

## Aldis Cottage, York Harbor, ME - Bryan Lathrop

The Aldis Cottage was located at the end of Aldis Lane beside Rock Ledge, the residence of Thomas Nelson Page. The story of the Aldis and Rock Ledge Cottages are linked closely together.

Brian Lathrop and Henry Field both were successful businessman in Chicago. Brian was a successful Chicago real estate investor. Henry was the brother of Marshall Fields (the retailer in Chicago) and the European buying partner in the business. Through their friendship, Henry Field met and married Brian's sister, Florence (Aldis) Lathrop in 1879. Together, Henry and Florence had two daughters Minna and Florence Field. (For a detailed look at Florence refer to "Florence Lathrop Page: a biography" by Philip J. Funigiello – 1994.)

About 10 years after Henry and Florence were married, in 1889, Brian Lathrop and Henry Field bought a large parcel of land on the ocean in York Harbor from Samuel S. Allen. York Harbor was becoming a very fashionable summer colony drawing affluent businessmen from across the country. Henry Field took a 5/8th interest in the property and Brian Lathrop had the remaining 3/8th interest. This land was in the areas of Aldis Lane and Pinefield Roads. Over time their combined land area would include 10 acres of prime ocean front real estate.

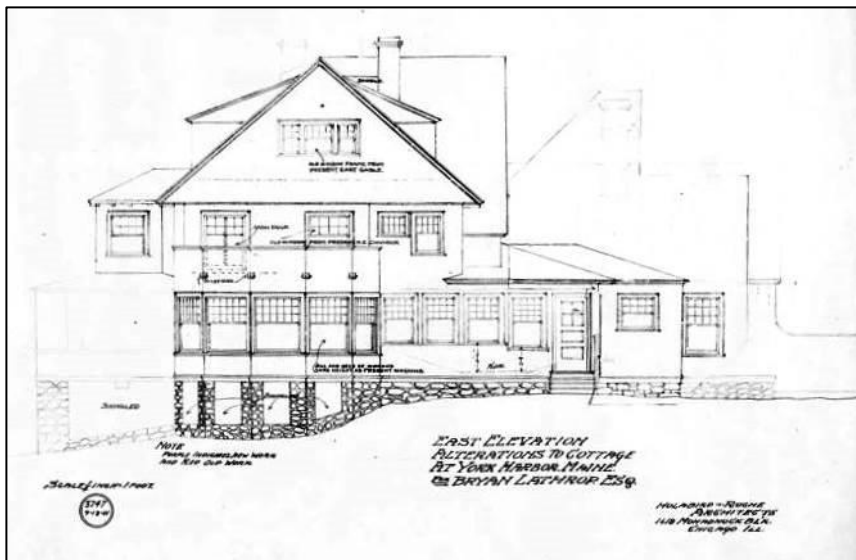
A year later in 1890, Brian and Henry began their plans to build two large cottages side-by-side on the ocean. An early local newspaper article (September 1890) would indicate that they engaged William Ralph Emerson, the prominent architect in Boston, to design these cottages to be constructed by the 1891 season. The two cottages had distinctive features of Emerson's Shingle-Style work. During the design process in December of 1890, Henry Field died. The plans continue for the cottages and it would appear that the local contractor, A. O. Mouton built the cottages either in 1891, or early 1892. In 1893, the widow Florence Lathrop (Field) married Thomas Nelson Page.

Later, between 1909-1911, Bryan Lathrop engaged Holabird and Roche, famous for their creation of the Chicago School of Skyscraper Architecture to enlarge the Aldis Cottage with a rear servant's wing and other modification.





Bryan Lathrop engaged the services of a civil engineer by the name of Ossian C. Simonds, who would go on to become one of Chicago's most important landscape architects. Bryan brought Simonds to York Harbor to design the grounds of both the Aldis and Rock Ledge Cottage. Simonds also contributed to many of the designs of walking paths that crossed York Harbor.

