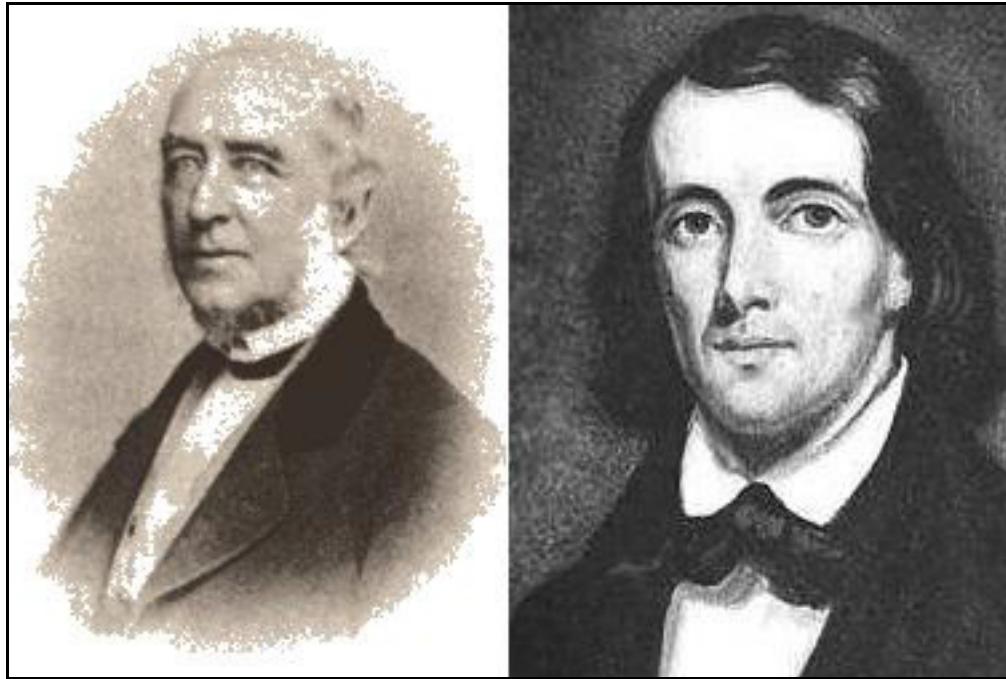


PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II



NOTA BENE: When Annie Dillard bought a goldfish to keep her company in her cabin on Tinker Creek, she named it Ellery.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

WALDEN: The one who came from farthest to my lodge, through deepest snows and most dismal tempests, was a poet. A farmer, a hunter, a soldier, a reporter, even a philosopher, may be daunted; but nothing can deter a poet, for he is actuated by pure love. Who can predict his comings and goings? His business calls him out at all hours, even when doctors sleep. We made that small house ring with boisterous mirth and resound with the murmur of much sober talk, making amends then to Walden vale for the long silences. Broadway was still and deserted in comparison. At suitable intervals there were regular salutes of laughter, which might have been referred indifferently to the last uttered or the forth-coming jest. We made many a "bran new" theory of life over a thin dish of gruel, which combined the advantages of conviviality with the clear-headedness which philosophy requires.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

ELLERY CHANNING

WALDEN: I took a poet to board for a fortnight about those times, which caused me to be put to it for room. He brought his own knife, though I had two, and we used to scour them by thrusting them into the earth. He shared with me the labors of cooking. I was pleased to see my work rising so square and solid by degrees, and reflected, that, if it proceeded slowly, it was calculated to endure a long time. The chimney is to some extent an independent structure, standing on the ground and rising through the house to the heavens; even after the house is burned it still stands sometimes, and its importance and independence are apparent. This was toward the end of summer. It was now November.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

ELLERY CHANNING



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

THE SCARLET LETTER: Such were some of the people with whom I now found myself connected. I took it in good part, at the hands of Providence, that I was thrown into a position so little akin to my past habits; and set myself seriously to gather from it whatever profit was to be had. After my fellowship of toil and impracticable schemes with the dreamy brethren of Brook Farm; after living for three years within the subtle influence of an intellect like Emerson's; after those wild, free days on the Assabeth, indulging fantastic speculations, beside our fire of fallen boughs, with Ellery Channing; after talking with Thoreau about pine-trees and Indian relics in his hermitage at Walden; after growing fastidious by sympathy with the classic refinement of Hillard's culture; after becoming imbued with poetic sentiment at Longfellow's hearthstone - it was time, at length, that I should exercise other faculties of my nature, and nourish myself with food for which I had hitherto had little appetite. Even the old Inspector was desirable, as a change of diet, to a man who had known Alcott. I looked upon it as an evidence, in some measure, of a system naturally well balanced, and lacking no essential part of a thorough organization, that, with such associates to remember, I could mingle at once with men of altogether different qualities, and never murmur at the change.

BROOK FARM

WALDO EMERSON

ELLERY CHANNING

LONGFELLOW

BRONSON ALCOTT

HENRY THOREAU

In regard both to the Reverend [William Ellery Channing](#) and to the poet [Ellery Channing](#) of Thoreau's time period in Concord, bear in mind, as everyone else did during this period, that this name was a most famous name, for regardless of whoever gets credit for creating the [Declaration of Independence](#), a [William Ellery](#) (1727-1820) later cosigned it on behalf of [Rhode Island](#):

New Hampshire: *Josiah Bartlett, William Whipple, Matthew Thornton*

Massachusetts: *John Hancock, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert Treat Paine, Elbridge Gerry*

Rhode Island: [Stephen Hopkins](#), [William Ellery](#)

Connecticut: *Roger Sherman, Samuel Huntington, William Williams, Oliver Wolcott*

New York: *William Floyd, Philip Livingston, Francis Lewis, Lewis Morris*

New Jersey: *Richard Stockton, John Witherspoon, Francis Hopkinson, John Hart, Abraham Clark*

Pennsylvania: *Robert Morris, Dr. Benjamin Rush, [Benjamin Franklin](#), John Morton, George Clymer, James Smith, George Taylor, James Wilson, George Ross*

Delaware: *Caesar Rodney, George Read, Thomas McKean*

Maryland: *Samuel Chase, William Paca, Thomas Stone, Charles Carroll of Carrollton*

Virginia: *George Wythe, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin*



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Harrison, Thomas Nelson, Jr., Francis Lightfoot Lee, Carter Braxton
North Carolina: *William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, John Penn*
South Carolina: *Edward Rutledge, Thomas Heyward, Jr., Thomas Lynch, Jr., Arthur Middleton*
Georgia: *Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, George Walton*

DOCTOR WALTER CHANNING, BROTHER OF THE REVEREND

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, BROTHER OF FELLOW HARVARD PROFESSOR

(OF RHETORIC), EDWARD TYRRELL CHANNING, COUSIN OF THE REVEREND WILLIAM

HENRY CHANNING, FATHER OF ELLERY CHANNING,

FATHER-IN-LAW OF ELLEN FULLER CHANNING (ESTRANGED WIFE OF HIS SON),

GRANDFATHER OF MARGARET FULLER CHANNING AND CAROLINE

STURGIS CHANNING.

