

# AMERICAN LITERATURE

## MINOR ROMANTICS • PART FOUR

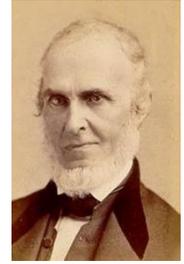
### NEW ENGLAND SCHOOL

## LECTURE NOTES

### HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW CONCLUDED

#### The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere

This poem tells the story of Paul Revere's Ride - it made Paul Revere's name famous!



### JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

#### His Life

- A strong Quaker
- He was very poor as a child - he did not have much formal schooling
- He was extremely active as an abolitionist - He founded the American Anti-Slavery Society

#### His Works

##### Ichabod

- This poem expresses disappointment in Daniel Webster for his surprising position supporting the Compromise of 1850 that supported slavery in new territories

##### First-Day Thoughts

- First Day is Quaker word for Sunday...so the poem is about "Sunday Thoughts"

### JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

#### His Life

- Lived in Cambridge, Massachusetts at family home Elmwood most of his life
- Took the Professorship of Modern Languages at Harvard previously held by H.W. Longfellow
- Later, he became the Minister to Spain - position formerly held by Washington Irving
- Then he became Minister to England



#### His Works

##### A Fable for Critics

- In this poem, Lowell gives a critique of many poets of his day.
- Our textbook includes only some of them.
- Lowell also lampooned Henry David Thoreau in verse quite harshly

##### The Courtin'

- This poem is an excerpt from the Biglow Papers.
- In the Biglow Papers, Lowell uses New England common dialect.

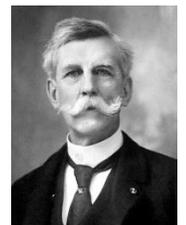
##### The Present Crisis

- It was written as a protest against the Mexican–American War at a time when the US government was considering the annexation of Texas as a state allowing slavery. Lowell worried that the precedent would be set to expand slavery into California and the southwest.
- It was inspired by a request made by J.G. Whittier in 1844, who asked Lowell to write a poem to inspire others.
- It was first published as "Verses Suggested by the Present Crisis" in the *Boston Courier* for December 11, 1845.
- Immediately successful, it rapidly became an anthem of the antislavery movement and was quoted by antislavery leaders such as William Lloyd Garrison and others. [Modern scholar Marcus Wood noted, "if abolition had a single poetic anthem then this was it."]

### OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

#### His Life

- He wrote both poetry and prose as an aside to his medical career
- He studied modern medicine in France
- He was revolutionary in proposing the radical theory that diseases could be transmitted from patient to patient via the doctor



#### His Works

##### Old Ironsides

- Written in honor of the U.S.S. Constitution that was about to be dismantled
- His poem helped to save it! We can go visit it today!

##### The Chambered Nautilus