

**LONGFELLOW LEAFLETS:
POEMS AND PROSE PASSAGES
FROM THE WORKS OF HENRY
WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW**

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Longfellow Leaflets: Poems and Prose Passages From the Works of Henry Wadsworth
Longfellow by Josephine E. Hodgdon

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JOSEPHINE E. HODGDON

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Riverside Literature Series

LONGFELLOW LEAFLETS

POEMS AND PROSE PASSAGES

FROM THE WORKS OF

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

FOR READING AND RECITATION

COMPILED BY

JOSEPHINE E. HODGDON

ILLUSTRATED



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LEAFLETS FROM STANDARD AUTHORS.

LONGFELLOW.



Henry W. Longfellow

LONGFELLOW IN HIS HOME.

A VISITOR to Cambridge, in Massachusetts, is very sure to make his first question, Where is the Longfellow house? and any one whom he meets will be able to tell him. The ample, dignified mansion, built in Colonial days, and famous as the head-quarters of Washington during the first year of the War for Independence, is in the midst of broad fields, and looks across mead-

LONGFELLOW IN HIS HOME.

ows to the winding Charles and the gentle hills beyond. Great elms, fragrant lilacs, and syringas stand by the broad path which leads to the door, and when the poet was living, the passer-by would often catch a glimpse of him pacing up and down the shaded piazza which is half screened by the shrubbery.

Here came, in the summer of 1837, a slight, studious-looking young man, who lifted the huge brass knocker which hung upon the front door, and very likely thought of the great general as he let it fall with a clang. He had called to see the owner of the house, Mrs. Andrew Craigie, widow of the apothecary-general of the northern provincial army in the Revolution. The visitor asked if there was a room in her house which he could occupy. The stately old lady, looking all the more dignified for the turban which was wound about her head, replied, as she looked at the youthful figure, —

"I lodge students no longer."

"But I am not a student; I am a professor in the University."

"A professor?" She looked curiously at one so unlike most professors in appearance.

"I am Professor Longfellow," he said.

"Ah! that is different. I will show you what there is." She led him up the broad staircase, and, proud of her house, opened one spacious room after another, only to close the door of each, saying, "You cannot have that," until at length she led him into the southeast corner room of the second story. "This was General Washington's chamber," she said. "You may have this;" and here he gladly set up his home. The house was a large one, and already Edward Everett and Jared Sparks had lived there; afterwards, when Mr. Longfellow was keeping house in it, the maker of the dictionary, Mr. Joseph E. Worcester, shared it with him, for there was room for each family to keep a separate establishment, and even a third could have found independent quarters. When Mrs. Craigie died, Mr. Longfellow bought the house, and it has remained in the family ever since.

When he came to Cambridge, in 1837, to be Professor of Modern Languages and Literature, he was thirty years old. He was but eighteen when he graduated at Bowdoin College in the class to which Nathaniel Hawthorne also belonged, and he had given such promise then that he was almost immediately called to be professor at Bowdoin. He accepted the appointment on condition that he might have three years of travel and study in Europe. The immediate result of his life abroad was in some translations, chiefly from the Spanish, in some critical papers, and in "Outre-Mer," his first prose work. He continued at Bowdoin until 1835, when he was invited to Harvard. Again he went to Europe for further study and travel, and then after that spent seventeen years as professor. One of his pupils has given an affectionate account of the teacher's method with his class: "As it happened, the regular recitation rooms of the college were all in use, and we met him in a sort of parlor, carpeted, hung with pictures, and otherwise handsomely furnished, which was, I believe, called 'The Corporation Room.' We sat round a mahogany table, which was reported to be meant for the dinners of the trustees, and the whole affair had the aspect of a friendly gathering in a private house, in which the study of German was the amusement of the occasion

LONGFELLOW IN HIS HOME.

He began with familiar ballads, read them to us, and made us read them to him. Of course we soon committed them to memory without meaning to, and I think this was probably part of his theory. At the same time we were learning the paradigms by rote. . . . His regular duty was the oversight of five or more instructors who were teaching French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese to two or three hundred under-graduates. . . . We never knew when he might look in on a recitation and virtually conduct it. We were delighted to have him come. . . . We all knew he was a poet, and were proud to have him in the college, but at the same time we respected him as a man of affairs."

Only a few knew him as a professor; thousands have known the poet, and thousands are born every year who will read and enjoy his poetry all their lives. He began to write and to publish poetry as soon as he was fairly settled in the Craigie House, and the place is full of suggestion of his work. "The house, with its great fire-places, its generously proportioned rooms, its hospitable hall and broad staircase, its quaint carvings and tiles, is itself an historic poem. The study is a busy literary man's workshop; the table is piled with pamphlets and papers in orderly confusion; a high desk in one corner suggests a practice of standing while writing, and gives a hint of one secret of the poet's singularly erect form at an age when the body generally begins to stoop and the shoulders to grow round; an orange-tree stands in one window; near it a stuffed stork keeps watch; by the side of the open fire is the 'children's chair'; on the table is Coleridge's ink-stand; upon the walls are crayon likenesses of Emerson, Hawthorne, and Sumner; and in one of the book-cases which fill all the spare wall-space and occupy even one of the windows, are, rarest treasure of all, the poet's own works in their original manuscript, carefully preserved in handsome and substantial bindings." Here, too, one may see the pen presented by "beautiful Helen of Maine," the old Danish song-book, the antique pitcher; upon the staircase is the old clock, which

"points and beckons with its hands;"

across the meadows is the gentle Charles,

"Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,
And have made thy margin dear."

It would be a pleasant task to read closely in Longfellow's poems and discover all the kind words which he wrote of his friends. A man is known by the company he keeps. And how fine must be that nature which gathers into immortal verse the friendship of Agassiz, Hawthorne, Lowell, Sumner, Whittier, Tenneyson, Irving, and chooses for companionship among the dead such names as Chaucer, Dante, Keats, Milton, Shakespeare. All these and more will be found strung as beads upon the golden thread of Longfellow's verse.

After all, the old house where the poet lived is most closely connected with his poems, because it is a home. Here his children were born, and out of its chambers issued those undying poems which sing the deep life of the fireside. Here was "Evangeline" written, one of the most precious tales