[UTILIZING A DISEASE METAPHOR PREVALENT IN THAT ERA, EDGAR ALLAN POE,

REVIEWING THE POETRY OF ELLERY CHANNING, WROTE THAT HE “APPEARS TO

HAVE BEEN INOCULATED, AT THE SAME MOMENT, WITH VIRUS FROM

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON AND THOMAS CARLYLE.”]



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

ELLERY CHANNING AUTHORED AN UNPUBLISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL WITH
THE PROPOSED TITLE MAJOR LEVITICUS: HIS THREE DAYS IN TOWN, WITH
CARICATURES OF HIMSELF, HENRY THOREAU, BRONSON ALCOTT, WALDO EMERSON,
ETC. THE MANUSCRIPT IS IN SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT THE CONCORD FREE PUBLIC
LIBRARY.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1818

 November 29, Sunday: [William Ellery Channing 2d](#) was born.



Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

1st day 29th of 11th M / Our meetings were both silent, the morning was to me a season of but little satisfaction, the Afternoon was more solid & a season of some favor. -

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS




THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II


PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1822

 A short young gentleman embarrassed about his name, [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#), entered Bowdoin



College as a sophomore at the age of 15, along with an undistinguished student named [Hathorne \(Nathaniel Hawthorne\)](#) and an undistinguished student named [Franklin Pierce](#), who were in the process of forming a lifelong alliance. No-one, not even Hawthorne, has ever represented that this college drinking buddy was the greatest president we ever had, or that he possessed native strength of intellect or native strength of character — as Hawthorne later was to represent an immensely popular genocidal racist named Andrew “Long Knife” Jackson:

 he the greatest man we ever had; and his native strength, as well of intellect as character, compelled every man to be his tool that came within his reach; and the cunninger the individual might be, it served only to make him the sharper tool.

Nevertheless, Hawthorne would later be willing to write a campaign biography for this drunkard, and lie about the man’s attitudes, and help him follow [Andrew Jackson](#) as President of the United States, merely because of this superficial personal connection and from a realistic expectation and hope that through the political reward system set up by Jackson and inherited by Pierce he, Hawthorne, would receive a personal and generous



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

reward.



Statesman Chum and Pretty Boy

These lads would go on to provide the stuff of legends:

THE SCARLET LETTER: Such were some of the people with whom I now found myself connected. I took it in good part, at the hands of Providence, that I was thrown into a position so little akin to my past habits; and set myself seriously to gather from it whatever profit was to be had. After my fellowship of toil and impracticable schemes with the dreamy brethren of Brook Farm; after living for three years within the subtle influence of an intellect like Emerson's; after those wild, free days on the Assabeth, indulging fantastic speculations, beside our fire of fallen boughs, with Ellery Channing; after talking with Thoreau about pine-trees and Indian relics in his hermitage at Walden; after growing fastidious by sympathy with the classic refinement of Hillard's culture; after becoming imbued with poetic sentiment at Longfellow's hearthstone - it was time, at length, that I should exercise other faculties of my nature, and nourish myself with food for which I had hitherto had little appetite. Even the old Inspector was desirable, as a change of diet, to a man who had known Alcott. I looked upon it as an evidence, in some measure, of a system naturally well balanced, and lacking no essential part of a thorough organization, that, with such associates to remember, I could mingle at once with men of altogether different qualities, and never murmur at the change.

BROOK FARM

WALDO EMERSON

ELLERY CHANNING

LONGFELLOW

BRONSON ALCOTT

HENRY THOREAU

HDT

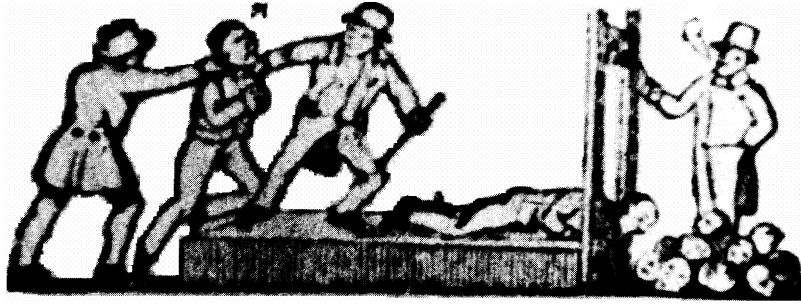
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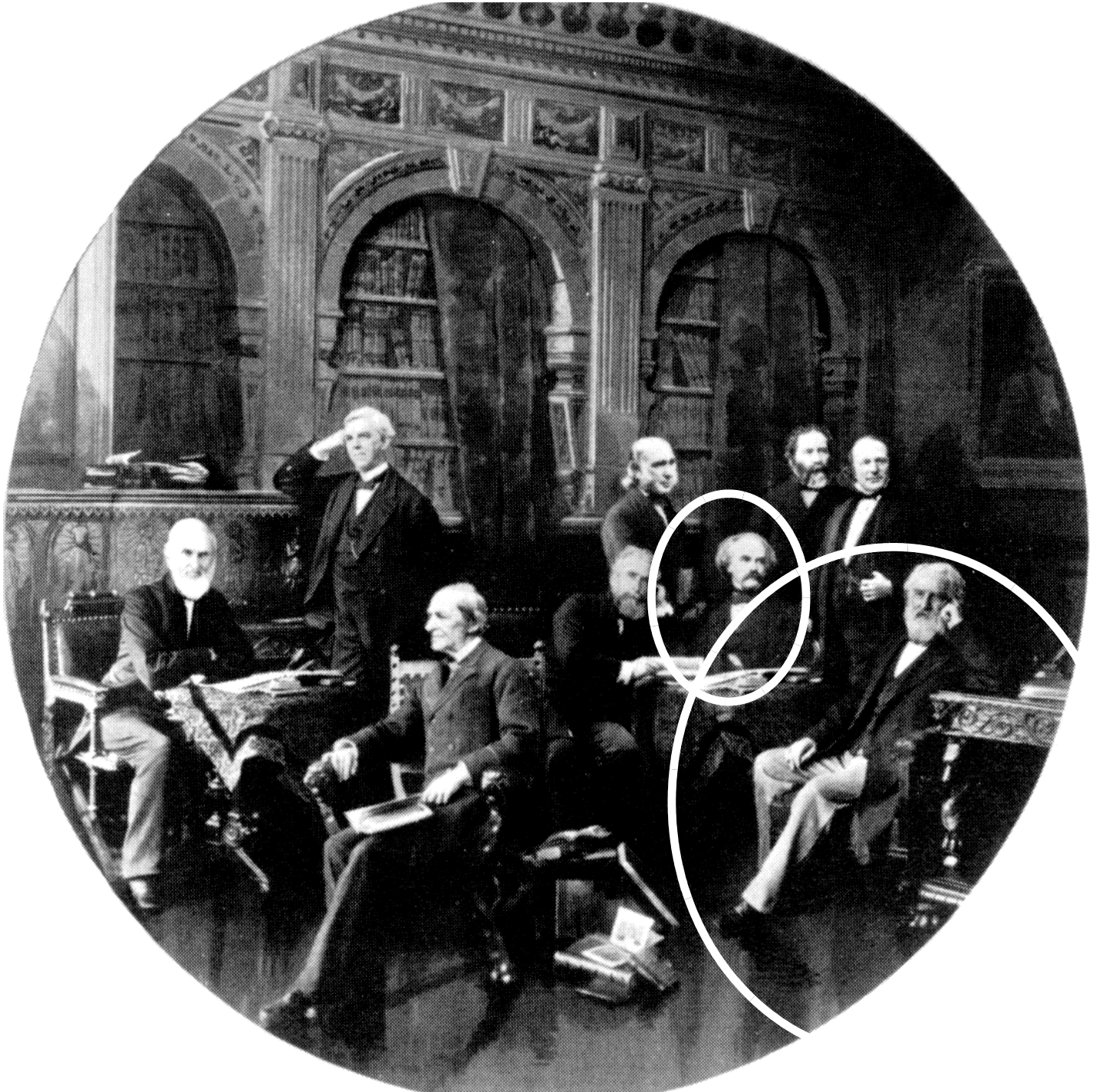
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Whittier-Holmes-Emerson-Motley-Alcott-Hawthorne-Lowell-Agassiz-Longfellow




THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1832

 [Ellery Channing](#)'s father, [Doctor Walter Channing](#), founded the [Boston](#) Lying-In Hospital for childbirth.

