

# THE WHITTIER NEWSLETTER



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The Trustees of the Whittier Birthplace, the Haverhill Whittier Club, and the Amesbury Whittier Home Association annually publish *The Whittier Newsletter*, jointly edited by Elinor Curtin Cameron, Tim Coco, Dianne Cole, Cynthia Costello and Arthur H. Veasey III. Items concerning Whittier and Whittier manuscripts, news of Whittier collections and organizations, and queries about future material inclusions in the Newsletter should be addressed to Arthur H. Veasey III at svz@comcast.net.

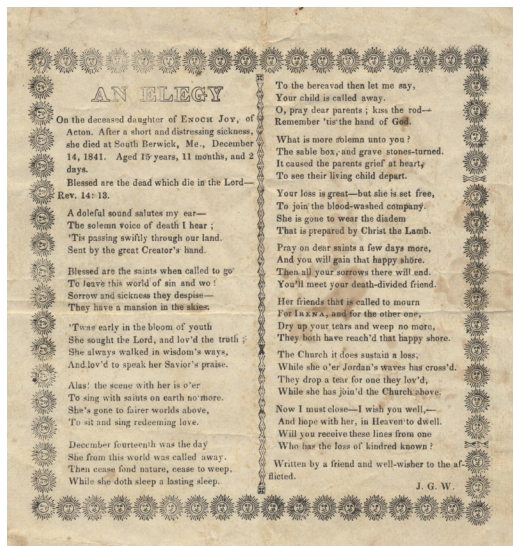
## THE LURE OF THE “UNRECORDED”

By Michael O'Neil

The possibility of discovering a previously unknown publication by an important author, and getting to do a little literary detective work, are for me, the highlights of being a bibliophile and part of the book trade. Such was the case with a broadside elegy, on the death of a fifteen year-old girl from Maine, “Written by a friend and well-wisher to the afflicted. J. G. W.”. It bears no imprint, but was likely printed in Maine, in a small edition, for friends & family members.

Whittier wrote several elegies, both well-known and obscure; and issued them signed, initialed, and anonymously, e.g. ‘To The Memory of Daniel Wheeler’ (1840), ‘On The Death of Lucy Hooper’ (1842), and ‘The Song of the Vermonters’ (1843)— the latter he issued anonymously, calling it his attempt at “literary mystification.”

Here his subject is the “deceased daughter of ENOCH JOY, of Acton. After a short and distressing sickness, she died December 14, 1841. Aged 15, 11 months, and 2 days...”. Irena Joy was born January 2, 1826, in Acton, Maine. She was the daughter of Enoch & Betsy Joy (née Twombly), and granddaughter of Mehitable Joy (née Whittier).



John B. Pickard gives a wonderful account of one dedicated Whittier collector, Parkman Dexter Howe’s “tenacity” “in securing extremely rare copies of Whittier material...”; and of the hunt for one fugitive piece, “The Sycamores,” he notes, “... for many years Mr. Howe searched for a copy,” his

hunt taking him from Nantucket, to Atlanta, and finally to Seattle. I was honored to have perhaps followed in his footsteps.

## From 'Brat' to Broadcaster:

### The Little Known Story of Greenleaf Whittier Pickard

*By Tim Coco, President, the Trustees of the John Greenleaf Whittier Homestead*

Despite having two-thirds of the famous poet's name, Greenleaf Whittier Pickard showed no interest in the literary arts nearly became a high school dropout and proved upsetting to almost all adults he encountered during his youth.

John Greenleaf Whittier, rarely recorded as speaking ill of anyone, called his grand nephew a "brat" and once remarked, "That boy isn't worth raising." Greenleaf's youthful shortcomings were all too evident to those around him, but his teenaged interests hinted at his future genius. During his adolescence, he assembled a private telephone circuit to discreetly speak with his friends between homes and installed a warning bell for patrons of a Portland, Maine, speakeasy.



No one, especially the poet, would ever have believed the troubled child would eventually hold a place of high prestige among radio pioneers.

Pickard, the only son of Whittier's niece Elizabeth H. and Samuel T. Pickard, was born in Portland, Maine, Feb. 14, 1877. A year earlier, Elizabeth left Whittier's Amesbury household to marry Pickard, publisher and editor of the Portland (Maine) Transcript and a Rowley, Mass. native.

