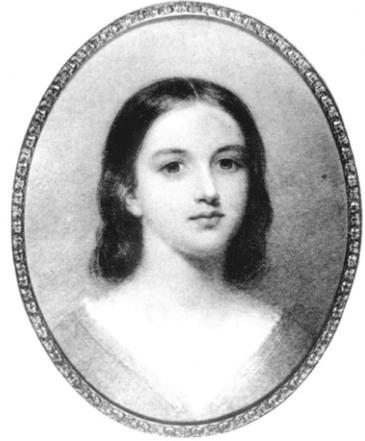


“The Cross of Snow”
by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

In the long, sleepless watches of the night,
A gentle face--the face of one long dead--
Looks at me from the wall, where round its head
The night-lamp casts a halo of pale light.
Here in this room she died; and soul more white
Never through martyrdom of fire was led
To its repose; nor can in books be read
The legend of a life more benedight.
There is a mountain in the distant West
That, sun-defying, in its deep ravines
Displays a cross of snow upon its side.
Such is the cross I wear upon my breast
These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes
And seasons, changeless since the day she died.



From www.MaineMemory.net, item 4124

Enrichment Links:

Taking pictures on the battlefield as recreation in the Civil War:

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/gettex/photo1.htm>

January 7, 1892 letter, from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, referencing “after the children’s hour”

[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/magbell:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(magbell03800206\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/magbell:@field(DOCID+@lit(magbell03800206)))



Mountain of the Holy Cross by Thomas Moran. Courtesy of www.autrynationalcenter.org

Central guiding questions:

1. What part(s) of this poem reflect Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's attempt to define American identity?
2. What is Longfellow's message in his poem and is this message still relevant today?
3. Looking at his message, what qualities and values as a person do you think HWL lived by?
4. Describe Longfellow's voice in this poem and how does it reflect his message?
5. Which images in the poem strengthen/illuminate Longfellow's message?
6. What traditional poetic conventions (i.e. rhyme, simile, meter, etc.) can you identify in this poem? Do they enhance your appreciation for the poem?