While calling on his uncle the [Reverend William Ellery Channing](#) on an unspecified date, the young poet [Ellery Channing II](#) declined to seat himself. "Why, Sir," he explained, "I'm not fit company for you; you are a great man, Sir, and I'm a small one; good morning, Sir."




THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1834

 August: *HOMĒROU ILLIAS*. THE ILIAD OF HOMER, FROM THE TEXT OF WOLF. GR. WITH ENGLISH NOTES AND FLAXMAN'S ILLUSTRATIVE DESIGNS. EDITED BY C.C. FELTON (2d edition. Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Co.). This would be a required text at Harvard College and would be found in the personal library of [Henry Thoreau](#).

When a plank on a [Concord](#) bridge gave way, 2 girls drowned.

TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS

One or two incidents of these schools are fresh to my memory. Sitting at the north window of the school room one summers afternoon, I was curious to know the cause of the rapid driving & running up the main road, and impatiently waited to find out after school, that two girls of about half my age had fallen through a loose plank in the south bridge and were drowned clinging to each other and the piles under water – I knew one of them very well, Esq Joseph Barretts daughter. It was a great shock, and the whole town turned out the funeral of the victims I with other boys of my age was asked to be one of the bearers, and attended first at Dea. Elijah Woods house, the services of the Orthodox minister over one child, and then in the old Lee house where Squire Joe lived the two were placed side by side, and another service was performed by the Unitarian preacher. It was an awfully hot day, and while this service was proceeding a fearful thunder shower came up, the worst I can recall. The roomy old mansion was full of people men women and children for the schools were dismissed for the occasion, and the rain poured the wind howled and the thunder rattled till women fainted, children screamed and men were panic stricken, while the lightning struck several times on the farm one setting into a blaze and burning up a large pine tree in plain sight of the door where I stood. I recall the remark of the old stage driver Stuart at the sight, that they burned the [Charlestown](#) convent last night so that was safe from the lighting, and that news that was whispered about did not allay the excitement or the strain. After a long long hour of waiting the rain stopped, and in the muddy washed out and badly gullied streets under the broken clouds and muttering thunder we bore the bodies on the bier to the graveyard & were dismissed after sunset worn out, exhausted and in a frightened state. This was August 16 1834– After this experience I had a great fear of thunder showers that lasted till a boy came to stay at our house and got to school whom I did not like and who was even more of a coward about lightening. Laughing and plaguing him on the matter cured me so entirely that I hardly remember any more showers till recent years.

J.S. KEYES AUTOBIOGRAPHY

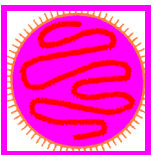
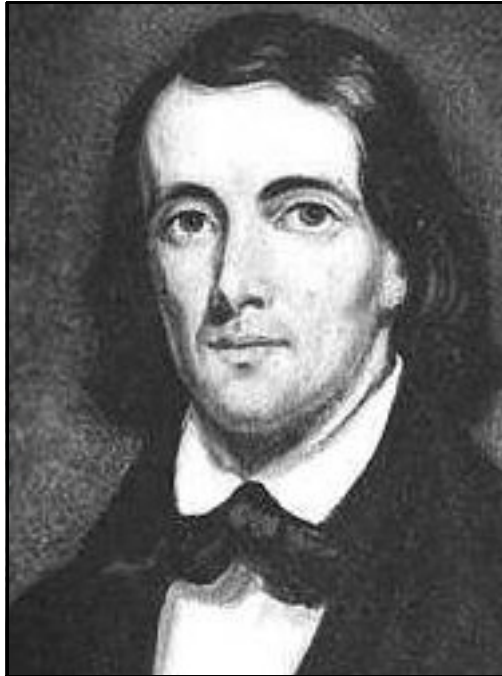


THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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Previously [Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) had for some reason turned down an offer to become “companion to the supercargo” aboard the sailing ship *Japan*, which would have meant an all-expenses-paid visit to Calcutta. While [Ellery Channing II](#) waited in the Dana home on Ellery Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts, his distant



cousin Dick Dana, eyesight temporarily damaged by [measles](#), asked his father [Richard Henry Dana, Sr.](#) for permission to leave [Harvard College](#) and signed on the *Pilgrim*, a ship bound to pick up a cargo of cowhides in the Los Angeles area¹, for use in the manufacturing of shoes in the [Boston](#) area. That is, to take up for a period the life of a common seaman.²



1. Visit a replica of the *Pilgrim* at moorings next to the Orange County Marine Institute in Dana Point Harbor, south of Disneyland.
2. The narrative he would write would take no notice of the common [homosexuality](#) of sailor life during this period. It would be made to appear as if this were something with which this particular attractive young man never had to deal.

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 September 1, Monday: [David Henry Thoreau](#) went back to [Harvard College](#) for the 1st term of his Sophomore year, living in 32 Hollis Hall with James Richardson, Jr. [Ellery Channing](#) ([William Ellery Channing II](#)) was matriculating there, but he would soon depart because otherwise he would have been expelled due to a very low point accumulation.

THOREAU RESIDENCES

At some point Henry and his room-mate needed to write to Oliver Sparhawk, the steward of the building:

Mr Sparhawk
Sir
The occupants of Hollis 32 would like to have that room painted
and whitewashed, also if possible to have a new hearth put in
yours respectfully
Thoreau & Richardson

Until November 30th, David Henry would be studying the Italian language under instructor [Pietro Bachi](#).