After Whittier's death in 1892, the Pickards leased the Amesbury home to the Whittier Home Association as a memorial to the poet. To the chagrin of members, however,

the family elected to occupy the home after Elizabeth's death in 1902 just as Greenleaf was surprisingly launching his career as a radio engineer.

While a portion of the home remained open to touring Whittier enthusiasts, Greenleaf expanded it, notoriously erected a 40-foot tower in the garden and began experimenting with the nascent radio science. His son, Dr. John Benjamin Pickard, noted author, researcher and Whittier biographer, told the Amesbury News in 2007 that radio noises from the property's open windows irritated neighbors who considered the property sacred.

Aggravated by Greenleaf's activities and upset about losing their exclusive use of the home, the Whittier Home Association circulated a petition requesting the Pickards either sell or lease the home to them. When the effort failed, there were allegations of an attempt to poison the family. "Poison in the Whittier Home." Relatives of the Poet Become Very Ill after Eating Beef-steak," blared a New York Times headline Nov. 18, 1906. The article reported police are investigating the presence of arsenic in the steak consumed by the Pickards and nurse Elizabeth Diegnan.

### **From drop-out to radio inventor**

Greenleaf flunked out of the Lawrence Scientific School at Harvard University—where he had been given a special opportunity to attend since his grand uncle had been a trustee there, but later took classes at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He had taken an interest in wireless telegraph inventor Guglielmo Marconi's work and found an opportunity in 1898 at the Blue Hill Observatory, Milton, Mass. The Observatory was commissioned by the Smithsonian Institute to conduct experiments with kites to determine how height affected transmission of radio waves.

Pickard next went to work as research engineer for the newly formed American Wireless Telephone and Telegraph Co., Philadelphia, and helped establish a station in Cape May, N.J. It was here, on May 22, 1902, his first of many great radio contributions was made. He accidentally lay fine sewing needles lightly across a pair of carbon blocks and found he could receive radio transmissions without an external power source.

"Being exasperated by the microscopic 'fry' of my detector, I attempted to check the annoyance by cutting out two of the three dry cells. The signals continued to come in, weaker, but clear. Suddenly, to my utter amazement, as I glanced over the apparatus I discovered that I had cut out not two but all three dry cells! My telephone diaphragm was being operated solely by the energy received on the aerial! Nobody believed at that time that such a thing was possible," Pickard was reported as saying.

As a result, Greenleaf patented his first of many inventions—the silicon crystal detector—in 1906. The crystal, known to many as "the cat's whisker," remains the heart of radio receivers to this day.

Between 1902 and 1906, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) recruited Pickard to help develop a wireless telephone. At the company's Boston offices, Pickard reportedly sent the first-ever transmission of voice by radio on Sept. 2, 1902. He also apparently moonlighted as a consultant, performing services in 1904 for Lee DeForest, the inventor of the Audion vacuum tube amplifier.

Pickard continued his radio experiments at the poet's former Amesbury home and, in 1907, along with Col. John Firth and patent attorney Philip Farnsworth, founded the Wireless Specialty Apparatus Co. of Boston. It began by selling the Perikon (PERfect pIcKard cONtact) branded crystal. Interestingly, Pickard's Seabrook, N.H. summer home, purchased in 1912, would be named "Perikon Cottage."

The Wireless Specialty Apparatus Co. became the premiere supplier of radio receiving sets to the U.S. Navy until 1914. It also handled the sales of transmitters by the National Electric Signaling Co. (NESCO). NESCO's scientific director was Reginald Aubrey Fessenden, the man credited with sending the first transmission of voice by radio from Brant Rock, Mass. in 1906.

Pickard became the second president of the Institute of Radio Engineers in 1913—about the same time Major Edwin Howard Armstrong was filing a patent that would be disputed by DeForest. Years later, Pickard received his first major recognition of his work from the Institute, accepting in 1926 the Institute's Medal of Honor, given "to that person who has made public the greatest advance in the science or art of radio communication, regardless of the time of performance or publication of the work on which the award is based." Other winners included Armstrong, 1918; Ernst F. W. Alexanderson, 1919; Marconi, 1920; Fessenden, 1921; and DeForest, 1922.

