

# The Charles S. Peirce International Centennial Congress

# Peirce 2014



One day with Peirce:  
Cambridge, Boston,  
New York and Arisbe

## Cambridge and Boston, MA.



“I remember how angry people were when a furniture dealer cut down some elms to build a store. Cambridge was a lovely place at that time [1844], and people went to Boston in an ‘Hourly.’”

2

Charles S. Peirce *MS.* 1602

## New York, NY.



“Should you desire to see me, I shall be in New York next week, where The Brevort and the Century Club are my headquarters...”

3

CSP to Daniel Gilman, June 6, 1879.

## “Arisbe” Milford, PA.



“When a man is about to build a house, what a power of thinking he has to do before he can safely break ground! ... What a study to ascertain the most available and suitable materials, to determine the mode of construction to which those materials are best adapted ... Now without riding the metaphor too far, I think we may safely say that the studies preliminary to the construction of a great theory should be at least as deliberate and thorough as those that are preliminary to the building of a dwelling house.”

4

C. S. Peirce, CP 6.8-9, 1892



This guide is an invitation to enrich the Congress beyond UMass Lowell, and to spend one day searching for Peirce through houses, buildings, streets and places where he lived and worked. In many of them still remain features of his time; others do not exist anymore; and a few are dedicated to Peirce. Peirce’s natal house (above) at 4 Mason St. Cambridge, “the *stone-colored* wooden building” as Peirce referred to it, should be the very first.

In train, Boston and Cambridge are under 50 minutes from Lowell. If you have an opportunity to go further, New York City also will be worth. Certainly, for those willing to journey up “Arisbe” (Milford, PA) it will be a true pilgrimage.

Baltimore, MD and Washington, DC are truly peircean places also, but they could be out of reach for one-day trip. In Baltimore, at Johns Hopkins University, the Original Faculty of Philosophy mural (at Shriver Hall) depicting Peirce is a must-see place. In Washington, the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey building at 205 New Jersey Avenue, SE, would have been the ideal place to visit but it was demolished in 1929.