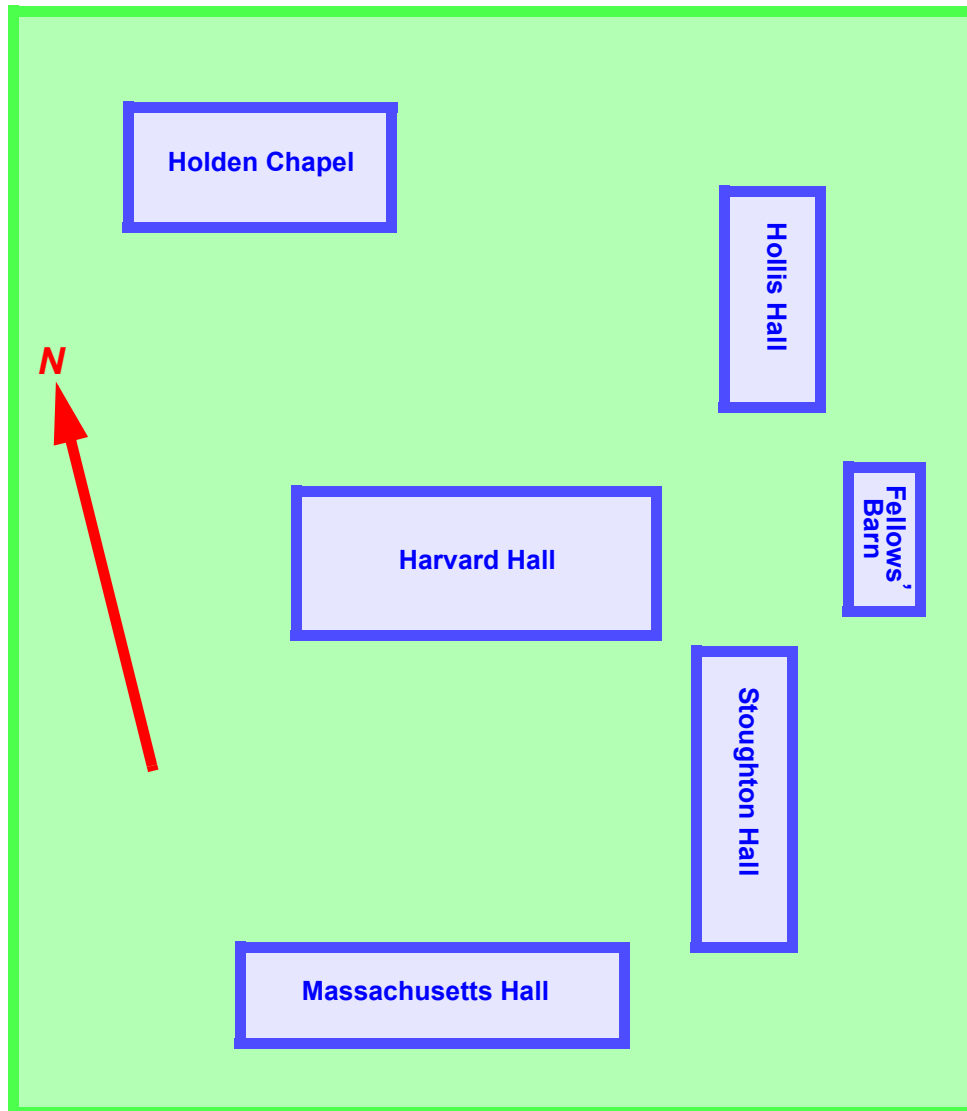
(Thoreau would be enrolled in the study of Italian for 4 terms, in the study of French for 4 terms, in the study of German for 4 terms, and in the study of Spanish for 2 terms under [Francis Sales](#).)



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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That evening, at the adjourned meeting of the citizens convened at the town hall in Columbia, Pennsylvania, to receive the reports of the committees appointed to inquire into the state of the colored population and to negotiate with them on the subject of a sale of their property, the officers appointed at the previous meeting resumed their seats. The committees having made their reports, a motion was made and approved:

Resolved, That these reports be remanded to the committees who offered them for the purpose of having resolutions attached to them, and that this meeting do adjourn until Wednesday evening next.




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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1835

 [Doctor Walter Channing](#) had the honor of delivering the annual address to the [Boston Society of Natural History](#). He was made the secretary of the Massachusetts Temperance Society.

At the age of 17 [Ellery Channing](#) published his adolescent poetry in the [Boston Mercantile Journal](#) under the pen name “Hal Menge” — poems of the “my mother died / Before I clasped her” sort, necessarily pseudonymous, “sublimo-slipshod” nevertheless poems,³ 19 of them in a single year — and we all wish to have such relations with the mercantile press.

3. This term “sublimo-slipshod” is Thoreau’s. Compare Thomas Carlyle’s “cabalístico-sartorial.”

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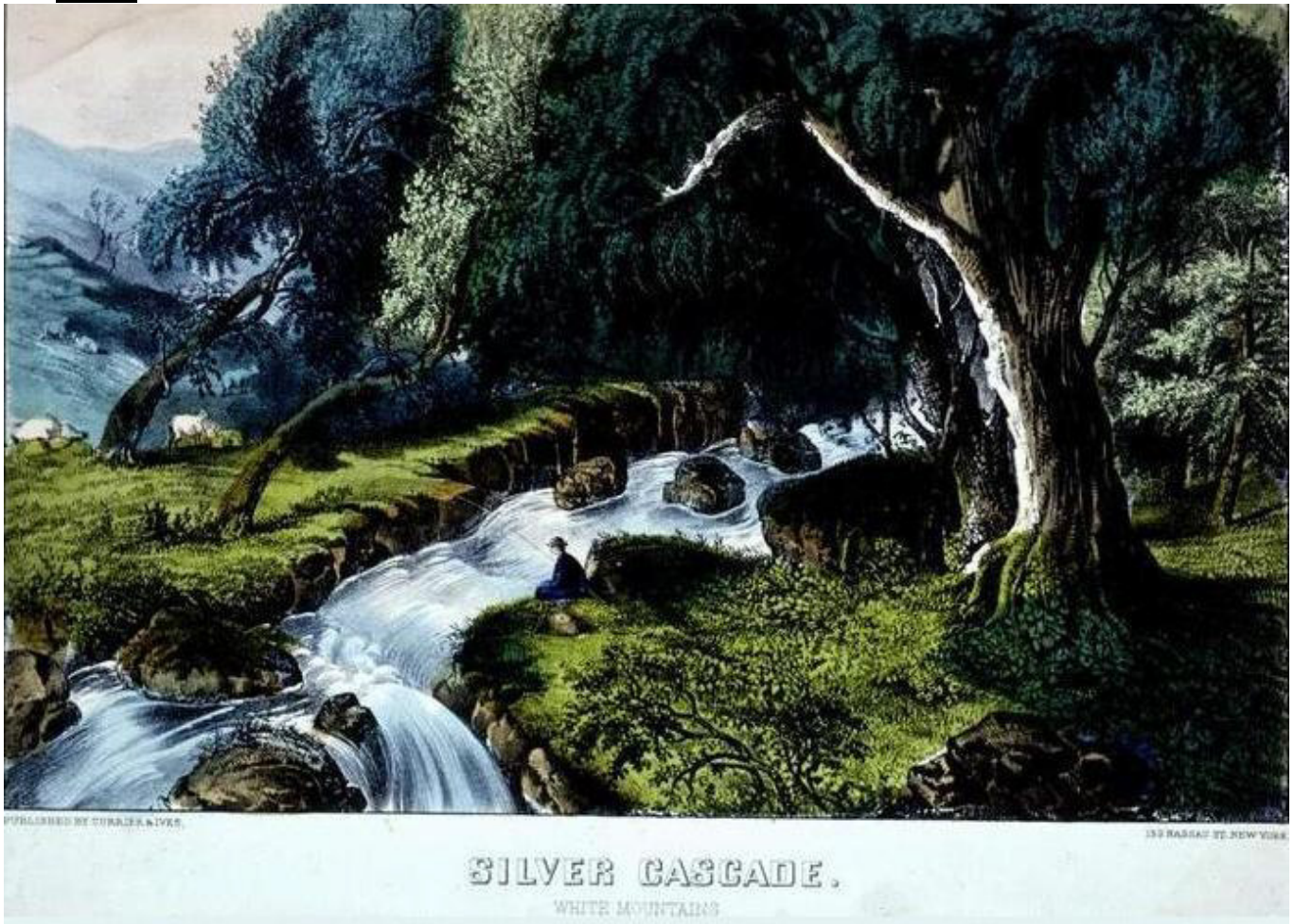
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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1836

➡ Summer: [Ellery Channing](#) made a solitary trip into the White Mountains of [New Hampshire](#).



