

12 Beaufort Gardens, S.W.
London. July 10th. 1883 -

My dear Aunt,

Yesterday evening, I called on Francis Bennoch Esq^{re}, of N^o 5, Tavistock Square, London, W.C. Treasurer (not Secretary, as I hastily thought) of the Committee here for the Longfellow Memorial in Westminster Abbey, and had an important conversation with him, regarding the desire of the Maine Historical Society, of which you informed me by telegraph, to obtain the autograph letter relating to this Memorial -

In consequence, I beg you will inform the Society that it would be well to send its Official Application to the Committee here for these letters as soon as possible, with such representations in support of their request as the Society can conveniently and forcibly offer.

My advice would be that the President & Secretary of the Society should sign the Application, that if convenient

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Maine Historical Society

MMN #36240

Date: July 10, 1883

Description: Josiah Pierce on Longfellow bust

it should be supported by the Governor of Maine & Secretary of State, and by the Mayor of Portland: and that their signatures should be attested by the Consul of H. B. M. in Portland, with some statement in his certificate of his knowledge, and if he was willing, of his recommendation, of its purpose —

Mr. Bennoch informed me that these letters, some hundreds in number, from most eminent men in England, are in the hands of W. C. Bennett Esqre (the Poet.) Hon. Secretary of the Committee: and also that Mr. Houghton, the Publisher, of Boston, had applied for them a few weeks since, for a Museum at Cambridge, Massachusetts, proposing to have them bound in a volume, but that his proposal had not been accepted, though under consideration —

I presented the superior claims of our Historical Society not, I hope, without obtaining Mr. Bennochs approval of consideration of its claims: — its more important, extended & permanent character: its certainty of guarding these documents in the birthplace of the poet:

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the value of such a deposit for public purposes: the great interest felt by the Society in securing the best memory of Longfellow, and its having taken charge of erecting a statue to him in Portland: but an official request will of course have more weight, & should be made -

Mr. Bennoch knew and visited your brother, and has a friendly feeling towards our State. Members of his family lived at Orono, were distinguished for kindness to the Indians, and some places there retain his family name - he was acquainted with the late Gov^r Washburn, and knows Senator Hamlin of Bangor - if the Historical Society can add to its application a personal letter from Senator Hamlin, and a letter from members of your own family, (could you obtain one signed by Alexander, Samuel and yourself; and, for the sake of old memories, by Henry's children) approving the delivery of these letters to the Society, it would be of great value.

The Society should act promptly and strongly in this matter: as there is a claimant before them. Their application can be sent

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through me, or directly to Mr. Bennoch.

With every wish to comply with any request from yourself, or
from the Historical Society in this matter,

I remain,

Affectionately & faithfully,

Your nephew,

Josiah Pierce.

Mrs. Anne L. Pierce.

Portland, Maine, U.S.

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