## 10 Arrow Street. Cambridge, MA

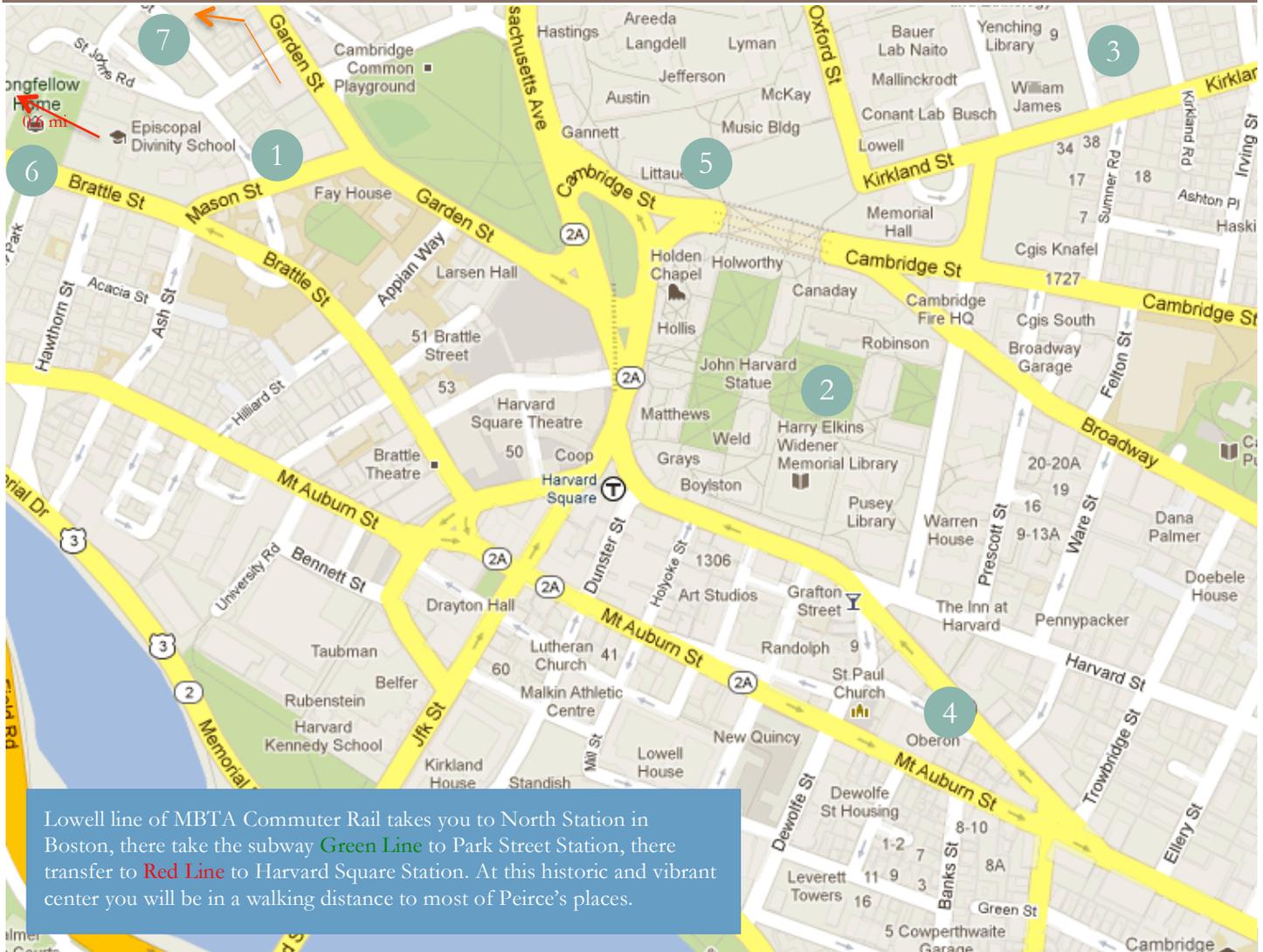
“When Charles and Zina returned from the First Survey assignment in Europe, they moved to their second house, at 10 Arrow Street Cambridge, MA.”

J. Brent, *Peirce*, p.82



Cambridge continues at page 2

# Cambridge and Boston, MA.

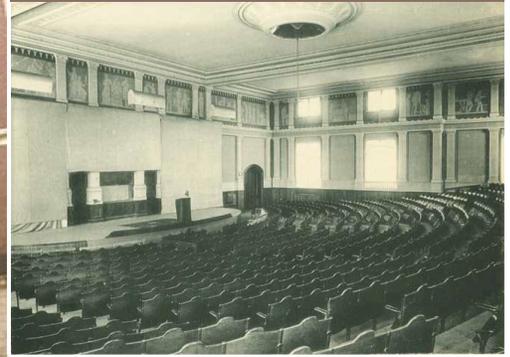


Lowell line of MBTA Commuter Rail takes you to North Station in Boston, there take the subway **Green Line** to Park Street Station, there transfer to **Red Line** to Harvard Square Station. At this historic and vibrant center you will be in a walking distance to most of Peirce's places.