In 1912 Firth sold his majority shares in the Wireless Specialty Apparatus Co. to United Fruit Co., which later consolidated its radio patents within RCA. Pickard continued to consult for RCA into the 1930s.

Meanwhile, Pickard, whose first wife passed away in 1912, married Helen Liston and the couple celebrated the birth of Elizabeth Whittier Pickard March, 1917, to the dismay of neighbors who had relished the heretofore-presumed celibate Whittier home. The family finally sold the residence several months later to the Whittier Home Association and relocated to Boston.

Pickard also was one of the first to note the effects of major meteor showers on radio reception in 1921 and wrote in favor of the formation of the Federal Radio Commission in 1927 to regulate broadcasting.

During World War II, he worked on military projects for the American Jewels Corp., Attleboro, Mass. In 1946, he joined with Harold S. Burns to form the research and development firm Pickard & Burns, Inc. of Needham, Mass.

Pickard and Armstrong would become better acquainted during meetings of the Radio Club of America, founded in 1909. During December, 1935, the club created the Armstrong Medal to initially honor Armstrong and then be presented to those "within its membership who shall have made in the opinion of the Board of Directors and within the spirit of the club, an important contribution to the Radio Art and Science." Armstrong served as toastmaster when the medal was presented to Pickard in 1940.

The Pickards still summered at Perikon Cottage, Seabrook, and resided there year round during the depression. The Seabrook home and surrounding land remain occupied by his descendants to this day. Even though the Armstrongs spent summers in nearby Rye Beach, John B. Pickard said during a recent telephone interview, the families did not become close socially.

A professional relationship, however, between Pickard and Armstrong remained in place. After the latter's invention of FM, Pickard was retained to study the effects of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) planned move of the FM radio band. Pickard's work proved Armstrong's

contention the proposal defied scientific research. The FCC moved the band anyway in a decision that critics said had more to do with slowing Armstrong than promoting good engineering.

## Back on the farm

Despite his radio work and relative lack of interest in his great uncle's legacy, Pickard accepted, perhaps grudgingly, his election as a trustee of Whittier Birthplace in 1916. He filled the seat vacated by his father's death in 1915 and went on to serve as president of the board from 1938 to 1940. During his presidency, he arranged to have Whittier's Dec. 17 birthday celebrated with a nationwide radio broadcast from the birthplace with Ted Malone, a newscaster also known for reading poetry on his "Between the Bookends" radio show. Pickard, although he attended few meetings, served as a trustee for 40 years.

The inventor passed away Jan. 8, 1956 at age 78. His firm had developed a solid reputation as manufacturer of submarine antennas, nuclear reactor temperature monitors and antenna coupling equipment. It was purchased by the Gorham Corp. in 1960, LTV Corp. in 1964 and Cardwell Condenser Co. in 1970. Cardwell Condenser exists today as Viking Technologies Ltd. Burns left the firm in 1962.

Although Pickard did not follow in Whittier's footsteps, his son writes, "Probably even his poet uncle would have been proud."

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## The Curator's Corner

by Gus Reusch

A wonderful item that was sent to the Whittier Birthplace is a December 1883 edition of "The Cottage Hearth" published in Boston by the Cottage Hearth Company. This was donated by Ms. Valerie T. Ross of Errol, New Hampshire and it is of special interest to Whittier aficionados because John Greenleaf Whittier had a poem in it called "The Little People." Here are the first and last stanzas of the eight stanza poem:

A dreary place would be this earth,  
Were there no little people in it;  
The song of life would lose its mirth,  
Were there no children to begin it.

Life's song indeed would lose its charm,  
Were there no babies to begin it;

A doleful place this world would be,  
Were there no little people in it.

*And this about artists and works of art at the museum~*

The "Birthplace of Whittier, The Poet" hangs over the desk of Joseph Whittier, the poet's grandfather, at the Birthplace/Museum in Haverhill, Massachusetts. It is dated 1865. In the lower right of the chromolithograph can be seen the signature of the artist, Thomas Hill, but in the lower left can be seen the signature of W. Harring, the chromolithographer who worked for Louis Prang the most prolific publisher of American chromolithographs. Born in Germany, Prang left there for political reasons and settled in Boston. He created the firm that issued over 800 art prints. He advertised them this way:

"Prang's American Chromos, 'The Democracy of Art' ... Our chromo prints are of original in color, drawing, and spirit, and their price is so low that every home may enjoy the luxury of possessing a copy of works of art, which hitherto adorned only the parlors of the rich."