He went by stage to North Conway and walked up the Saco Valley toward Crawford Notch, riding part way in a farm wagon with Abel Crawford, whose family had given the Notch its name. Channing then took a stage to Ethan Crawford's and Bethlehem, and the Lafayette House near the Great Stone Face. He passed through Franconia Notch on his way back to Massachusetts.





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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[Karl Friedrich Schimper](#) spent the summer near Bex in the Swiss Alps with his former university friend [Louis Agassiz](#) and [Jean de Charpentier](#). Schimper, De Charpentier and possibly [Ignaz Venetz](#) convinced Agassiz that there had been a period of glaciation.

THE SCIENCE OF 1836

OUR MOST RECENT GLACIATION



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1837



The founding of the Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, the 1st American school for women to have an endowment.

The [Concord](#) school board had as its chair the Reverend Barzillai Frost, as its secretary [Nehemiah Ball](#) (who in this year won election as Town Clerk), and as its 3d member Nehemiah's brother-in-law Sherman Barrett. Money for the school was being raised by a town tax, supplemented by small donations and by some state aid. The budget this year would be \$2,132.⁵⁵, of which the Centre District, the section of the system which occupied the [Town School](#) building and three other more remotely located buildings, would receive \$1,119.⁵⁹. The head of the prudential committee of the Centre District was the owner of the local grocery store, Charles B. Davis (who in this year would become Concord's postmaster), and it would be he who would hire as the new teacher replacing Eliezer J. Marsh a recent local college graduate, [Henry David Thoreau](#). Hiring a recent local [Harvard College](#) grad has been pretty much the tradition since 1700. Davis would agree to pay Thoreau \$500 a year, which, although it would render him by far the highest paid of the more than 16 teachers employed in the system, was \$100 less than had been paid in the previous year to Marsh. After Thoreau would resign the post would pass to his classmate in Harvard College's Class of 1837 [William Allen](#). Here is what happened as it was reconstructed (or invented!) in 1873 by [Ellery Channing](#) in THOREAU THE POET-NATURALIST / WITH MEMORIAL VERSES:

Another school experience was the town school in Concord, which he took after leaving college, announcing that he should not [flog](#), but would talk morals as punishment instead. A fortnight sped glibly along, when a knowing deacon, one of the school committee, [[Nehemiah Ball](#)] walked in and told Mr. Thoreau that he must flog and use the ferule, or the school would spoil. So he did, ferruling six of his pupils after school, one of whom was the maid-servant in his own house. But it did not suit well with his conscience, and he reported to the committee that he should no longer keep their school, as they interfered with his arrangements; and they could keep it.

[Waldo Emerson](#) recorded in his journal having attended a convocation of the [Concord](#) school reform group, at which [Horace Mann, Sr.](#) spoke:



Yesterday Mr Mann's Address on Education. It was full of the modern gloomy view of our democratical institutions, and hence the inference to the importance of Schools.... Sad it was to see the death-cold convention yesterday morning as they sat shivering a handful of pale men & women in a large church, for it seems the Law has touched the business of Education with the point of its pen & instantly it has frozen stiff in the universal congelation of society.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT






THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN


1839

 [Edward Sherman Hoar](#) matriculated at [Harvard College](#).

[Loring Henry Austin](#), Francis Lemuel Capen, [Edward Everett Hale](#), and [William Francis Channing](#) graduated from [Harvard](#). Channing would go on to study medicine at the University of Pennsylvania (although his practice as a physician would never extend beyond the administration of quack applications of electricity to the heads and feet of sufferers).

NEW “HARVARD MEN”

After leaving [Harvard](#), [Ellery Channing](#) had spent almost five years living in the home of his father [Dr. Walter Channing](#), withdrawing books from the Boston Athenæum and presumably educating himself in this manner — but otherwise not doing much of anything. In this year he determined that he was going to make something of himself, as a farmer on the frontier! (Meanwhile, in this year, [Abraham Lincoln](#) was beginning to travel through nine counties in central and eastern [Illinois](#), as a lawyer on the 8th Judicial Circuit.)

 October: [David Lee Child](#) joined [Lydia Maria Child](#) in Boston.

The Seneca River Towing Path of the [New York State Barge Canal](#) connected Mud Lock on the [Oswego Canal](#) to the outlet of Onondaga Lake.

[Ellery Channing](#) departed from Massachusetts on a pilgrimage by [canal boat](#), steamboat, and stagecoach toward the [Illinois](#) region, to take up a life behind the plow.

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October 3, Thursday: The 1st public railroad in what would become [Italy](#) opened, an 4-and-a-half mile track between [Naples](#) and a royal palace at Portici at the foot of Vesuvius.



[Waldo Emerson](#) responded to Samuel Gray Ward, one of [Ellery Channing](#)'s friends, in regard to a poem by Channing that Ward had sent him. Emerson considered the poem to be evidence of the poet's promise. However, before Channing could be told of this, he had departed on his pilgrimage by canal boat, steamboat, and stagecoach toward the Illinois region, to take up a life behind the plow. If you remember, [Henry Thoreau](#) later made a passing remark about this, in [CAPE COD](#):



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

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CAPE COD: We found ourselves at once on an apparently boundless plain, without a tree or a fence, or, with one or two exceptions, a house in sight. Instead of fences, the earth was sometimes thrown up into a slight ridge. My companion compared it to the rolling prairies of Illinois. In the storm of wind and rain, which raged when we traversed it, it no doubt appeared more vast and desolate than it really is. As there were no hills, but only here and there a dry hollow in the midst of the waste, and the distant horizon was concealed by mist, we did not know whether it was high or low. A solitary traveller, whom we saw perambulating in the distance, loomed like a giant. He appeared to walk slouchingly, as if held up from above by straps under his shoulders, as much as supported by the plain below. Men and boys would have appeared alike at a little distance, there being no object by which to measure them. Indeed, to an inlander, the Cape landscape is a constant mirage. This kind of country extended a mile or two each way. These were the "Plains of Nauset," once covered with wood, where in winter the winds howl and the snow blows right merrily in the face of the traveller. I was glad to have got out of the towns, where I am wont to feel unspeakably mean and disgraced, - to have left behind me for a season the bar-rooms of Massachusetts, where the full-grown are not weaned from savage and filthy habits,- still sucking a cigar. My spirits rose in proportion to the outward dreariness. The towns need to be ventilated. The gods would be pleased to see some pure flames from their altars. They are not to be appeased with cigar-smoke.

