

## = Edward Bellamy House =

The Edward Bellamy House is a National Historic Landmark at 91 ? 93 Church Street in the Chicopee Falls section of the city of Chicopee , Massachusetts . Its landmark designation was in honor of journalist and Utopian writer Edward Bellamy ( 1850 ? 1898 ) , whose home it was for most of his life .

Built in 1852 , Bellamy 's father moved the family into the house after its construction . Bellamy grew up in the house , and returned there after completing his studies and a brief stint of work in New York City . He did much of his writing ( both journalistic and otherwise ) in his father 's study until the latter 's death in 1886 , after which Bellamy 's family took over the entire house . It was in these years that Bellamy wrote *Looking Backward* , the work that brought him fame . His principal absences from Chicopee were made in a quest to improve his tubercular health , which eventually claimed his life .

The property had only two private owners after the Bellamys before it was acquired in the 1970s by the Edward Bellamy Memorial Association and restored . The association operates part of the property as a historic house museum , and rents out office space in the remainder . The building is not architecturally distinguished , and has undergone a variety of alterations .

## = = Architecture = =

The main part of the house is two stories high , with a gable end facing the street . It is three window bays wide , with the front door occupying the righthand bay . A single story porch extends across the width of this part of the house . The pediment of the street @-@ facing gable end has a small circular window in it .

The house has three additions . A single story addition extends from the rear of the house , and a two story addition extends to the main house 's right , with its roof gable perpendicular to that of the main house . A single story ell extends further to the right from the second addition . The main house is numbered 91 Church Street , while a separate entrance from the second addition is numbered 93 .

Inside the main house , a stairway leads up from the front entry , with a parlor occupying the space to the left . The dining room is behind the parlor , with the kitchen occupying the first addition . The parlor and dining room have matching fireplaces with black marble mantels . The upstairs of the main house has three bedrooms , one of which has a builtin desk and bookcases , and may have been used as a study .

The two story addition and the ell to its right effectively form a second dwelling space . Accessible via an outside entrance and a door in the main house 's entry hall , this space has seen multiple uses over the course of the house 's history .

## = = History = =

The house was built in 1852 . Rufus and Maria Bellamy moved there from a nearby house when their son Edward was still a baby . Rufus Bellamy was the local Baptist minister , whose church was also nearby . The house was sited near a high point in Chicopee , and would have had views of the growing mill centers of Chicopee Falls and Cabotville . The neighborhood was then one of the wealthier in the town ( Chicopee was not incorporated as a city until 1891 ) , where the owners and managers of the local factories lived . Edward Bellamy likened his wealthy neighbors to " the feudal baron dwelling among the people " .

Edward Bellamy was the third of four children . In 1867 he attended Union College in Schenectady , New York , and from 1868 to 1869 he lived in Germany with a cousin . From 1871 to 1872 he worked for a time in New York City as a journalist .

From 1872 to the end of his life , Bellamy , with three exceptions , made the house his home . In 1876 , in a quest to improve his health ( he suffered from tuberculosis , which would eventually kill him ) , he went on an extended tour to the Sandwich Islands ( now Hawaii ) . In 1882 he married

Emma Sanderson , a ward of his father 's since 1874 . When the couple were expecting their second child , they lived in the house next door for a time in 1886 . Rufus Bellamy died in November 1886 , and Edward and his family promptly moved back in . In 1887 he published Looking Backward , a utopian novel that was instantly popular , and brought Bellamy wide notice . In 1895 Bellamy traveled to Denver , Colorado in another bid to improve his failing health . After unsuccessful attempts at treatment , he returned to Chicopee in April 1896 , and died at home one month later .

According to a neighbor , Bellamy at first used his father 's study for his writing . In his later years Bellamy would also use other areas of the house for his work , leaving chaotic piles of manuscript paper lying about . When Bellamy helped found the Penny News ( later the Springfield Daily News ) , it began publication in the house .

The house remained in the family until 1905 , when Emma Bellamy sold it to a photographer named Hanniman . He divided the house , using the right @-@ hand side as a professional space . Hanniman was also responsible for enlarging the fourth addition , and replacing a barn on the property with a garage . In 1965 the house was sold to Joseph Lavallee , whose only significant alteration was to update the kitchen .

The house was added to the National Register of Historic Places and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1971 .

The Edward Bellamy Memorial Association purchased the property in 1974 , and conducted major restoration efforts in the 1970s and 1980s , assisted by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities ( now Historic New England ) . The association operates part of the house as a museum , renting out the other to provide additional income .

= = Bellamy and Chicopee = =

Despite Bellamy 's lifelong association with Chicopee , he was a detached observer of the social changes unfolding in the growing industrial areas of the town . He was a somewhat reclusive personality who shunned publicity , avoiding social and speaking engagements , including in the years of his popularity following the publication of Looking Backward . He was not widely known within the town . When it was suggested that Bellamy move to Boston to facilitate the production of the journal A New Nation ( begun to support and promote the social and political movements established in the wake of the publication of Looking Backward ) , Bellamy demurred , writing " I have the deepest aversion to change . "

Bellamy did , however , draw on the community for inspiration in his writings . The last name of Julian West , the protagonist of Looking Backward , is that of one of his neighbors . Elements of his historical novel The Duke of Stockbridge , based on the events of the 1786 ? 87 Shays ' Rebellion , are set in a town resembling Chicopee , and characters in his short story " A Nantucket Idyll " are based on local women . Biographer Arthur Morgan notes that many of his other stories are set in towns based " quite obviously [ on ] the village of Chicopee Falls " .