



# Charles Appleton Longfellow: Twenty Months in Japan, 1871-1873

*Charles A. Longfellow, Christine Wallace Laidlaw*

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"Charley" Longfellow, the elder son of the famous poet, Henry W. Longfellow, arrived in Japan on June 25, 1871, three years after the restoration of imperial rule. He originally planned to stay for only a few months, but he became so fascinated by the country that he remained for twenty months instead. He accompanied the United States Minister to Japan to audiences with the young Emperor Meiji and on expeditions through the Ainu country to Hokkaido and from Hakodate to Tokyo. They were the first Americans to travel much of this route. Charles described these and other adventures in his letters home and in his journals. His lively descriptions show the impressions early modern Japan made on a largely sympathetic observer. His writings remained virtually unknown for over a century, stored with other family papers at the Longfellow House in Cambridge, Massachusetts. They have been edited for this book and an excellent introduction provided by Christine Wallace Laidlaw. The photographs Charles Longfellow brought back, including many by the famous photographer Felice Beato, are a valuable record of Japan from Hokkaido to Kyushu at this critical point in history. This book includes some 50 photographs, many published here for the first time.

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