PEOPLE OF
CAPE COD

ELLERY CHANNING



November 9, Saturday: [Ellery Channing](#) purchased 3 parcels of farmland and forest in McHenry County, [Illinois](#).



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1840

March: [Waldo Emerson](#) wrote [Margaret Fuller](#) and listed [Ellery Channing](#) among possible contributors to [THE DIAL](#). Having no response to his letter to Channing, he tried to contact the poet with the famous name through their mutual friend Ward, and, Channing having abandoned his fields in [Illinois](#) without raising a crop, Emerson even paid a visit to Channing's father's house in hopes of discovering Channing there. (Channing had gone to visit at [Brook Farm](#)⁴ and had then returned toward the West.)

Thoreau composed the 1st version of what would become his essay on the Roman satirist [Aulus Persius Flaccus](#), "[AULUS PERSIUS FLACCUS](#)," "first printed paper of consequence," for July's issue of [THE DIAL](#).

THE DIAL, JULY 1840

This paper turned two tricks of interest. First, [Henry Thoreau](#) espoused an attitude of moving away from creedal closedness, associating creedal closedness with immodesty and openness with modesty rather than vice versa and developing that attitude out of comments such as *Haud cuivis promptum est, murmurque humilesque susurros / Tollere de templis; et aperto vivere voto:*

"[AULUS PERSIUS FLACCUS](#)": It is not easy for every one to take murmurs and low Whispers out of the temple -*et aperto vivere voto*- and live with open vow,



4. [How could that be? Did the Brook Farm Institute of Agriculture and Education already exist in 1840, when they did not solicit [Thoreau](#) to join until March 3, 1841?]

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Second, Thoreau perversely insisted on translating *ex tempore* in its literal etymological sense “out of time” ignoring what had become the primary sense of the phrase: “haphazard,” “improvised.” Thoreau mobilized this phrase to summon people to live not in time but in eternity:⁵

“AULUS PERSIUS FLACCUS”: The life of a wise man is most of all extemporaneous, for he lives out of an eternity that includes all time. He is a child each moment, and reflects wisdom. The far darting thought of the child’s mind tarries not for the development of manhood; it lightens itself, and needs not draw down lightning from the clouds. When we bask in a single ray from the mind of Zoroaster, we see how all subsequent time has been an idler, and has no apology for itself. But the cunning mind travels farther back than Zoroaster each instant, and comes quite down to the present with its revelation. All the thrift and industry of thinking give no man any stock in life; his credit with the inner world is no better, his capital no larger. He must try his fortune again to-day as yesterday. All questions rely on the present for their solution. Time measures nothing but itself. The word that is written may be postponed, but not that on the lip. If this is what the occasion says, let the occasion say it. From a real sympathy, all the world is forward to prompt him who gets up to live without his creed in his pocket.



PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

ZOROASTER

PERSIUS



TIME AND ETERNITY

The force of the essay, then, was to provide **Thoreau** an opportunity to preach his own doctrines by satirizing a minor Roman satirist, and he admits as much: “As long as there is satire, the poet is, as it were, *particeps criminis*.” Young Henry is of course that poet, that accessory to the crime.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

December: [Ellery Channing](#) having returned from [Illinois](#) a 2d time, [Waldo Emerson](#) finally met his long-sought poet.

The Richmond-to-Lynchburg section of Virginia's [James River and Kanawha Canal](#) was inaugurated by President William Henry Harrison.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1841

[Waldo Emerson](#) would write, retrospectively in 1865, about the events of this year, and of the following 6 years in the



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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experience of [Brook Farm](#), in his “Historic Notes of Life and Letters in New England”:

The West Roxbury association was formed in 1841, by a society of members, men and women, who bought a farm in West Roxbury, of about two hundred acres, and took possession of the place in April.... It was a noble and generous movement in the projectors, to try an experiment of better living. They had the feeling that our ways of living were too conventional and expensive, not allowing each to do what he had a talent for, and not permitting men to combine cultivation of mind and heart with a reasonable amount of daily labor. At the same time, it was an attempt to lift others with themselves, and to share the advantages they should attain, with others now deprived of them. There was no doubt great variety of character and purpose in the members of the community. It consisted in the main of young people, – few of middle age, and none old. Those who inspired and organized it were of course persons impatient of the routine, the uniformity, perhaps they would say the squalid contentment of society around them, which was so timid and skeptical of any progress. One would say then that impulse was the rule in the society, without centripetal balance; perhaps it would not be severe to say, intellectual sans-culottism, and impatience of the formal, routinary character of our educational, religious, social and economic life in Massachusetts. Yet there was immense hope in these young people. There was nobleness; there were self-sacrificing victims who compensated for the levity and rashness of their companions. The young people lived a great deal in a short time, and came forth some of them perhaps with shattered constitutions. And a few grave sanitary influences of character were happily there, which, I was assured, were always felt.... The founders of Brook Farm should have this praise, that they made what all people try to make, an agreeable place to live in. All comers, even the most fastidious, found it the pleasantest of residences. It is certain that freedom from household routine, variety of character and talent, variety of work, variety of means of thought and instruction, art, music, poetry, reading, masquerade, did not permit sluggishness or despondency; broke up routine. There is agreement in the testimony that it was, to most of the associates, education; to many, the most important period of their life, the birth of valued friendships, their first acquaintance with the riches of conversation, their training in behavior.... It was a curious experience of the patrons and leaders of this noted community, in which the agreement with many parties was that they should give so many hours of instruction in mathematics, in music, in moral and intellectual philosophy, and so forth, – that in every instance the new comers showed themselves keenly alive to the advantages of the society, and were sure to avail themselves of every means of instruction; their knowledge was increased, their manners refined, – but they became in that proportion averse to labor, and were charged by the heads of the departments with a certain indolence and selfishness....



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Of course every visitor found that there was a comic side to this Paradise of shepherds and shepherdesses. There was a stove in every chamber, and every one might burn as much wood as he or she would saw. The ladies took cold on washing-day; so it was ordained that the gentlemen-shepherds should wring and hang out clothes; which they punctually did. And it would sometimes occur that when they danced in the evening, clothespins dropped plentifully from their pockets. The country members naturally were surprised to observe that one man ploughed all day and one looked out of the window all day, and perhaps drew his picture, and both received at night the same wages.... In Brook Farm was this peculiarity, that there was no head. In every family is the father; in every factory, a foreman; in a shop, a master; in a boat, the skipper; but in this Farm, no authority; each was master or mistress of his or her actions; happy, hapless anarchists. They expressed, after much perilous experience, the conviction that plain dealing was the best defence of manners and moral between the sexes. People cannot live together in any but necessary ways. The only candidates who will present themselves will be those who have tried the experiment of independence and ambition, and have failed; and none others will barter for the most comfortable equality the chance of superiority. Then all communities have quarrelled. Few people can live together on their merits. There must be kindred, or mutual economy, or a common interest in their business, or other external tie. The society at Brook Farm existed, I think, about six or seven years, and then broke up, the Farm was sold, and I believe all the partners came out with pecuniary loss. Some of them had spent on it the accumulations of years. I suppose they all, at the moment, regarded it as a failure. I do not think they can so regard it now, but probably as an important chapter in their experience which has been of lifelong value. What knowledge of themselves and of each other, what various practical wisdom, what personal power, what studies of character, what accumulated culture many of the members owed to it! What mutual measure they took of each other! It was a close union, like that of a ship's cabin, of clergymen, young collegians, merchants, mechanics, farmers' sons and daughters, with men and women of rare opportunities and delicate culture, yet assembled there by a sentiment which all shared, some of them hotly shared, of the honesty of a life of labor and of the beauty of a life of humanity. The yeoman saw refined manners in persons who were his friends; and the lady or romantic scholar saw the continuous strength and faculty in people who would have disgusted them but that these powers were now spent in the direction of their own theory of life.

