

HAPPY 200TH BIRTHDAY, HENRY

*To Longfellow*

by Lee Evans, Bath, Maine

There was a time when poetry was found  
Throughout this land, in parlors far and wide,  
And actually was read; while side by side  
Sat families and friends all gathered round  
To hear your words. This practice was held sound,  
Not an anomaly, as 'tis today--  
For the electric image now holds sway,  
And poetry lies crippled on the ground.

Return to us, O Longfellow, to teach  
Once more the liberal arts in our sad schools,  
Where poetry is gibberish or trite!  
You showed us that the Old World's cultured rules  
Can be applied to us afresh, despite  
Our quest for novelties beyond our reach.

