

'That so young a man be successful'

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Over the years, Chelmsford has numbered among its sons and daughters several professionals who have achieved national and/or international fame, particularly in medicine. Drs. Willard Parker, John Call Dalton, Rufus Wyman and his son, Jeffries Wyman, and Anna Q. Churchill are included in this group.

However, the son of yet another doctor received recognition in a different field and at a comparatively early age.

John Galen Howard, the youngest son of Dr. Levi Howard, was brought up in the Greek revival house at 21 Chelmsford Street. After graduating from the Chelmsford public schools, John studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; furthering his professional education in the office of the eminent architect, H.H. Richardson.

He spent a year and a half in California in the practice of his profession, after which he returned east but soon made a visit to Europe, profitably spending some six months in studying the noted architectural models to be found in the great continental cities. Upon his return, he was employed in the office of McKim, Mead & White, leading architects in New York City.

The way It was

By George A.
Parkhurst



The publisher of *Cosmopolitan* magazine, in the fall of 1889, offered a prize of \$200 for the best plan for a public bath house in New York. As the newspaper reported: "Circulars were sent to the prominent architects of the country and drawings were received from more than 30 competitors.

"At a recent meeting of the committee of awards, the plan of John Galen Howard was accepted as most deserving of the prize. The estimated cost of the building is \$200,000 and when it is erected the designer probably will be the supervising architect. That so young a man, he is but 26 years old, should be successful in a contest with so many able competitors is no slight honor and most creditable to his thorough acquaintance with the details of his profession."

All of the work on this project was done by Mr. Howard outside of working hours

and not as an employee of McKim, Mead & White.

The house in which John Howard spent his youth, while now considered to be one of Chelmsford's architecturally interesting historic homes, is better known as the residence and office of several of the town's physicians. It was built about 1840 by Dr. Francis M. Kittredge, one of the 14 children of Dr. Paul Kittredge who lived across the street. Incidentally, four of the fourteen children of Dr. Paul Kittredge became doctors in later life.

In 1848 Dr. Francis Kittredge sold the house to Dr. Levi Howard, father of the young architect. Dr. Howard deeded it to his son, Dr. Amasa Howard, in 1895. Another doctor, Leonard Dursthoff, purchased it in 1924. It is now the residence of Mr. Henry Eriksen, who operates an antique shop in his barn.

The present writer has, unfortunately, not been able to uncover any information on the public bath house whose design won recognition for a Chelmsford native.

But that's the way it was in 1890.

George A. Parkhurst is a Chelmsford historian whose family has lived in town since 1654.