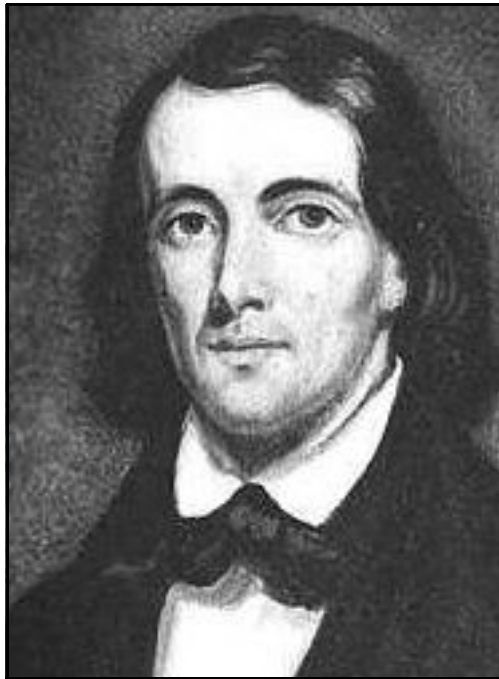


THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

[Nathaniel Hawthorne](#)'s FAMOUS OLD PEOPLE (GRANDFATHER'S CHAIR), a children's book, was published. He resigned from his position as Weigher and Gauger at the Boston Custom House and invested in and joined [Brook Farm](#) in West Roxbury MA, only to leave after 8 months persuaded that he could "best attain the higher ends of life by retaining the ordinary relation to society." He and [Ellery Channing](#) first met during this period at this utopian community.





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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[Nathaniel](#) was shot in the hand during some horseplay at a birthday picnic, by someone masquerading as the goddess Diana.

THE SCARLET LETTER: Such were some of the people with whom I now found myself connected. I took it in good part, at the hands of Providence, that I was thrown into a position so little akin to my past habits; and set myself seriously to gather from it whatever profit was to be had. After my fellowship of toil and impracticable schemes with the dreamy brethren of Brook Farm; after living for three years within the subtle influence of an intellect like Emerson's; after those wild, free days on the Assabeth, indulging fantastic speculations, beside our fire of fallen boughs, with Ellery Channing; after talking with Thoreau about pine-trees and Indian relics in his hermitage at Walden; after growing fastidious by sympathy with the classic refinement of Hillard's culture; after becoming imbued with poetic sentiment at Longfellow's hearthstone - it was time, at length, that I should exercise other faculties of my nature, and nourish myself with food for which I had hitherto had little appetite. Even the old Inspector was desirable, as a change of diet, to a man who had known Alcott. I looked upon it as an evidence, in some measure, of a system naturally well balanced, and lacking no essential part of a thorough organization, that, with such associates to remember, I could mingle at once with men of altogether different qualities, and never murmur at the change.

[BROOK FARM](#)

[WALDO EMERSON](#)

[ELLERY CHANNING](#)

[LONGFELLOW](#)

[BRONSON ALCOTT](#)

[HENRY THOREAU](#)



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Among them was an Indian chief, with blanket, feathers and war-paint, and uplifted tomahawk; and near him, looking fit to be his woodland-bride, the goddess Diana, with the crescent on her head, and attended by our big, lazy dog, in lack of any fleetier hound. Drawing an arrow from her quiver, she let it fly, at a venture, and hit the very tree behind which I happened to be lurking. Another group consisted of a Bavarian broom-girl, a negro of the Jim Crow order, one or two foresters of the middle-ages, a Kentucky woodsman in his trimmed hunting-shirt and deerskin leggings, and a Shaker elder, quaint, demure, broad-brimmed, and square-skirted. Shepherds of Arcadia, and allegoric figures from the Faerie Queen, were oddly mixed up with these. Arm in arm, or [page 815] otherwise huddled together, in strange discrepancy, stood grim Puritans, gay Cavaliers, and Revolutionary officers, with three-cornered cocked-hats, and queues longer than their swords. A bright-complexioned, dark-haired, vivacious little gipsy, with a red shawl over her head, went from one group to another, telling fortunes by palmistry; and Moll Pitcher, the renowned old witch of Lynn, broomstick in hand, showed herself prominently in the midst, as if announcing all these apparitions to be the offspring of her necromantic art. But Silas Foster, who leaned against a tree near by, in his customary blue frock, and smoking a short pipe, did more to disenchant the scene, with his look of shrewd, acrid, Yankee observation, than twenty witches and necromancers could have done, in the way of rendering it weird and fantastic.

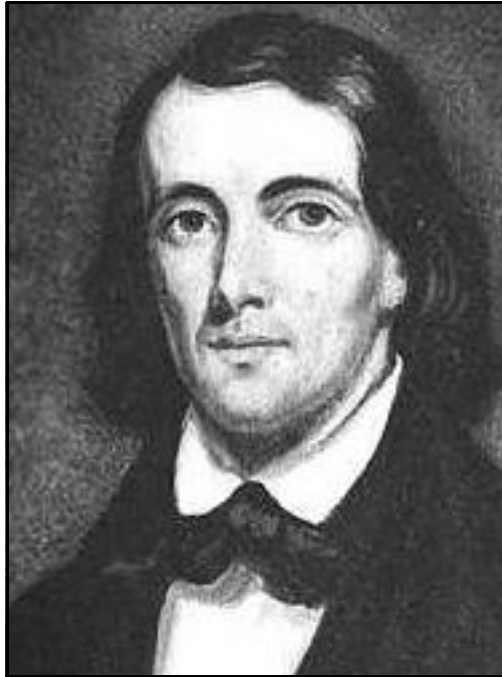
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THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Spring: [Ellery Channing II](#), while studying law in Cincinnati and discovering that he was not motivated for such pursuits, became enamored of another person from the [Boston](#) area, a [Miss Ellen Kilshaw Fuller](#), younger sister of [Margaret Fuller](#), daughter of Timothy Fuller, deceased, and Mrs. Margaret Crane Fuller.



 September 5, Monday: From Cincinnati, [Ellery Channing](#) wrote the widow Mrs. Margaret Crane Fuller in Massachusetts, about her daughter [Miss Ellen Kilshaw Fuller](#).



You have probably heard that Ellen is engaged to me.... She loves me so much, so deeply, so truly ... in her arms I am under the shelter as of a wide-spreading tree ... we were made for each other ... to you, also, another child has come....

[ELLEN FULLER CHANNING](#)

September 24, Friday: [The Liberator](#).

