

**AN ORATION DELIVERED AT
CAMBRIDGE, ON THE FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION
OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA**

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An Oration Delivered at Cambridge, on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Declaration of the independence of the United States of America by Edward Everett

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EDWARD EVERETT

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ORATION
Delivered at Cambridge
ON THE
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
DECLARATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE
OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

BY EDWARD EVERETT.

BOSTON:
CUMMINGS, HILLIARD, AND COMPANY,

1826.

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*Memorial Oration, Delivered
at the
New England Historic Genealogical Society*

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO WIT:

District Clerk's Office.

BE it remembered, that on the eighteenth day of July, A. D. 1826, and in the fifty-first year of the Independence of the United States of America, Cummings, Hilliard, & Co. of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:—

“An Oration delivered at Cambridge on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Declaration of the Independence of the United States of America. By Edward Everett.”

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,” and also to an Act, entitled, “An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, ‘An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.”

JNO. W. DAVIS,

Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

CAMBRIDGE.

From the University Press—By Hilliard & Metcalf.

Cambridge, July 6, 1826.

SIR,

At a meeting of citizens of Cambridge and the vicinity on the 4th of July, the following vote was passed, which, by direction of the Committee thereby appointed, I beg leave to communicate to you.

I have the honor to be, &c.

S. P. P. FAY.

The Hon. EDWARD EVERETT.

VOTED, That the

HON. MR FAY,
" MR FULLER,
" MR STEARNS,
DR HEDDER,
MR WHIPPLE,

be a Committee to present to the Hon. EDWARD EVERETT the thanks of this meeting for the ORATION this day delivered by him, and respectfully to request that he will permit the same to be published.

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ORATION.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

It belongs to us with strong propriety, to celebrate this day. The town of Cambridge, and the county of Middlesex, are filled with the vestiges of the Revolution; whithersoever we turn our eyes, we behold some memento of its glorious scenes. Within the walls, in which we are now assembled, was convened the first provincial Congress, after its adjournment at Concord. The rural magazine at Medford reminds us of one of the earliest acts of British aggression. The march of both divisions of the Royal army, on the memorable nineteenth of April, was through the limits of Cambridge; in the neighbouring towns of Lexington and Concord, the first blood of the Revolution was shed; in West Cambridge, the royal convoy of provisions was, the same day, gallantly surprised by the aged citizens, who staid to protect their homes, while their sons pursued the foe. Here the first American army was formed; from this place, on the seventeenth of June,

was detached the Spartan band, that immortalized the heights of Charlestown, and consecrated that day, with blood and fire, to the cause of American Liberty. Beneath the venerable elm, which still shades the southwestern corner of the common, General Washington first unsheathed his sword at the head of an American army, and to *that seat** was wont every Sunday to repair, to join in the supplications which were made for the welfare of his country.

How changed is now the scene! The foe is gone! The din and the desolation of war are passed; Science has long resumed her station in the shades of our venerable University, no longer glittering with arms; the anxious war-council is no longer in session, to offer a reward for the discovery of the best mode of making salt-petre,—an unpromising stage of hostilities, when an army of twenty thousand men is in the field in front of the foe; the tall grass now waves in the trampled sally-port of some of the rural redoubts, that form a part of the simple lines of circumvallation, within which a half-armed American militia held the flower of the British army blockaded; the plough has done, what the English batteries could not do,—has levelled others of them with the earth; and the MEN, the great and good men, their warfare is over, and they have gone quietly down to the dust they redeemed from oppression.

*The first wall pew, on the right hand of the pulpit.

At the close of a half century, since the declaration of our Independence, we are assembled to commemorate that great and happy event. We come together, not because it needs, but because it deserves these acts of celebration. We do not meet each other, and exchange our felicitations, because we should otherwise fall into forgetfulness of this auspicious era ; but because we owe it to our fathers and to our children, to mark its return with grateful festivities. The major part of this assembly is composed of those, who had not yet engaged in the active scenes of life, when the Revolution commenced. We come not to applaud our own work, but to pay a filial tribute to the deeds of our fathers. It was for their children, that the heroes and sages of the Revolution labored and bled. They were too wise not to know, that it was not personally their own cause, in which they were embarked ; they felt that they were engaging in an enterprise, which an entire generation must be too short to bring to its mature and perfect issue. The most they could promise themselves was, that, having cast forth the seed of liberty ; having shielded its tender germ from the stern blasts that beat upon it ; having watered it with the tears of waiting eyes, and the blood of brave hearts ; their children might gather the fruit of its branches, while those who planted it should moulder in peace beneath its shade.