



hallway, the winder stairs, the colors, and the types of finishes and fixtures that characterized this house a hundred and thirty years ago, then a visitor might more easily envision the transformative events that occurred here in the life of Mary Baker Eddy.

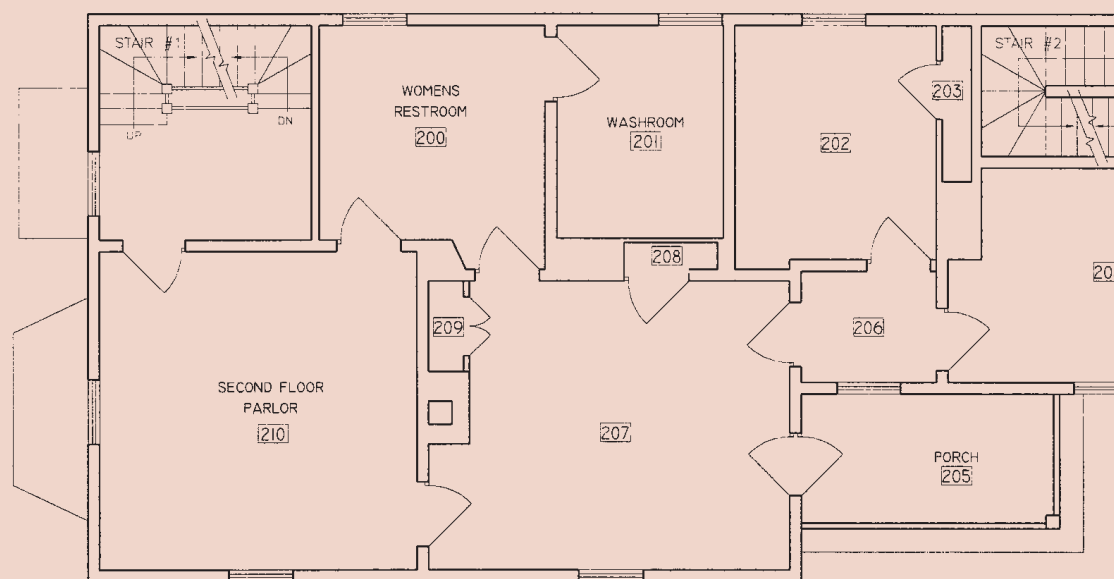
The next step for us was design, to explore alternative approaches to the house, not only with respect to how to present the historic interiors, but also in terms of the need to provide universal accessibility into the house, to locate new bathrooms, and to introduce up-to-date systems. As schematic design went into design development, and Phase I construction was followed by the design of construction documents for Phase II, the current house took shape. Initial options, as basic as an uncovered handicapped ramp added to the side of the house, and as complicated and intrusive as building a four-story elevator and stair tower to reach all floors of the house, evolved into the new enclosed story-and-a-half entrance vestibule, with a lift and stairs connecting to the basement and first floor. This solution creates an entrance accessible to all, at the back of the house facing the parking lot. It provides a place for the introductory orientation of visitors before they enter the historic house itself. And it offers a convenient and open new stair up and down.

Before we could start construction, our team successfully petitioned to have the Mary Baker Eddy Historic House listed in the Massachusetts State Building Code as a Totally

Preserved Historic Building. This special category permits greater flexibility in rehabilitating a building, in order to avoid potentially unsympathetic changes demanded by the code for new construction. The team also successfully applied to both the regional review group and the State Access Board for approval for our new accessibility design, which received exemptions to allow historic features to remain in the house, as long as we added safe new elements — such as continuous “graspable” handrails at the two historic stairs. And the Massachusetts Cultural Council awarded Longyear the second-largest grant of the year in 2009, in support of the project’s construction.

Now, following the second phase of construction, the resulting transformation is complete. A Victorian house whose exterior had been monochromatic gray for decades features a vibrant, colorful palette, complete with surprising red accents. Windows were beautifully refurbished and outfitted with low-profile storm windows for added protection and thermal efficiency. Interior wall, window, and door locations make sense once again, and only a visitor with a very good memory will recall the former, sometimes odd, layouts that previous modifications decades ago had produced, which made it difficult to imagine how this house was lived in. Careful studies and detailing of the replacement front and back stairs maximized safety and comfort, while fitting into the original tight stairway openings. Key elements of the transformation include the following:

Many decades ago the second-floor layout was greatly altered (see floor plan, near right). The far-right floor plan shows the layout restored to what Mrs. Eddy had known.