*And more from Whittier fans past and present~*

Something special arrived at the Birthplace recently. It was brought here by Mrs. Jane Fitzgerald Pauley and her husband from their home in Shirley, Massachusetts. Mrs. Pauley is a native of Lawrence, the same city where her mother, Mary Davies was born and raised. When Mary was a student at the Essex School in Lawrence she wrote about one of Whittier's most famous poems "In School Days." The date on the report was December 9, 1901. Mary was in grade seven. The first page was devoted to the meaning of the poem and then she transcribed the rhymed stanzas in beautiful penmanship, something lacking these days. She made the cover herself with the title: "In School Days" and a black and white picture of the Essex School framed in a border of silver ink. Though the pages have seen the passage of over 100 years, the report is truly a treasure and visitors at the Birthplace will be able to admire this heart-warming work on display at the museum.

*Whittier devoted much of his life to social causes and reform and was an ardent abolitionist. "Barbara Frietchie", written 150 years ago – was a poem inspired by the Civil War - the fictional account of a ninety-six year-old woman's encounter with General Stonewall Jackson.*

## **Barbara Frietchie 1863**

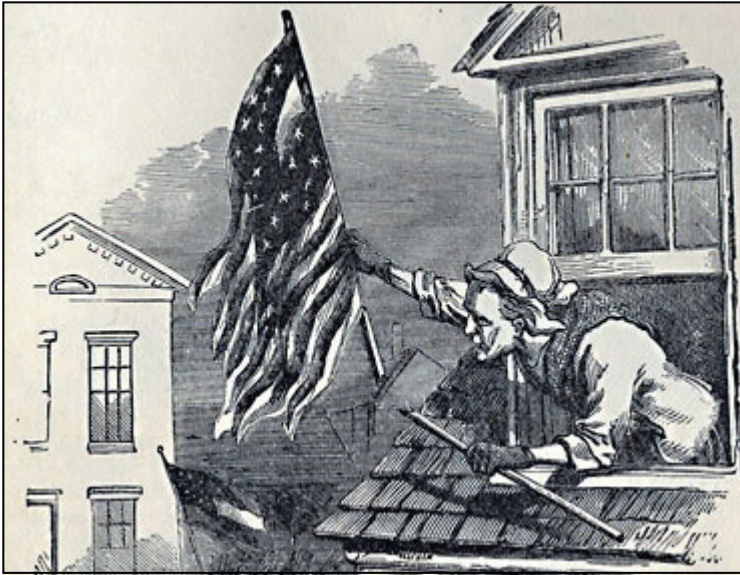
Up from the meadows rich with corn,  
Clear in the cool September morn,  
The clustered spires of Frederick stand  
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,

Apple- and peach-tree fruited deep,  
Fair as a garden of the Lord  
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,  
On that pleasant morn of the early fall  
When Lee marched over the mountain wall,—  
Over the mountains winding down,  
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,  
Forty flags with their crimson bars,  
Flapped in the morning wind: the sun  
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,  
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;  
Bravest of all in Frederick town,  
She took up the flag the men hauled down;  
In her attic window the staff she set,  
To show that one heart was loyal yet.



Up the street came the rebel tread,  
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.  
Under his slouched hat left and right  
He glanced: the old flag met his sight.  
“Halt!”— the dust-brown ranks stood fast.  
“Fire!”— out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;  
It rent the banner with seam and gash.  
Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff  
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf;  
She leaned far out on the window-sill,

And shook it forth with a royal will.  
"Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,  
But spare your country's flag," she said.  
A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,  
Over the face of the leader came;  
The nobler nature within him stirred  
To life at that woman's deed and word:  
"Who touches a hair of yon gray head  
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.

