

Portland. Dec~ 21. 1837.

My dear St. George,

It is so cold here that I cannot mend a pen; and my hand trembles like an old man's. Nevertheless I would fain write you a few words, begging you to send the inclosed (sic) without delay. I tell you, I shall succeed in this, O thou of little faith!

It is awful cold to-day. They seem to keep all their "cold snaps," here for College Vacations. My mind is like a frozen ink-stand. I believe there are some thoughts in it, but they won't flow out. There is no feeling in my fingers, under my nails are purple blood-spots. Circulation stops. Send me some news - a "beaker full of the warm South" (say, Beacon Street) to give the currents of my veins full play. Give me some drink: - juices of Mandragora or Love-in-idleness. Touch my mind's eye therewithal.

Contributed to Maine Memory Network by the Maine Historical Society  
(Local Code: Coll. 420 Box 31)  
Date: Dec. 21, 1837  
Description: Letter from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to George S. Hillard

I left Boston in good spirits; -

"And by the vision splendid

Was on my way attended"

(Pen, do thy duty better) - Coming events cast no shadows before them - only luminous outlines; - like the light of the rising moon, shining through the twilight. So shall it ever be; for with a soul within him and a heaven above him, why should man be sad.

This is a dull town notwithstanding. My native place, too; a perfect hornet's nest of early recollections, insects with stings. I have hardly been out of doors yet; but hear sundry reports about myself. They were brought from Boston by a dress-maker, a cousin of the Hammonds - who dwelling for a time at Russle's in Beacon street, on her return to this place, says to her fair customers, that she saw me walking by at Sunday times with Madonna Francesca, - and describes our dress minutely! This Boston gossip comes with Boston fashions; - both, by change of place assuming an aspect somewhat outré.

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My travelling companion hitherto was a Brown Student - the youth who dined with us Phi Beta day. He spoke of you and your oration at Providence in delightful praise; showing how you have left y<sup>r</sup> footsteps in the soil of Rhode Island, and under them some seed, which is pleasant to think upon.

How goes it with Feltonius - the Doctor Solidus of our new school of Philosophic Theology? - I shall write to him anon. Tell Cleaveland not to make more than three hundred and sixty four engagements to dine out next year. We want him on the sixth of January: which I beg you to bear in mind. "L'Art de diner en Ville" was sold at Auction last week. He should have bought it. I wonder if the bread of others has indeed such a savour of salt, and if it is so hard to go up and down other people's stairs - as the poet says it is! - You had better not ask him, however, for fear he may think it just unkind. Heaven knows I do not mean it so.

Good bye, good Geordie. Y<sup>rs</sup> truly

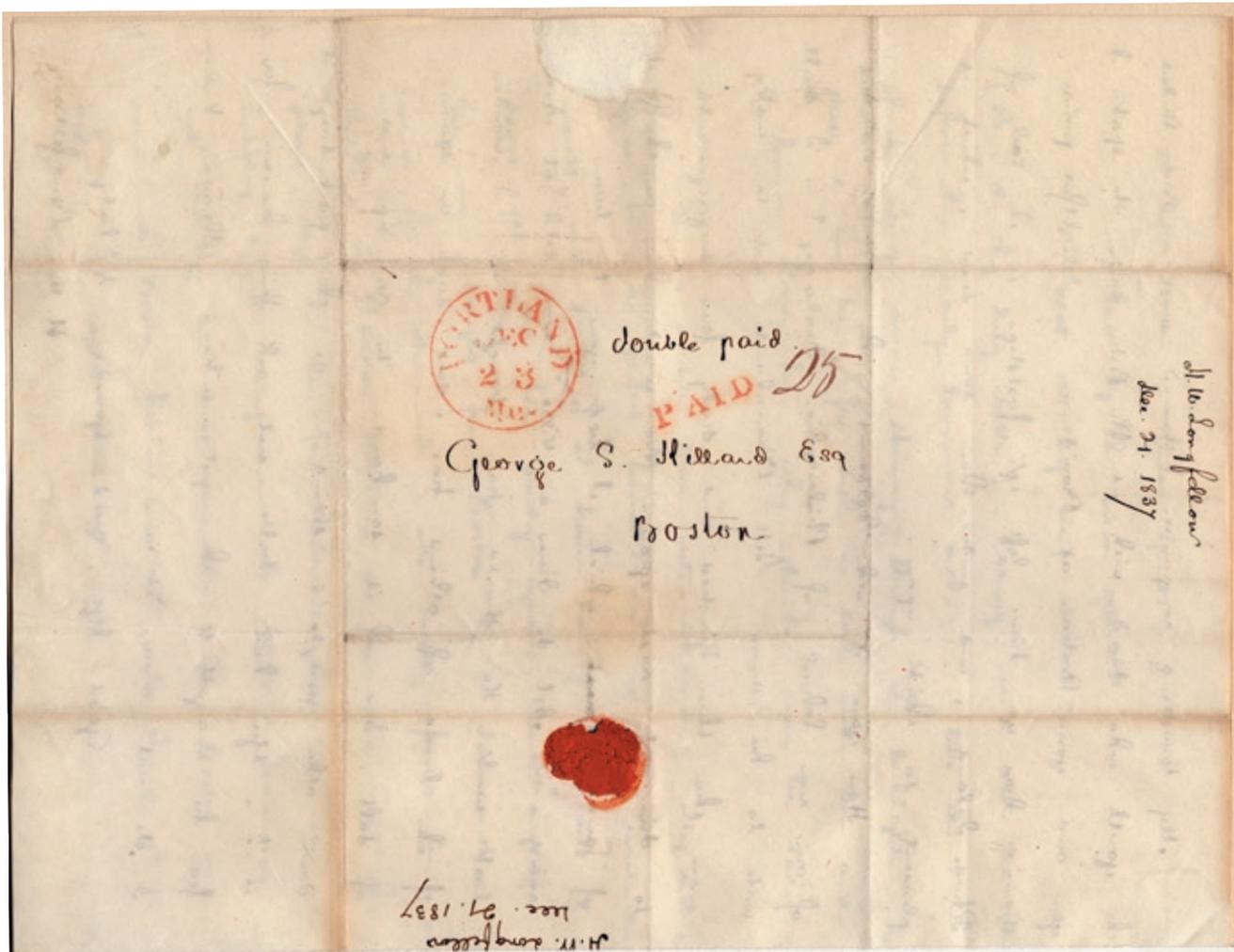
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H. W. Longfellow



George S. Hillard, Esq.  
Boston

[Annotation by Longfellow]  
Double paid

[Written along two edges]

H.W. Longfellow  
Dec. 21, 1837