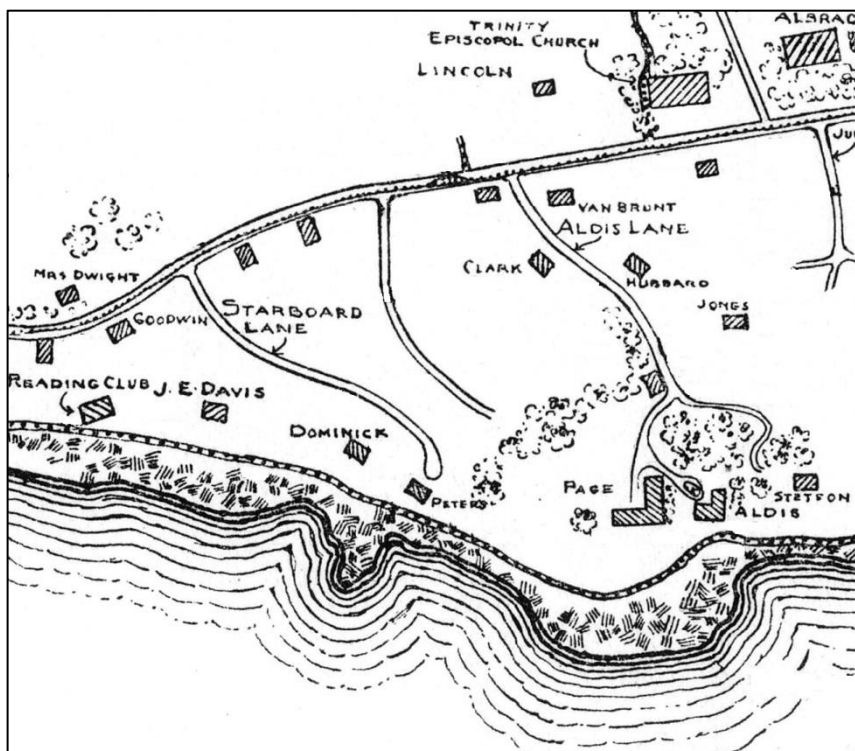
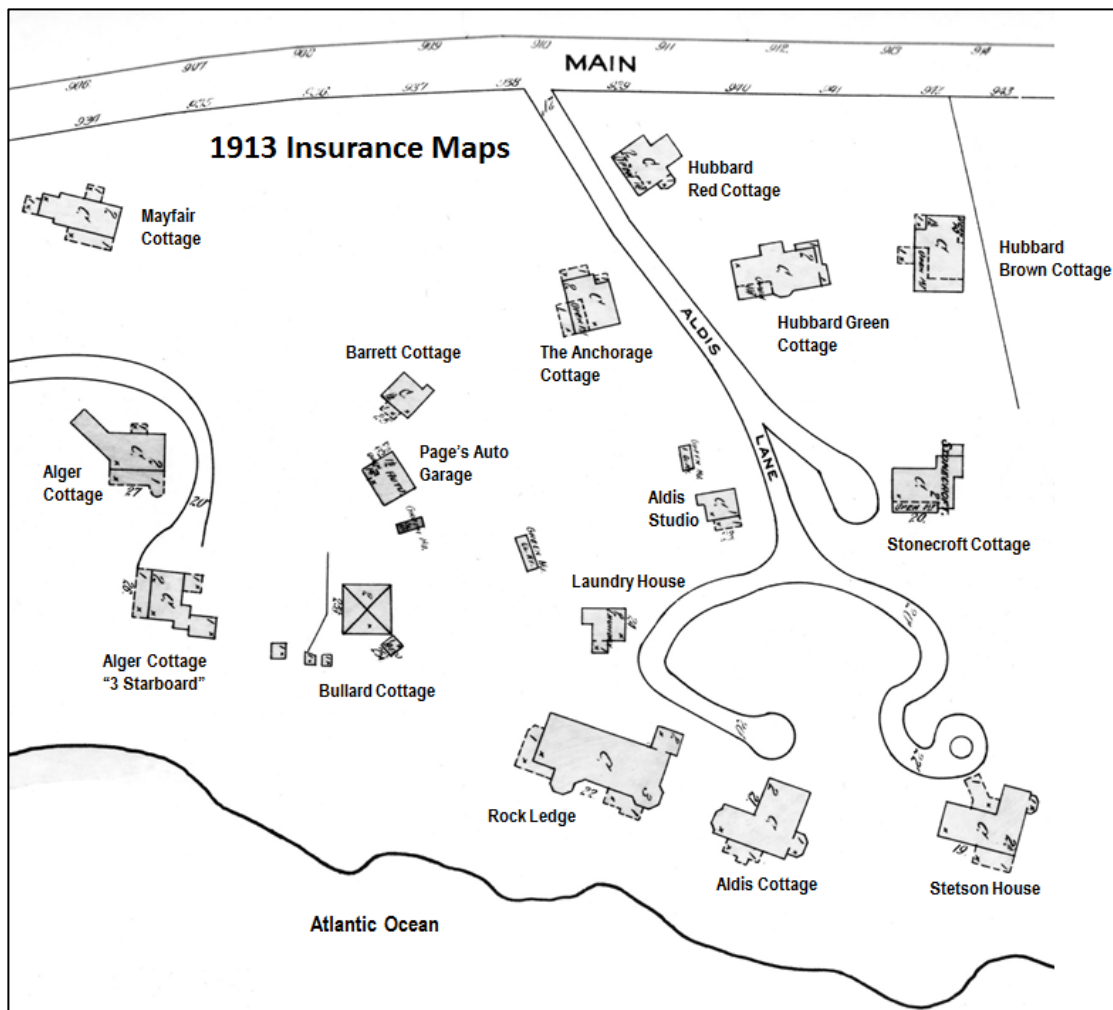