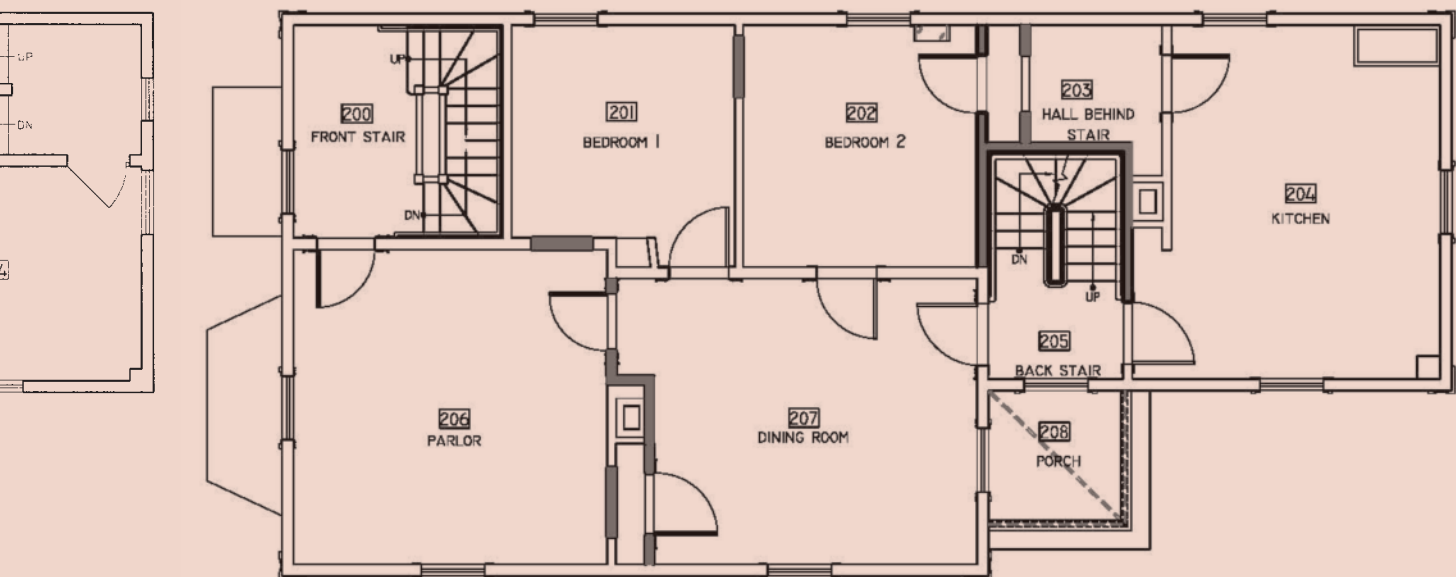


- The original wide pine floors are revealed and painted in the bold authentic colors, expressive of the innovative spirit of the age.
- “State-of-the-art” 1870s registers from the house’s central heating system — slate-framed cast iron grates — are now served by a high-velocity heating and air conditioning system.
- Restoration of the original layouts throughout most of the building is enhanced with wonderful period lighting fixtures and stoves, and reproduction wallpaper and carpets (researched and located by Longyear staff members Martha Cummings and Pam Partridge), so that visitors can get a sense of how the rooms of the house relate to one another.

On the first floor, where portions of the original walls had been demolished in the early twentieth century, our initial thought had been to restore that configuration as the three separate rooms. Yet the Historic House Committee realized that this larger area — although oddly shaped — was useful for exhibits, tours, open houses, and meetings. So the design challenge that we gave ourselves was to renovate this space so that it would become even more open for these public activities but at the same time to find a way to express its history as three separate rooms of a first-floor apartment. By recessing the steel beam that supports the floors overhead into the ceiling and by removing the intermediate sections of wall that had been left behind, we were able to open this



Research disclosed locations of original heating ducts (top). First-floor space where exhibits will tell of Mrs. Eddy's life and accomplishments while living at 8 Broad Street.





New materials used in reconstruction were marked with date so future investigators would easily recognize work done in 2013.

portion of the house even more dramatically. We then inserted wood strips in the new bamboo floors and in the plaster walls and ceilings of this area, where the original walls had once been located, to suggest these rooms of the 1870s.