All day long through Frederick street  
Sounded the tread of marching feet:  
All day long that free flag tost  
Over the heads of the rebel host.  
Ever its torn folds rose and fell  
On the loyal winds that loved it well;  
And through the hill-gaps sunset light  
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,  
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.  
Honor to her! and let a tear  
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.  
Over Barbara Frietchie's grave  
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw  
Round thy symbol of light and law;  
And ever the stars above look down  
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

*Whittier Genealogy: A twelfth generation Whittier by birth recently sent this fascinating piece of investigative correspondence to our Curator, Gus Reusch.*

November 12, 2012

Dear Gus:

This past May my husband and I had the pleasure of traveling to Europe for two weeks. As you know I am quite interested in my family history, so I thought this would be the perfect opportunity to research Thomas Whittier. Previous research had led to some confusion about his birthplace, as it is recorded as Salisbury, MA in some sources and as Salisbury, UK in others. One we arrived we were able to access the British public records online through the library. Finally, with a bit of research, we found a public record from Salisbury which confirms that Thomas Whittier was born in Salisbury, England and traveled to America as the servant of his Uncle, John Rolfe. His parents, Richard and Mary (Rolfe) Whittier, remained in Salisbury, England. Several other Whittier family members moved to Whiteparish, which is a nearby village. Although we were not expecting it, we found some additional information about the Whittier family which I'd love to share you and



members of the Whittier Club.

During our travel we discovered that the town of Sarum is likely where the Whittier family lived prior to moving to Salisbury. This town was a stronghold on top of a hill, and is shown to have existed in the earliest records of the United Kingdom. In approximately 1300 the residents of Sarum were struggling with a lack of water. The location was perfect to provide safety, but unfortunately it also made it quite difficult to carry in goods. They dismantled their cathedral and homes and moved to Salisbury. Their cathedral was rebuilt and the people built a fence to keep out invaders. To this day the gate is closed and locked at night, and all residents of Salisbury have a key. It is very likely that the Whittiers helped to dismantle and rebuild the cathedral, as most residents were part of the process. Today, Sarum is unoccupied but maintained as a British Heritage site. We observed many tourists visiting during our trip. We visited the cathedral and inquired about family records,



but due to the volume of paper records and many spellings of Whittier at that time they were unable to find any burial records. The many spellings that we found in historical records included Whittier, Whittyer, Whittier, Whityer, Whithear, Wittier, Whittiwere, Wittyer, Wityere, Whitear, Whitehair, Whithere, Wityere, Wityear, Wittiere, Wityear, Wytyear, and Whicher.

Tracing our family line back even further, the first mention of the Whittier family was in the year 1273 in Huntington. Eustace and Thomas Whittewere were estate owners in that shire. They held family seats as Lords of the Manor, and it is likely that they were appointed as early as 1066 when William the Conqueror brought the Norman influence to the area. The references indicated that mention of the family name so early in recorded history is relatively rare, and is indicative of familial influence and importance in the area. Unfortunately, local parentage records do not extend back far enough to trace the lineage of Thomas Whittier directly to Eustace and Thomas Whittewere, but it is clear that there is some relation. This information was found in the Parish of Registers of Andover, Hampshire, UK, as accessed virtually.

I found additional anecdotal records, which show a George Whicher, another relative who unfortunately cannot be directly traced, is buried in Westminster Abbey in the East Cloister. He served as a Yeoman Warder of his Majesties Chapel Royal, and died in 1682. His nearest relation was his sister Susan, according to yeoman records, but unfortunately no birthplace is recorded for him.

During our trip, we were delighted to be able to see London and the English countryside decorated for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. It was beautiful! Unfortunately the holiday meant that the hours for many of the town offices and libraries did not coincide with our plans, and our ability to look through physical records and speak to historians was limited. We hope the little bit of information we found will be of interest to you and the members of the Whittier Club. We have planned a trip back to England in April, and plan to visit Huntington to research the family seat as Lord of the Manor. We also plan to return to Salisbury, and visit the nearby town of Whiteparish, where records indicate many of my ancestors are buried. We are hopeful that we will discover even more previously unknown information.

I'll leave you with the newly discovered historical Whittier family motto: *Esto Fidelis*, which is translated to Be Faithful.

