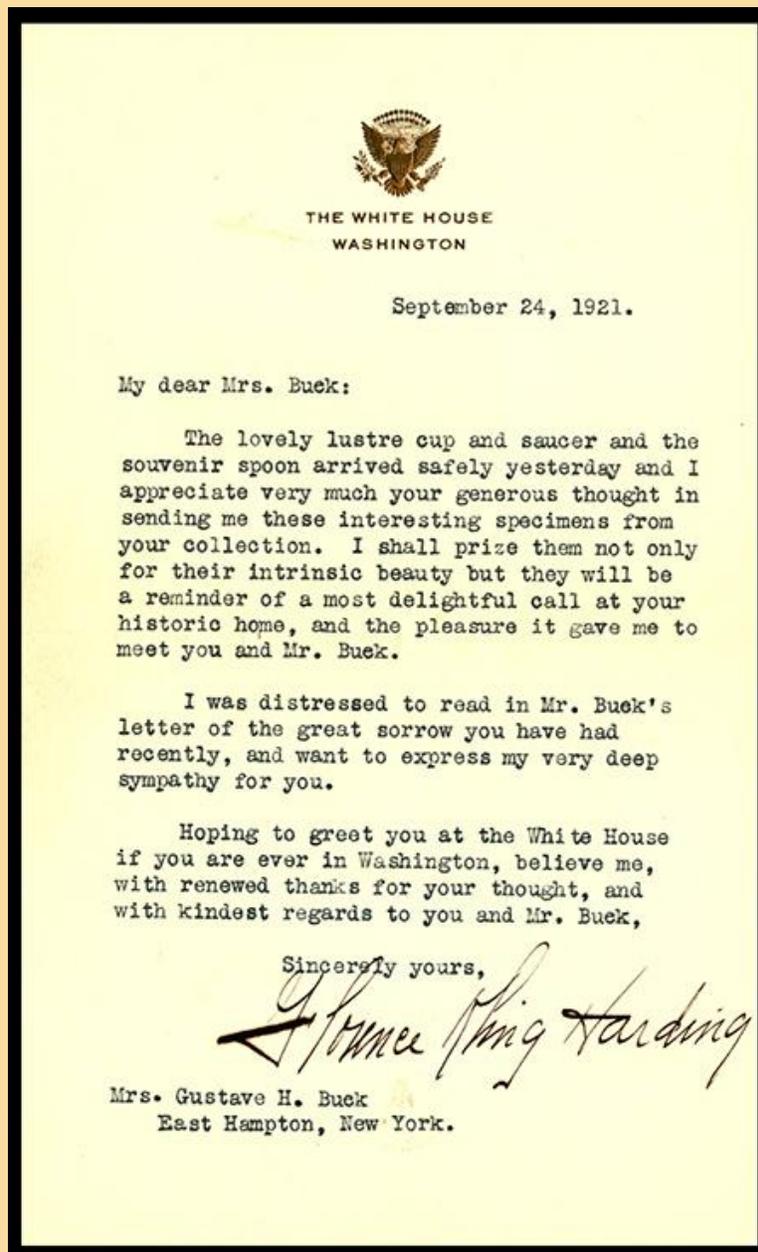




Item of the Week *from the* Long Island Collection

LONG ISLAND COLLECTION | DIGITAL LONG ISLAND | EAST HAMPTON STAR ARCHIVE



**Letter from First Lady Florence Kling Harding
to Mrs. Gustav Buek, September 24, 1921**

On White House letterhead, [First Lady Florence Kling Harding](#) wrote to Mrs. Hannah Valentine Buek on September 21st, 1921. In this letter, Mrs. Harding thanked Mrs. Buek for the "lovely" gift of a lustreware cup, saucer, and spoon Buek sent Harding following the First Lady's visit. The First Lady visited Home, Sweet Home with Secretary of War, John W. Weeks, and Frank B. Wiborg. During her visit, [President Warren Harding](#) played golf at Shinnecock Hills National Golf Course.

Gustave and Hannah Buek owned [Home, Sweet Home](#) between 1907 and 1927. [Gustave Buek](#) ran a printing company, achieving prominence as a lithographer. The Bueks enjoyed a close friendship with the Moran family. It's believed the Bueks purchased the home because of the popular (inaccurate) myth that it was the birthplace of John Howard Payne, playwright and composer of the song "Home, Sweet Home." The Bueks were particularly interested in the Colonial Revival aesthetic and architectural style, which became popular after the Centennial Exhibition of 1876.

The Bueks filled the rooms of Home, Sweet Home with colonial relics, antique furnishings, and Hannah's lustreware. Florence Harding admired the collection during her visit, which prompted the thoughtful gift from Hannah. Many items from the Bueks' collection remain on display at Home, Sweet Home Museum.

As for the President and First Lady, they shared the Bueks' enthusiasm for Colonial Revival style. In 1922, the nationwide "Better Homes Movement" championed home ownership, home maintenance and improvement, and home decoration in response to the shortage of homes after WWI, and to motivate responsible consumer behavior and expand the market for consumer products. Warren Harding endorsed the movement, and he supported using a replica of the Bueks' Home, Sweet Home residence as the "National Better Home." Harding endorsed and officiated the opening of the [movement's model residence in Washington, D.C.](#) in the spring of 1923. Later, the replica home became a training facility for the Girl Scouts of America.

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[The Digital Long Island Collection](#) is part of New York Heritage Digital Collections. Included are searchable scans of deeds, drawings, etchings, inventories, letters, maps, paintings, pardons, patents, photographs, plans, postcards, prints, sculptures, sketches, textiles, tiles, yearbooks and more to come.

[The East Hampton Star Archive](#) is a fully searchable, online digital archive of our local weekly newspaper, that features each complete issue of the paper from 1918-1968, exactly as it appeared in print. Visit the archive online, for a tour of our Town's history that will fascinate both the amateur and professional historian!

[The Karl Grossman Research Archive](#) is an extensive collection of materials digitized from the personal archive of Karl Grossman, an investigative reporter, columnist, author, and current professor of journalism at SUNY Old Westbury. The archive brings together a decades long career in reporting and journalism with topics ranging from the economy and pollution to fishing and East Hampton Town. Patrons are capable of searching this 9,500+ item collection by collection name, year, title, or keyword search.

The Local Artist Research Archive is a collection of over 19,000 items digitized from Guild Hall, containing materials including personal letters, photographs, news clippings, and art catalogs concerning artists of the East End. Patrons are capable of searching this archive by collection, title, or keyword search.

Welcome to the Long Island Collection's "Item of the Week."

We are an archive dedicated to the history and people of Long Island, with a special interest in all things East Hampton and East End. Unlike some small local history rooms in other public libraries, we have over 100,000 items including, but not limited to, rare books, maps, photographs, deeds, postcards, letters, newspapers, and whaling logs. We also have a dedicated and hardworking staff ready to help you with any questions you may have. Unable to make it to the library? No problem! We upload images from the collection to Digital Long Island on a weekly basis, so there's always something new and interesting to behold.

Please visit us at the Library, make use of our extensive online digital resources, or contact us for assistance. Public hours are: Mon. - Tues. and Thurs. - Sat., 1:00-4:30 p.m.



Researched and written by:

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Mayra Scanlon began working in the Long Island Collection in October 2019 as a full-time Librarian/Archivist. Mayra's activities include updating the Collection's Digital Long Island database, scanning materials, and assisting patrons with a variety of research requests. A Suffolk County, Long Island native and Civil War buff, Mayra Scanlon is currently completing a dual master's degree program in History, and Library and Information Science, at Queens College, City University of New York.

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