In these ways, the seemingly minor decisions that we made at 8 Broad Street were in service of our goal of articulating the building's past and emphasizing its transition into the present:

- Alongside the stairs down to the new coat room and accessible bathrooms in the basement, we exposed the stone wall of the foundation, rugged on the exterior and more finished on the interior, where we repointed it as an artifact of the original construction.
- Also in the basement, new ceramic tiles in solid colors evoke the bold Victorian palette upstairs, while their rectangular shape and their width relate to the historic floor boards.
- Recognizing an obligation to future generations to clearly distinguish old from new, we wrote language into our specifications to require that all new wood, whether studs in a wall or casing around a door, be stamped with the date "2013," and that existing historic wood trim that was removed, stripped, and re-installed include a similarly descriptive informational stamp.
- In several locations we designed "Windows to the Past" to showcase evidence of original materials that were long hidden, that would otherwise not be visible in the restored house: fragments of historic wallpaper, a section of original baseboard that was all that remained on one wall, a gas pipe, from the days before electric lighting, that was found inside a lath and plaster wall.



Restored second-floor kitchen.

The style of the new entry addition itself is a bold modern design. While this relates to some of the contemporary features of the Museum in Chestnut Hill, the intent here is to distinguish new from old — a key principle in historic preservation, articulated in the U.S. Secretary of Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*: "New design should always be clearly differentiated so that the addition does not appear to be part of the historic resource." In other words, the interpretation of the historic house should be clearly manifest in the design itself, so that there will be no questions when a visitor enters the twenty-first-century addition whether Mrs. Eddy herself used that door, or that lift, or that staircase!

Experientially, the design result is that the glass-enclosed entrance becomes a time-machine of sorts, literally carrying the visitor into the "past" of the historic house. The addition's design connotes to the passerby that this building is not simply a restored residence on Broad Street: it is a museum. Furthermore, its materials and form identify it as a recently-built structure, thereby symbolizing Longyear's continuing commitment to the stewardship of this house. Finally, the very fact of this modern wing's contrast with the restored, polychromatic historic house serves to alert everyone who sees it that a transformation has occurred here, one that may be worth exploring through a visit. And, by analogy, perhaps this architectural transformation will help attune thoughtful visitors to the transformations wrought by Mary Baker Eddy here at 8 Broad Street in Lynn over a century ago.

Gary Wolf, AIA, is the principal of Wolf Architects, Inc., of Boston, the architect for 8 Broad Street.



What appears to be a picture on the wall is actually a “window into the past” showing remnants of wallpaper from earlier times.

Interior Restoration

by Martha Cummings

“Peeling back the layers” inside and out of Mary Baker Eddy’s house on Broad Street has been the running theme of the past six years. Coupled with the excitement of getting down to the original layers of paint or wallpaper, if they still existed from about 1871, was the opportunity to present Mrs. Eddy’s story in this house in a fresh new way, through a lens of visual interpretation. As preservation consultant Sara Chase comments, every time we went to the house, we discovered something we had not seen before, nuggets of information regarding how this house looked when Mrs. Eddy lived here.

Beginning in 2007 and with the expertise of Sara Chase, as well as of architect Gary Wolf and his team, the house was carefully investigated. Written documents were examined for clues to decipher how the rooms were used and for hints of finishes and decoration. We learned that the house was built as a two-family speculative property in about 1871, with a finished, multiple-bedroom third floor, and that Mrs. Eddy was the first owner to live in the house when she purchased it in 1875. It was already known that Mrs. Eddy at first lived on the third floor and that she rented the first- and second-floor apartments with the exception of the parlors. But it has been over a hundred years since anyone had seen the layout of the house as it was first designed — the way Mrs. Eddy would have known it. As with any other house that has had multiple owners, the fabric inside the house — the paint, wallpaper, carpets, flooring, etc. — changed many times. Electric lights replaced gas fixtures around the turn of the twentieth century. The back stairs were relocated about that same time, changing room configurations and the size of the kitchen ell. Kitchen stoves came and went. Sinks shifted within the kitchen, leaving multiple generations of plumbing evidence. All in all, quite a puzzle to put together!

Interestingly, it was Mary Godfrey Parker, an eyewitness of the house in the 1870s, who put several of those pieces back



Second-floor dining room. Mary Baker and Asa Gilbert Eddy occupied the second floor after their marriage on January 1, 1877.

together. In her reminiscence in *We Knew Mary Baker Eddy*, she describes the layout of the second floor, including the kitchen which her cousins, the Nashes, used for the dual purpose of cooking and dining.¹ It was in that kitchen where little Mary Godfrey, about seven years old, and her mother Christiana met Mrs. Eddy for the first time. Her description of the kitchen was the written evidence that confirmed what the physical evidence about the back stairs was telling the team. Mrs. Parker's description not only of the kitchen but of the rest of the rooms on the second floor, including what she saw when she peeked into the parlor, is a key firsthand account providing guidance for the furnishing interpretation.