*Aldis Cottage in 1979 – it was torn down in 1980.*



*(Left) Fan above main doorway in original cottage, and the same fan above the newer cottage.*

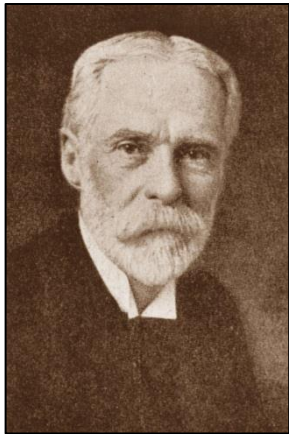




In the map above there is small structure called the "Aldis Studio" which was part of the original Lathrop property. The studio structure is now incorporated into a larger cottage located at 17 Aldis. There is a very small section of the original studio visible from the street today.

## Bryan Lathrop – Chicago and York Harbor

(Source: Wikipedia)



**Bryan Lathrop** (August 6, 1844 – May 13, 1916) was an American businessman, philanthropist, and art collector from Alexandria, Virginia, United States. He is known for his works in Chicago, Illinois, where his insurance and real estate dealings made him very wealthy. Lathrop had a lifelong interest in the arts, supporting several Chicago institutions and rallying for an extension to Lincoln Park. He was also the longtime president of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Graceland Cemetery. He was the brother-in-law of Henry Field and Thomas Nelson Page.

Bryan Lathrop was born on August 6, 1844, to Jedediah and Mariana Lathrop in Alexandria, Virginia. His family was prominent in the state; he descended from John Lothrop and was the grand-nephew of Governor James Barbour. He attended the Dinwiddie School, intending to enroll at the University of Virginia. However, with the outbreak of the American Civil War, Lathrop moved with his pro-Union family to Chicago, Illinois, home of his uncle, Thomas Barbour Bryan. Lathrop's parents sent him to study in Europe under private tutelage during the war. Here, Lathrop gained an appreciation of art and culture. Lathrop returned to Chicago in 1865.

### Returning To Chicago

Upon his return to Chicago, Lathrop joined his uncle's real estate investment practice. The two men shared a great deal in common, including their appreciation for landscape gardening. As such, it is not surprising that Thomas Bryan involved his nephew in the development of Graceland Cemetery, with Bryan Lathrop joining the board of managers in 1867. When his uncle moved to Washington in 1877, Bryan became the president of the board, guiding the development of the cemetery until his death nearly forty years later.

