

William Ernest Henley



Born in Gloucester, England, poet, editor, and critic William Ernest Henley was educated at Crypt Grammar School, where he studied with the poet T.E. Brown, and the University of St. Andrews. At age 12 Henley was diagnosed with tubercular arthritis that necessitated the amputation of one of his legs just below the knee; the other foot was saved only through a radical surgery performed by Joseph Lister. As he healed in the infirmary, Henley began to write poems, including "Invictus." Henley was a close friend of Robert Louis Stevenson, who reportedly based his Long John Silver character in *Treasure Island* in part on Henley.