

SCENES FROM

# The Golden Legend

A CANTATA for SOLI, CHORUS & ORCHESTRA

THE WORDS WRITTEN BY  
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

THE MUSIC COMPOSED BY  
Charles Villiers Stanford  
(1875)





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The “renaissance” in English music is generally agreed to have started in the late Victorian period, beginning roughly in 1880. Public demand for major works in support of the annual choral festivals held throughout England at that time was considerable which led to the creation of many large scale works for orchestra with soloists and chorus.

Although a number of those works were engraved, printed and are regularly performed today, performance scores for a considerable number of compositions, both large-scale and more intimate works, are not available. These works were either never engraved or were engraved and printed but are no longer available in the publishers’ catalogues. While the existence of these works is documented in biographies of the composers, the ability to study and, most importantly, to perform these compositions is not possible.

Changes in the International copyright laws, coupled with changing musical tastes, played a pivotal role in creating this void. As a result, music publishers lost the ability to generate revenue from the sale/rental of such music. In 1964, holograph and copyist scores from both Novello and from publishers it represented were offered to the British Library and the Royal College of Music Library (see The RCM Novello Library – The Musical Times, Feb. 1983 by Jeremy Dibble ).

These autograph full score manuscripts along with copies of engraved vocal scores, widely available through various online library sources, are now the only resources available for studying and performing these works.

The English Heritage Music Series has been created to ensure that these compositions are preserved, are accessible for scholarly research and, most importantly, are available for performance by future generations. Its mission is to:

- Source non-engraved/out-of-print English composer compositions that are in the U.S. public domain
- Preserve these compositions through the preparation of performance scores using notation software
- Provide open Internet access to the scores to facilitate study, performance and sharing of performance material (program notes, audio, reviews, etc.)

In preparing the English Heritage Music Series editions, every effort has been made to adhere strictly to the notation contained in the manuscripts. Because of the passage of time and its effect on the condition of the manuscript, the absence of clear information often times by the composer in notating divided instruments, and with emendations in the composer and other hands resulting from use of the manuscript in performance, there were numerous circumstances which required interpretation and decisions for notes, accidentals, dynamics, articulations and tempi. Should questions arise in the use of these editions, the composers’ autograph manuscripts and the Novello vocal scores should be consulted for clarification.

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### Source Information

*Autograph Manuscript:*

*Vocal Score:*

*Royal College of Music Library*

*Manuscript Transcription & Score Preparation*

Royal College of Music Library, London: MS 4145

n/a

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### Reference Material and Software

*Notation Software:* Dorico Pro Version 5.1.81.2225 *Audio Software:* NotePerformer 4 *Graphic Software:* Affinity Photo 2

*Document Software:* Affinity Publisher 2 *Music Notation Reference:* Behind Bars by Elaine Gould, Faber Music © 2011

# The Golden Legend

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

1851

## STANFORD'S "PART I"

- **Prince Henry's Despair:** The poem opens with Prince Henry of Hoheneck, afflicted with a malady, seeking a cure from the physicians of Salerno, who tell him the only cure is the blood of a maiden willing to die for him.
- **Lucifer's Temptation:** Despairing, Henry is tempted by Lucifer, disguised as a traveling physician, who leads him to a life of excess and eventually, an outcast state.
- **Elsie's Sacrifice:** Henry finds refuge with Ursula, a former vassal, and her daughter Elsie, who, moved by compassion, offers herself as a sacrifice to cure Henry, believing it will bring her closer to Christ.

## BALANCE OF LONGFELLOW'S POEM

- **Journey to Salerno:** Elsie and Henry embark on a journey to Salerno, where they encounter a band of pilgrims, including Lucifer disguised as a friar, who gloats over Elsie's fate.
- **Miraculous Healing:** During the journey, Elsie is kidnapped by Lucifer, but Henry rescues her, and in the process, is miraculously healed. Henry and Elsie return to Hoheneck and marry.