Written descriptions of the décor have been more challenging to find. Since very little physical evidence was found in the first-floor parlor, a description found in Robert Peel's *Mary Baker Eddy: The Years of Trial* provided a clue as to the room's appearance when Mrs. Eddy used it "to receive her students."² Other nuggets of information were found in a variety of places, often as an aside, something simply mentioned but not described.

Much of the restoration of the finishes throughout the house is based on physical evidence, such as wallpaper found behind a door surround or behind a sink, and samples of paint layers from every room. The evidence informed the choices of colors and wallpaper that have been used in the house today. On the second floor, there was enough wallpaper evidence in the parlor and bedroom to have reproduction paper custom made. (It will be very exciting to share this with visitors, as for the first time in 138 years there will be something in the house which Mrs. Eddy would recognize!) This wallpaper and others found offered interesting insight into the styles and tastes of the late 1870s. We found many examples of gilded papers and papers with mica flecks. As we peeled back layers, the house began to pop with color and sparkle.

The period gas lighting fixtures (now electrified) add yet another dimension to the restored period rooms. The 1870s had a particular style all its own for light fixtures. Most were made out of white metal with a bronzed finish and had a thicker, flatter dimension than their earlier brass counterparts. No longer was the Rococo style *en vogue* but was on its



Third-floor “skylight room” where Mrs. Eddy completed the first edition of *Science and Health*. Even after her marriage to Asa Gilbert Eddy, when she moved to the second floor, she continued to use this room as her study and office.

Investigation of the choices that Mary Baker Eddy made as she set up housekeeping in the house on Broad Street was thrilling. Every time we returned to the house, we made new discoveries. The many layers of paint and wallpapers made this a very dynamic house. Determining which paints went with the earliest or next-to-earliest papers was challenging.

Photographs of Mrs. Eddy, as seen in the exhibit at Longyear, show that she was a woman of informed taste. Thus, the search to find, and re-create, the look and feel of the rooms and corridors and stairs of the first house she owned, and the place where she put *Science and Health* into publishable form, was especially diligent.

The paints and clear finishes and wallpapers that originally adorned old houses are sometimes very hard to find. When clues are discovered, or uncovered, analysis — in a laboratory as well as in a library or archives — helps to put the clues together. Interpretation leads to a

picture of how life was lived — in a specific house, at a specific time.

When the lower, first-finish layers of paint or varnish or wallpaper appear — under a microscope or in plain sight — they are usually clues to the person who chose them. Choices were abundant in the Boston area in the 1870s and 1880s, due to a general rise in prosperity. Thus, Mrs. Eddy’s selecting papers with gilt and some shine, typical of good taste in the opulent third quarter of the nineteenth century, sometimes called America’s Gilded Age, lets us see her as indeed aware of and in touch with her era — in the first house she could call her own.

History came to life in the earliest wallpapers (hiding beneath door frames, behind baseboards) and the early paint and varnish layers. That makes historic preservation exciting.

Sara B. Chase
Preservation Consultant



Period gas-light fixture, second-floor pantry. Original gas-pipe opening is visible below the now-electrified fixture.

way out. Fixtures in the house celebrate a variety of styles from Classical Revival to Eastlake inspired. We installed light fixtures only in areas where there had been evidence of a gas-pipe opening. The lower luster lighting given by gas fixtures, along with the rich burgundies and deep greens in the rooms off-set by gilded papers, gives a truer sense of what these rooms might have looked like during Mrs. Eddy's residency.

With the layers peeled back and historic finishes restored and replicated at 8 Broad Street, the interior now presents a fresh and more accurate backdrop in which to share Mrs. Eddy's story from the house of her own.

Martha Cummings is Assistant Manager of Historic Houses, Longyear Museum. She is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Historic Preservation.

NOTES

1. *We Knew Mary Baker Eddy, Expanded Edition, Vol. 1*, (Boston: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 2011), 12.
2. Robert Peel, *Mary Baker Eddy: The Years of Trial*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 12–13.

Youth Programs

From top: In May, the Principia Upper School Junior Class toured five of the Mary Baker Eddy Historic Houses, including 8 Broad Street, Lynn, where they learned about publishing the first edition of *Science and Health*. In June, a DiscoveryBound National Leadership Council class enjoyed an evening of special programs at the Museum. Also in June, young people from Mexico attending Crystal Lake Camps in Hughesville, Pennsylvania, toured Mrs. Eddy's Chestnut Hill home on a trip to Boston.



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LONGYEAR MUSEUM Established 1923

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LONGYEAR MUSEUM is an independent historical museum dedicated to advancing the understanding of the life and work of Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer, Founder, and Leader of Christian Science.

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Longyear Museum owns
eight historic houses in
which Mary Baker Eddy
lived:

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