Warm Regards,  
Mandy Whittier Breton

*Jeremie and Mandy Whittier Breton, a 12th generation Whittier, were married at the John Greenleaf Whittier Birthplace on July 17, 2010.*

## Environment and Human Sentimentality in Whittier's Snow-Bound

*By Tyler Lay*

Little can develop as profound a connection between human sentiment and an object as time itself can. The Whittier farm in Haverhill, Massachusetts had been built by the great-great grandparents of the poet John Greenleaf Whittier, and was inherited by each successive generation of the family (Sloan 9, 11). The farm was geographically isolated by hills on most sides, and by a small creek that was connected to the nearby Merrimack River (11). The work that each child of the family was made to do on the farm kept them within the confines of the property most of the time. Because they were infrequently involved in social conventions such as schooling, the inhabitants of Whittier farm developed special connections with each other, as well as with the land upon which they worked and lived. Their use of the land as a means of subsistence gave way to a relationship of dependence over time, whereas their familiarity with the property created an emotional bond. In *Snow-Bound*, Whittier recalls a scenario that is characterized by nostalgic reflection. When life as the Whittier family knows it becomes temporarily halted, they achieve sentimental satisfaction by means of evoking the enjoyment they once derived from simple yet significant adventures and experiences. Ultimately, it is the environment that brings about the fondest memories. Whittier's poetic reverence of experiences in nature expresses his appreciation of the environment for the emotional elation it elicits. The

Whittiers' reliance upon the land remains a more subtle and intrinsic theme of the poem, as farming was not a rare means of living during the 19th century.

When the impending Snow-Bound storm is first perceived by the family, they immediately take action to ensure that they have taken care of their livestock and gathered supplies in preparation for snow-in conditions. They pull in their lumber from outside: "Brought in the woods from out of doors" (Whittier 20). Whereas the term "woods" denotes the logs of firewood that are to be used for heating purposes, a second understanding of the term foreshadows the later events of the poem. Interpreting "woods" as a reference to a forest or wooded area would signify that the family has brought the outside into their home. This idea relates to the family's bringing sentiments of the woods and the environment into their home when they tell the stories of their past.

Whittier writes that, in the silence and idleness brought on by the blanketing storm, "No welcome sound of toil or mirth / Unbound the spell, and testified / Of human life and thought outside" (Whittier 107-109). Without signs of external humanity, the family seeks comfort in familiarity of their environment, which they also fail to detect:

We minded that the sharpest ear  
The buried brooklet could not hear,  
The music of whose liquid lip  
Had been to us companionship  
And, in our lonely life had grown  
To have an almost human tone. (110-115)

The brooklet has become so engrained in the lives of the Whittiers that they subconsciously equate its passive existence in their lives to the undisturbed continuance of life as they know it. The personification of the stream presents the idea that Whittier regards this aspect of nature with a sense of equality. The brook acts as an inhuman companion that gives comfort through normalcy.

Stanza seven depicts an interesting and meaningful interaction between the children and their "wood." They utilize the wood that they have literally brought into their home to begin a fire in their hearth. When the fire grows, the children notice that they are able to perfectly observe it as a reflection in one of the windows (Sloan 54). The kids assign their own fantastical significance to the marvel:

While childish fancy, prompt to tell  
The meaning of the miracle  
Whispered the old rhyme: "Under the tree  
When the fire outdoors burns merrily,  
There the witches are making tea." (Whittier 138-142)

The young minds have imagined a scenario that is rather dark. The reflection suggests a superimposition of fire over the external snow, and one can imagine that the forest which is typically visible through the window is also alight. To children, the unsettled and foreign condition of natural areas such

as forests can provide an experience that reveals a lack of universal order. Whereas infants grow under the care of their family and are guided by established rules and norms, an area of nature without such accompaniment provides an equally essential aid to development by encouraging imaginative thought. The Whittier children discover pleasure in their whimsical musings, yet are also being subtly exposed to life's negativities in this scene.

In stanza ten, Whittier's own emotions become projected onto the poetry as he reminisces about the pristine, idyllic lifestyle he once enjoyed with his family. His brother, being the only still-living character from the poem and Whittier's closest companion of the remembered period, is most responsible for Whittier's nostalgia (Sloan 55). Addressing his brother directly, Whittier displays a yearning for the rural life-style and its characteristic environment in addition to his longing for a return to times of simple interaction with his deceased or distant relatives:

|| We tread the paths their feet have worn  
|| We sit beneath their orchard trees  
|| We hear, like them, the hum of bees  
|| And rustle of the bladed corn... (Whittier 191-194)

Whittier had moved from the farm and was living in the town of Amesbury at the time he wrote the poem (Sloan 55). Amesbury's center is much more populated than the location of the Whittier farm. Whittier expresses affection for his rural upbringing and his resultant relationship with the environment.

