

The Alice Curtis Fish Room

The room is personally furnished with antiques and heirlooms from the home of Mrs. Fish.

The sofa is a Sheraton design dating from 1810 and is a treasured piece of furniture. The chairs are early 20th century with fabrics of velvet and an unusual rose floral Indian crewel material.

The occasional tables are all inlaid mahogany tilt-top designs. The pair of rugs in the Fish Rooms are oriental-Turkish designs.

The earliest photograph of Mrs. Fish shows her at the age of 4 years and is near a photograph of her mother. The family home in Bridgeport, Connecticut is on a nearby table. At either end of the Room are two marble-topped Victorian tables upon which the visitor can see two photographs of Mrs. Fish, in her twenties and late forties.

Other photographs show Mrs. Fish in the library of her present home, receiving a doctorate degree in literature and a degree from M.I.T. for her photographic work.

A favorite portrait of Mrs. Fish's father, Louis Beers Curtis, hangs over the sofa. At one end of the Room is another portrait, that of Eliza Beers Curtis (1804-1835), the great-grandmother of Mrs. Fish. Eliza Curtis died in the Great Fire of New York in 1835, giving birth to Mrs. Fish's grandfather, Lewis Auger Curtis (1835-1909). His portrait, painted by Samuel Waldo, in 1815, hangs in the main room of the library. Incidentally, the young man is shown at the age of 15 years.

Mrs. Fish is a direct descendant of Governor William Bradford, founder of the Plymouth Colony and three Connecticut governors. Several genealogical certificates which attest to this heritage are to be seen.

The central glass case contains a collection of figures, idols and art objects which Mrs. Fish collected during her several trips around the world. They are made of ivory, jade, enamels with semi-precious stones and bronze. Many are Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Tibetan and Indonesian. The pair of "Horn of Plenty" vases with a griffon design are on the top shelf and have been in her family for several generations. There are several unusual "pots" made of cloisonne enamel with flowers made of jade and metal. On the second shelf, one may see a very small, round photograph of Mr. and Mrs. Fish on the Occasion of their wedding in 1976.

To the right of the center case are a number of leather-bound sets of books from her personal library. The case to the left contains a

collection of the books written by Mrs. Fish. Some have been bound in leather by her publisher. A number of her books are available in the library's general collection. The cases contain a number of African wood-carvings collected by Mrs. Fish while in Kenya. On other shelves, there is a collection of books about "Women in History," a subject about which Mrs. Fish has written several books.

The purpose of her Room is to provide a place for her heirlooms, books, and personal papers to which the interested reader may have access in a comfortable setting. In the future, her collection will contain a number of scrapbooks concerning her family, professional and public life.

We are planning to have various exhibits, in the future, which will focus on her activities in politics, writing and photography.

The Hamilton Fish Room.

The Hamilton Fish Room is furnished with antiques, heirlooms and personal memorabilia from the Fish family home.

It is intended to be a repository for his political papers, family and historical papers, books and pictures which Mr. Fish has collected for many years. The Room is arranged so that visitors may comfortably read and study. The historical collections are so extensive that only a portion will be on view at any given time. The library plans to periodically exhibit the many diverse parts of the Hamilton Fish Collection.

The Room is dominated by the large painting of the Marquis de Lafayette. The original of this painting is in the collection of the Order of Lafayette in the U.S. - an historical and patriotic organization to which Mr. Fish belongs.

The central glass case contains a number of autographed pictures to Hamilton Fish from General Pershing and Marshall Foch (Mr. Fish was instrumental in forming a black infantry unit in W.W. I. and received the Silver Star for valor); and other autographed photographs from Herbert Hoover, Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge. There are three documents concerning Colonel Nicholas Fish, dating from the 1780's. The silver ink-well stand belonged to Colonel Fish and was used to sign many Revolutionary War documents. Of interest to the visitor will be the 18th century mahogany cradle used by Nicholas Fish and later, Hamilton Fish. It is located in the Children's Room.

The highly decorated silver bowls and drinking cup were given to Hamilton Fish as a baptismal gift by W.W. Astor, his godfather, in 1889. There are several honorary awards, medals and a silver pitcher in the case as well. Mr. Fish has a large collection of military awards and medals which will be placed in several exhibition cases in the future.

To either side of the central case, the visitor may see a number of historical documents and photographs relating to Nicholas Fish, Hamilton Fish and Peter Stuyvesant (a small engraving with signature), W.T. Sherman, U.S. Grant and Zachary Taylor.

While at Harvard University, Mr. Fish captained an all-American football team and there are a number of trophies, photographs and books to be seen.

The shelves and walls show the political, historical and patriotic interests of Mr. Fish: photographs and engravings of George Washing-

ton, Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (W.W. I) for which Mr. Fish's efforts were largely responsible; and 2 bronze busts of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington by Jean Antoine Houdon in 1778.

Of great interest is the Indenture, located on the central panel, dated 1818, concerned with the Last Will & Testament of Peter Stuyvesant, signed by 12 ancestors of Hamilton Fish.

Mrs. Alice Curtis Fish, who enjoys needlecraft, made the Livingston family coat of arms and the seal of Harvard University for Mr. Fish.

Throughout the Room, the shelves contain many rare and unusual books. They are concerned with American history, New York state and local history, genealogy, world Communism and other subjects.

As the book collections and historical documents are received and processed, they will be made available to the public.