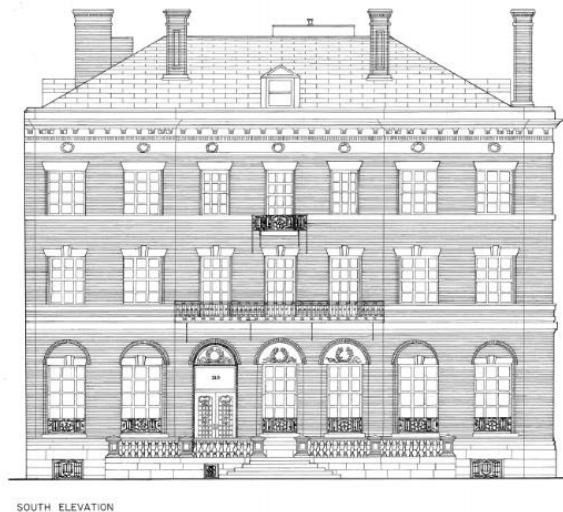
Almost immediately, Bryan Lathrop engaged the services of a civil engineer by the name of Ossian C. Simonds, who would go on to become one of Chicago's most important landscape architects. Together they shared an understanding and appreciation for naturalistic landscapes, and their work at Graceland had a profound effect on not only the cemetery, but the development of landscape architecture in the United States

He quickly rose to prominence and became an advocate for parks in Chicago. Lathrop led an effort to extend Lincoln Park along the shore of Lake Michigan. His uncle Thomas named him the president of Graceland Cemetery in 1878. Lathrop held this position until his death. He also co-founded the Chicago Real Estate Board and became president of the Elmhurst Spring Water Company. He was a trustee of the Newberry Library and Art Institute of Chicago from 1894 until his death. He was also a trustee of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 1894 until 1898, when he was named its vice president. Five years later, he was named its president and served in this role until his death. Under his presidency, the orchestra moved into its current home in Orchestra Hall.

## Bryan Lathrop's House in Chicago

Helen Lynde Aldis (1849-1935) was the daughter of a Chicago judge, and the sister of Owen Aldis, who was a successful real estate investor and developer of high rises in Chicago following the Civil War and the Chicago. She married Bryan Lathrop in 1875. .

In 1891, Lathrop and his wife Helen Aldis, commissioned Charles Follen McKim, of the firm McKim, Mead and White, to design their home at 120 East Bellevue Place. Completed in time for the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, the house was described by architect Alfred Hoyt Granger as "the most perfect piece of Georgian architecture in Chicago." McKim came to Chicago in early 1891 regarding his design for the Agricultural Building at the Fair, and it was at that time that he and Lathrop were brought together. One of the few buildings in Chicago designed by the firm, the design brought Georgian Revival to the Gold Coast, and in less than a decade, it was the predominant style. (The house has been owned and occupied by The Fortnightly since 1922, and was designated a Chicago landmark in 1973).



The Lathrop House, also known as the Bryan Lathrop House, is a Georgian style house at 120 E Bellevue Place in the Gold Coast neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois, United States. It was designated a Chicago Landmark on May 9, 1973, and it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974

## Bryan Lathrop's Sister - Florence

Lathrop's sister was Florence Lathrop, who first married Henry, brother of Marshall Field, and then, after being widowed, married Thomas Nelson Page. Lathrop was also an avid collector of art and had one of the largest collections of James Abbott McNeill Whistler in the country. Lathrop was a member of the Caxton Club, Grolier Club, and Chicago Historical Society.

## Bryan Lathrop Dies in 1916

Lathrop died on May 13, 1916 and donated most of his property to his philanthropic endeavors, including \$700,000 to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He was buried in Graceland Cemetery. Edgar Lee Masters wrote a commemorative poem about Lathrop in Poetry magazine in honor of his support of music in Chicago. The orchestra established the Bryan Lathrop Memorial scholarship fund in his memory, thanks in part to a \$50,000 donation from Florence. Lathrop donated his Whistler collection to the Art Institute in Chicago.

His wife, Helen, would live another 19 years until 1935, spending her summers at the Aldis Cottage of York Harbor.

**Bryan Lathrop.**  
*Special to The New York Times.*

**CHICAGO, May 13.**—Bryan Lathrop, a leader in the civic, social, and musical life of Chicago, died suddenly today from heart disease at his residence at 120 Bellevue Place. He was 72 years old. With him when he passed away were Mrs. Lathrop and Mrs. Thomas Nelson Page, the latter Mr. Lathrop's sister and wife of the United States Ambassador to Italy. For a number of years Mr. Lathrop was President of the Chicago Orchestral Association, and some time ago made a gift of \$25,000 to the pension fund of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