The roles of environment as an educator and as a provider of blissful companionship that have arisen in the poem come together when the uncle reflects on his past. Whittier claims that he, "innocent of books, / Was rich in lore of fields and brooks" (Whittier 307-8). The uncle is a man who is very familiar with the workings of nature. He even claims to understand the natural discourse that is created by the various components of the environment: "He read the clouds as prophecies," and once again; "Himself to Nature's heart so near / That all her voices in his ear / Of beast or bird had meanings clear" (312, 317-9). The uncle's relationship with nature appears to be characterized by scrutiny and depth of understanding, rather than the light-hearted observation that Whittier has been encouraging in the poem. However, it may be more responsible to view the uncle as having achieved Whittier's ideal relationship with nature. Though he is an older man, the uncle remains "A simple, guileless, childlike man" (324). His harmonious connection with nature has allowed him to maintain an attractive innocence. The language of the stanza shows that Whittier regards his uncle with more fondness than he does his own parents (Sloan 59). His adoration for his uncle can be attributed to the man's likeable disposition, which is largely due to his passion for the environment.

The last passage in which Whittier writes of nature and the environment at length is stanza sixteen. In this stanza, Whittier pays respects to the final family member from the farm that has since passed away. His younger sister, Elizabeth, was regarded as the dearest to the family, and Whittier remembers a scene of pure contentment that he and she had shared a year be-

fore (Sloan 62). During the summer, they walked a scenic route and admired the thriving country. Whittier describes several types of flowers and speaks of sounds and smells the two of them encountered during the period of indulgence in nature. Prior to the memory of summer, he imagines Elizabeth's passing has brought her to a better place: "Now bathed within the fadeless green / And holy peace of Paradise. / Oh looking from some heavenly hill..." (Whittier 398-400). Lines later, he echoes these images in a description of the walk: "all the hills / Stretch green to June's unclouded sky..." (415-6). By equating the burgeoning beauty of a summer environment to Heaven, Whittier expresses that this experience represents the highest point of rapture one can attain.

Whittier uses the anecdotes to convey his appreciation for the ability of the environment to impact human development. During childhood, the mysteriousness of nature creates an alternative to guided growth and provokes a growth in sensibility. According to Whittier, engaging the environment with a reverent disposition and without an analytical or self-seeking agenda can provide a contentment that is nearly spiritual. He incorporates this mode of observation into his style of writing as he keeps his descriptions of any one object in nature to a bare minimum, and allows himself and his relatives to be immersed in the environment as if it were a grand harmony. This attitude is reflected by the structure of the poem as well. The stanzas are formed liberally and in accordance with the narrative development, rather than with a specific pattern of length. Most are characterized by advancement of plot, a descriptive passage, or a specific remembrance (Sloan 49). The meter of the poem is consistently iambic tetrameter, and it is composed as a series of rhymed couplets. These types of poetic organization are fairly simple and provide a whimsical, lyrical read, rather than one that is complex.

Whereas natural resources are fundamental to the family's subsistence, Whittier proves that the environment's impact on sentimentality bares its own significance. Whether they have been displaced from nature by the blizzard or by a move from the farm to Amesbury, the characters each yearn for "scenes and manners which the rapid changes of our national habits will soon have made as remote from us as if they were foreign or ancient" (Lowell 42). When they reach old age, the characters of *Snow-Bound* (including Whittier the poet) find pleasure in reminiscing about their youth. They characterize their pasts by their imaginative innocence or leisurely exploration that was often associated with their interactions with the environment. Ultimately, they achieve a satiation that is as essential as the warmth of the hearth.

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*sity where he is the Managing Editor of the independent student newspaper, The Daily Free Press.*

## Whittier Home Museum (Amesbury) hours of operation:

Our regular season and hours are listed below. If you are interested in conducting research, an interview, or any other activity that is time sensitive, please contact us and someone from the Home will make every effort to accommodate you.

Hours: Open June 2 through October 27. Guided tours Saturdays, noon to 4:00 p.m. – otherwise by appointment by calling 978-388-1337 or 978-465-5964.

Admission: Adults \$6.00 Students (age 7-17) and Seniors \$5.00 Children (under 7) free. Group rates on request.