## THEMES & ANALYSIS

- **Themes of Faith and Sacrifice:** The poem explores themes of faith, sacrifice, and redemption, with Elsie's willingness to die for Henry serving as a powerful example of Christian selflessness.
- **Light vs. Darkness:** The poem contrasts the light of faith and hope with the darkness of despair and temptation, embodied by Lucifer's machinations.
- **Historical and Mythical Elements:** Longfellow weaves together historical and mythical elements, drawing from Christian traditions and legends to create a rich and evocative narrative.
- **Existential Themes:** The poem delves into existential themes, exploring the nature of suffering, the search for meaning, and the promise of salvation.
- **Longfellow's Style:** Longfellow's signature style is evident in the poem's lyrical language, beautiful imagery, and focus on moral and spiritual themes.

*Source: Google Generative AI*



After completing Part I on December 27, 1875, Stanford never returned to the project. We can only imagine how he would have chosen to portray the rest of the story. Only the full score manuscript has survived (Royal College of Music Library MS 4145). The composer did not prepare a piano reduction and no vocal score was created at the time. The vocal score and associated piano reduction for this edition were created by Dave Fielding (English Heritage Music Series) in April 2025.





CHARACTERS

<b>Lucifer</b> Fallen Angel <i>Baritone</i>	<b>Ursula</b> Mother of Elsie <i>Alto</i>	<b>Bertha</b> Sister of Elsie <i>Alto</i>
<b>Henry</b> Prince of Hoheneck <i>Tenor</i>	<b>Gottlieb</b> Vassal of the Prince - Father of Elsie <i>Baritone</i>	<b>Max</b> Brother of Elsie <i>Tenor</i>
<b>Elsie</b> Daughter of Ursula and Gottlieb <i>Soprano</i>		Approximate Performance Time 60 minutes



INDEX OF SCENES

	PAGE		PAGE
<b>Scene I (Prologue)</b> <i>The Spire of Strasburg Cathedral</i>	2	<b>Scene V</b> <i>A Room in the Farm-House</i>	TACET
<b>Scene II</b> <i>The Castle of Vautsberg on the Rhine</i>	TACET	<b>Scene VI</b> <i>Elsie's Chamber</i>	TACET
<b>Scene III</b> <i>The Castle of Vautsberg on the Rhine</i>	TACET	<b>Scene VII</b> <i>The Chamber of Gottlieb and Ursula</i>	TACET
<b>Scene IV</b> <i>A Farm in the Odenwald</i>	TACET	<b>Scene VIII</b> <i>A Room in the Farm-House</i>	TACET



# Scenes from The Golden Legend

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Charles Villiers Stanford

## Prologue - The Spire of Strasburg Cathedral

**Allegro con fuoco** **131**  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$  **13**  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$  **51** **Con fuoco** **15**

*1-131* *132-144* *145-195* *196-210*

**49** **23** **23** **5** **1** **Recitativo**

*211-259* *260-282* *283-305* *306-310*

**5** **Recitativo** **6** **a tempo** **Presto**

*315-319* *320-325* *LUC.* *Timp.*

Come a - way, come a - way, ere night is

**3** **3** **1**

*332-334* *336-338*

*pp* *pp* *f*

**5** **3** **6**

*346-350* *352-354* *356-361*

*f* *f*

**9** **2** **2**

*363-371* *374-375* *378-379*

*pp* *f*

**1** **5** **3** **1**

*383-387* *389-391*

**5** **3** **33** **1**

*395-399* *401-403* *404-436*

*pp* *pp*

**Moderato tranquillo** **rall.**

Scene II - The Castle of Vautsberg on the Rhine

Tacet

Scene III - The Castle of Vautsberg on the Rhine

Tacet

Scene IV - A Farm in the Odenwald

Tacet

Scene V - A Room in the Farm-house

Tacet

Scene VI - Elsie's Chamber

Tacet

Scene VII - The Chamber of Gottlieb & Ursula

Tacet

Scene VIII - A Room in the Farmhouse

Tacet





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