## Peirce's places at Cambridge: Then and Now

1. Peirce's birthplace at 4 Mason Street. Across the street see Fay House, from 1835 home of Judge Samuel Phillips Prescott Fay, grandfather of Melusina "Zina" Fay who became Peirce first wife. Zina spend her "whole girlhood" there.
2. Harvard Yard: At least three must-see buildings of Peirce' life. First, Sever Hall's room 11 on east side of Harvard Yard, where Peirce delivered the Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism in 1903. Professor Benjamin Peirce's House, from 1845 to 1872 at 10 Quincy Street or "Function Hall", was demolished to give place to Sever Hall. Second, Emerson Hall, in front of Sever Hall, where Peirce lectured before the Harvard Philosophy Club on "Logical Methodetic" in 1907. Third, Boylston Hall where Peirce gave his second Harvard lectures on British Logicians. A fourth building of interest is Massachusetts Hall, on west side of Old Yard, where Peirce moved into as a resident graduated in 1860.
3. Peirce Family House, 4 Kirkland Place. Charlotte Elizabeth Peirce, Prof. Benjamin's sister ("Aunt Lizzie") bought this house for being home of Prof. Benjamin and Sarah. After Prof. Benjamin dead, in some old maps it appears as J. M. Peirce House (James Mills, Charles' eldest brother).
4. Melusina Fay Peirce House, 10 Arrow Street. A Blue Oval Historic Marker credits Peirce' first wife as an early feminist and founder of the Cooperative Housekeeping Association. The Peirces lived there for almost twelve years and probably the Metaphysical club met most frequently in early 1870s.
5. Littauer Center (1805 Cambridge St.) is placed where once was the Lawrence Scientific School (then 5 Kirkland St.) where Peirce graduated from Chemistry in 1863.
6. Studio House, 168 Brattle Street. At 0.6 miles down the street from Mason Street. Here Peirce offered the lectures on "Reasoning and the Logic of Things".
7. Harvard College Observatory, 60 Garden St., where Peirce was an Assistant in 1869. From the Harvard Square Station take any bus or trackless trolley going west on Concord Avenue and get off at "Observatory Hill."

## Lowell Lectures



Peirce gave three series of lectures for the Lowell Institute in Boston, but as its founder ruled that none fund was to be invested in a building for the Lectures, they usually were given in hired halls. Peirce's:

“The Logic of Sciences” 24 Oct-1 Dec. 1866

“The History of Sciences” 28 Nov-5 Jan. 1892

“Some Topics on Logic” 23 Nov-17 Dec. 1903

Second and Third lectures were given at Huntington Hall (above), Rogers Building MIT's First Building 1866. In 1937 it was purchased by the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company and razed in 1939 to make way for their new home office at 501 Boylston Street, Boston.

First lecture was at Marlboro Chapel, part of Marlboro Hotel bounded by Washington and Tremont, Winter and Bromfield streets. Despite that the Chapel does not exist today, it is a great opportunity to walk until Granary Burying Ground to see the grave of Samuel Adams and many notable patriots.



## Boston Athenæum

10 ½ Beacon St. Boston, MA 02108 Tel. (617) 227-0270.

From Harvard Square Station, take the **Red Line** to Park Street Station and walk northward until reaching Beacon Street, turn east to find the Athenæum

Peirce was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and read his New List of Categories before the Academy. During the 19th century the Academy shared quarters with the Boston Athenæum (c. 1896) and later the Massachusetts Historical Society at 1154 Boylston Street, Boston.

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“On May 14, 1867, after three years of almost insanely concentrated thought, hardly interrupted even by sleep, I produced my one contribution to philosophy in the ‘New List of Categories.’”

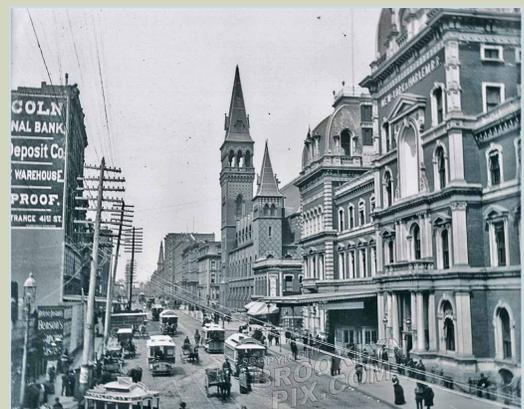
## New York, NY.

A walk searching for Peirce's places in NY should begin in Bryant Park nearby NY Public Library (5th Ave 42nd St.) into which the Astor Library of Peirce's time was absorbed; then go to the Century Club (7W 43rd St.), and walk a few blocks northwards to the Saint Thomas Episcopal Church (5th Ave 53rd St.) where Peirce had a mystical calling. Early in 1876 Peirce had an operations center for Coast Survey related work at 558 Lexington Ave.; an office at 40 Wall Str.; and an apartment at 109 East Fifteenth Street (c. 1891).