Although the Whittier Home closes its museum doors to the public during the winter, our amply stocked gift shop on-line is now “open” year round. [www.whittierhome.org](http://www.whittierhome.org) Please feel free to browse our selections and use us as a resource for your cultural and historic research. The items for sale include books of Whittier verse, biographical works, pictorials, unique publishings and illustrated note cards. The shipping cost is inclusive in the price. Massachusetts tax calculates for residents separately.

## John Greenleaf Whittier Birthplace (Haverhill) hours of operation:

Hours: Open April 7 through November 30  
Wednesday, Friday: 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Saturday: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Sunday 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: Closed

Additional tours may be scheduled by prior arrangement; please provide two weeks notice. Groups larger than five are asked to make a reservation. The museum is closed on all major holidays and during the winter months, with the exception of special events.

Admission: Adults \$5.00, Seniors (62 and over): \$3.00, Students (18 and over): \$3.00, Students (under 18): \$2.00, Youth Groups: \$1.00 per person, Whittier Club members: Free

To learn more about the John Greenleaf Whittier Birthplace go to: [www.johngreenleafwhittier.com](http://www.johngreenleafwhittier.com) for news and events and click on Gift Shop to select from our collection of authentic Staffordshire China, as well as books, artwork and postcards commemorating the Quaker Poet.

## Greetings from the John Greenleaf Whittier Home in Amesbury!

*Cynthia Costello, president WHA*

2012 has been a productive and creative one for the Whittier Women who

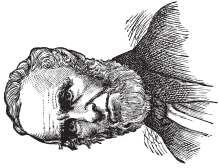
continue their mission of upkeep of the Whittier Homestead, at 86 Friend St., where our beloved Quaker poet wrote the legendary winter idyll, "Snowbound." Here hundreds of artifacts are housed in a museum setting which maintains the character and full history of one of the earliest American patriots to speak and write boldly against the stain of slavery in this country. A charter member of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833, for the next three decades Whittier passionately opposed slavery, and was praised by President Lincoln. Whittier often risked his life for his abolitionist beliefs: he was assaulted, mobbed, and once was burned out of his newspaper office in Philadelphia. Boycotts of his literary works and publications caused financial hardship as well. He has been described to have "served as the conscience of his nation . . . at a time when conscience was that nation's greatest need."

Whittier was very famous after the Civil War with the publication of "Snowbound," (please see Snowbound piece by BU student, Tyler Lay of Merrimack in this edition) Whittier left us with a magical collection of beloved poems like "Maude Mueller," "The Barefoot Boy," "Ichabod," "Telling the Bees," "From Massachusetts to Virginia," to name a few. His words are included in many hymns, especially, "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind" which is included in most hymnbooks to this day and often sung at remembrance and ecumenical services. The WHA plans a Hymn Sing at the Friends Meetinghouse next holiday season to showcase this aspect of his writing. For his birthday this past Dec. 17, local cable channels aired Gus Reusch, curator of the birthplace, reading "Snowbound, coinciding with our first snowfall.

Since receiving a prestigious Institute of Library Sciences Grant in 2007 the WHA Board has strived to reach out and bring JGW back into fashion. We have developed an Educational Program to introduce him to young people. Our final component is to list it on the web for use mainly by teachers and Whittier enthusiasts.

Because of outreach to press and other, Whittier has become the focus of many of today's happenings and literary pieces, including local magazines, Merrimack Valley Magazine, Newburyport Magazine, newsletters, songwriter Bob Dylan, Boston Globe, local cable stations and visits from students from many schools. He is often quoted on the TV show "Jeopardy," as well. The other piece of the grant encouraged us to focus on fund-raising to keep up the property and keep spreading the gospel. To that end an annual fund-raising event, "Celebrating Whittier," was established in 2010, "The event focuses on gathering in the beauty of nature to celebrate camaraderie, a picnic feast, poetry and the elegance of the natural setting of Maudslay State Park in Newburyport celebrating the flora and fauna of nature so loved by Whittier, sister Elizabeth, and many friends. Our 4th such event is Saturday, Sept. 21 in the evening in the Maudslay Arts Center Concert Barn.

For tours call 978-388-1337. See other happenings including summer teas in the garden by visiting our website: [www.whittierhome.org](http://www.whittierhome.org)



The Haverhill Whittier Club  
Haverhill Public Library  
99 Main Street  
Haverhill, MA 01830

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