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“The address 84 Broad St New York City, will go for this summer I think. It is my business office. Or you can address me 108 West 89th Street where I have an apartment. When I write again, I shall tell you of some personal matters. My wife is in a dangerous condition of health.”

C. S. Peirce to E. Schröder, April 7, 1897.



42<sup>nd</sup> St looking west from Old Gran Central Station ca. 1888

## “Arisbe”. Milford, PA.

From New York, take the **Metro-North Railroad** in Penn Station to Port Jervis, NY., a two and a half hour trip. There, take the **Shortline bus** to Milford, PA. After 10 minutes traveling (about 5.5 mi), ask the bus driver for an additional stop; you should be at 400 Route 6/209 or just 2.5 mi before reaching Milford, PA. When you get off the bus, walk northwards crossing the Old Road to “Arisbe”.



In Milford you could visit “The Columns,” as is known the Pike County Historical Society Museum at 608 Broad St, to see a copy of the Cuddeback Letter Box containing more than two hundred letters of Peirce from 1859 to 1861. There are exhibited Peirce’s desk, some of his hats, and Juliette’s dresses.

Charles Peirce and his second wife Juliette Froissy (Pourtalais) moved from New York to Milford, PA, on 28 April 1887, and for two weeks checked into the Hotel Fauchère (visit it at 401 Broad St.), then rented the house Scheinmee Homestead on Broad Street. On 10 May 1888 with inheritances from Peirce’s mother and aunt Lizzie who died meanwhile, they purchased a 130-acre (52 ha) estate in the west bank of Delaware River. It was composed of two parcels, “Wanda Farm” and a estate called “Quicktown”. Peirce renamed the whole estate “Arisbe” after the ancient Greek town with that name, a colony of Miletus home of the first philosophers. Peirce would begin renovating the house of Wanda Farm built at 1854 aiming to turn it into a summer school of philosophy.

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“Now I propose to put up three pretty cottages of about 4 rooms each, and make the house a sort of Casino [i.e. resort] for fashionable people of ‘cultural’ tendencies, to spend the summer, have a good time, and take a mild dose of philosophy. There is now no railway through the valley. When it comes, as it will in a few years, values will be greatly enhanced, and my place, with the business I shall have built up will be worth considerable. My ultimate aim is to set going an institution for the pursuit of pure science & philosophy which shall be self-supporting.”

Charles S. Peirce to Francis C Russell, Sep. 17 1892.

Peirce died in 19 April 1914, his body was cremated and when Juliette died in 4 October 1934 his ashes were buried with her body in the Milford cemetery. Joseph Jastrow a former student of Peirce in Johns Hopkins, in an obituary on the widow of Peirce remembered a visit to her at Arisbe two years before her death: “the entire house was shadowed in memories” and “Mrs. Peirce ... still retained in the midst of these ruins the dignity and distinction of an assured station in life.”

For Charles Peirce not a hundred years of solitude have elapsed because his memory and ideas would live in the community of Peirce’s scholar worldwide.



## Mapping Peirce’s Life and Thought

As you would have realized following this guide, mapping Peirce’s life and thought is a living semiotic activity that surely contribute to Peirce’s understanding as it is aimed at the Centennial Congress. Peirce himself was a map maker (cartographer) and his work on the Coast and Geodetic Survey contributed to the mapping sciences (astronomy, geodesy, metrology). To visit Peirce’s places not only could give us a sense of Peirce’s epoch and space but also could make us to abduct how Peirce’s thought evolved while living and traveling homeland and abroad. As Max Fisch advised Peirce’s philosophical activity may be divided into three periods related to where Peirce used to live. In Cambridge—a period rich in in logic discoveries— Peirce lived dissatisfied with Boston Brahmin; during his five trips to Europe—a cosmopolitan period of international recognition— Peirce was confronted with new aesthetics experiences and was associated with the community of inquirers; finally, in Arisbe the multiple renovations undertaken became a metaphor of building his own philosophical system.



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