Despite the efforts of the bride's guardian in Cincinnati, the wedding ceremony of [William Ellery Channing II](#) and [Ellen Kilshaw Fuller](#) was performed. "She did it, however, in opposition, not only to all of us, — but to her mother, sister, his father and (I fear) her own coolest conscience ... our very domestics have been critical of her conduct in this regard ... Ellen is now suffering the practical results of — what I can only call Emersonianism, — as it presents itself to young minds and hearts ... not to thwart her nature; and the result is before us."

[Mr. D.H. Thoreau](#) was written to by Isaiah T. Williams in Buffalo.

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THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Buffalo N.Y. Sept. 24, 1841 —

Mr. D.H. Thoreau

My dear Sir,

Your kind offer to receive and answer any communication from me, is not forgotten — I owe myself an apology for so long neglecting to avail myself of so generous an offer. Since I left Concord I have hardly found rest for the sole of my foot. I have followed the star of my destiny till it has, at length, come and stood over this place. Here I remain engaged in the study of Law — Part of the time I have spent in New-Hampshire part was in Ohio & part in New-York — and so precarious ~~has been~~ my residence in either place that I have scarcely known whither you might direct a letter with any certainty of its reaching me.

When I left Concord I felt a strong desire to continue the conversation I had so fortunately commened with some of those whom the Public call Trancendentalists. Their sentiments seemed to me to possess a peculiar fitness. Though full of doubt I felt I was fed & refreshed by those interviews. The doctrines I have there heard ever since, been uppermost in my mind — and ^ like balmy sleep over the weary limbs, have they stolen over me quite unawares. I have not ~~emp~~ embraced them — but [they] have embraced me — [I] am led, their willing captive. Yet I feel I have but yet taken the first step. I would know more of this matter. I would be taken by the hand and led up from this [darkness] and torpidity where I have so long groveled like an earthworm. I know what it is to be a slave to what I thought a Christian faith — and with what rapture do greet the hand that breaks my chains — & the voice that bids me — live — Most of the books you recommended to me I was not able to obtain — “Nature” I found — and language can ~~will~~ not express my admiration of it. When gloom like a thick cloud comes over me — in that I find an Amulet that dissipates the darkness and kindles

Page 2

anew my highest hopes. Few copies of Mr Emerson’s Essays have found their way to this place — I have read part of them and am very much delighted with them. [Mr Park’s German](#) I have also found[.] and as have much as I should shrunk[.] from such sentiments a ^ year ago. half, do I already receive them. I have also obtained “Hero Worship” — which of course I read with great interest[.] and as I read I blush for my former [had] bigotry and wonder that I ~~did~~ not known it all before wonder what there is in chains that I should have loved them so much — Mr. E’s oration before the Theological class at Cambridge I very much want. If — you have it in your possession, allow me to beg you to forward it to me & I will return it by mail af-



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ter perusing it. Also Mr. Alcott's "Human Culture" — I will offer no apology for asking this favor — for I know you will not require it. I find I am not alone here, your principals are working their way even in Buffalo[.] this emporium of wickedness and sensuality. We look to the east for our guiding star for there our sun did rise. Our is motto that of the [Grecian] Hero — "Give but to see ^ and Ajax asks no more" —

For myself my attention is much engrossed in my [s]tudies — Entering upon them as I do without a Public Education — I feel that nothing but the most ~~devo~~ undivided attention ~~with~~ and entire devotion to them will ensure me [evn] an ordinary standing in the profession.

There is something false — in such devotion — I already feel its ~~chilling~~ effects I fear I shall fall into the wake of the profession which is in this section proverbially bestial — Law is a noble [profession] it calls loudly for men of genius and integrity to fill its ranks. I do not aspire to be a great Lawyer — [I] know I cannot be, but it is the sincere desire of my heart that I may be a true one

You are ready to ask — how I like the West — I must answer — not very well — I love New England so mch

Page 3

comparatively that the West is odious to me — The part of Ohio ^ that I visited was one dead Level — often did I — a glimpse strain my eyes to catch of [some] distant mountain — ^ that should transport me in imagination to the wild country of my birth, but the eternal level spread itself on & on & I almost felt myself launched forever, Aloud did I exclaim — "My own blue hills O, Where are [thy]"! — I did not know how much I was indebted to them for the happy hours I'd passed at home — I knew I loved them — and my noble river too — along whose banks — I'd roamed half uncertain if in earth or Heaven — I never shall — I never can forget them all — though I drive away the remembrance of — them which ever in the unguarded moment[s] throngs me laden with ten thousands incidents before forgotten & so talismanic its power — that I wake from [the] enchantment as [frm] a dream[.] If I were in New-England again I would never leave her. but — now I am away — I fear forever — I must eat of the Lotus — and forget her. ~~forever~~ — Tis true we have a noble Lake — whose pure waters kiss the foot whose of our city — and ~~its~~ bossm bears the burdens of her our [commerce]. ~~its~~ beacon light now looks in upon me through my window as if to watch, lest I should is say untruth of that which ~~was~~ her nightly charge But hills or mounta[i]ns we have none.

My sheet is nicely full & I must draw to a close — I fear I have already wearied your pat[ie]nce. Please remember me to ~~yo~~ those of



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your friends whose acquaintance I had pleasure to form while in Concord — I engaged to write your brothe[r] — Mr Alcott also gave me the the same privelege — which I hope soon to avail myself of. I hope [sometime] to visit your town ag[ai]n which I remember with so much satisfaction — yet with so much regret — regret that I did not earlier avail myself while there of the acqu[ai]ntances, it was my high privelege to make ^ and that the lucubrations of earlier years did not [better] fit me to appreciate & enjoy — I cheer myself with fan-

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ning the fading embers of a hope that I shall yet retrieve my fault. that such an opportunity will again be extended to me — and that I may once more look upon that man whose name I never speak without reverence — whom of all — I most admire — almost adore — Mr Emerson — I shall wait with impatience to hear from you — Believe me

ever yours —

Isaiah T. Williams.

{written perpendicular to text:

Postmark: *BUFFALO*

SEP 25

N.Y.

Address: *Mr. D. H. Thoreau,*

Concord

Mass}

“MR. PARK’S GERMAN”

November: The newlywed [Ellery Channing](#) took a subeditor job on the Cincinnati [Gazette](#) at a salary that was supposed to amount to \$400.⁰⁰ per year.

[Edward Dickinson](#) won election to the Massachusetts Senate.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1842

September 2, Friday: [The Liberator](#).

[Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) wrote in his notebook, about [Henry Thoreau](#):

AMERICAN NOTEBOOKS: Yesterday afternoon, while my wife, and Louisa, and I, were gathering the windfallen apples in our orchard, Mr. Thorow arrived with the boat. The adjacent meadow being overflowed by the rise of the stream, he had rowed directly to the foot of the orchard, and landed at the boards, after floating over forty or fifty yards of water, where people were making hay, a week or two since. I entered the boat with him, in order to have the benefit of a lesson in rowing and paddling. My little wife, who was looking on, cannot feel very proud of her husband's proficiency. I managed, indeed, to propel the boat by rowing with two oars; but the use of the single paddle is quite beyond my present skill. Mr. Thorow had assured me that it was only necessary to will the boat to go in any particular direction, and she would immediately take that course, as if imbued with the spirit of the steersman. It may be so with him, but certainly not with me; the boat seemed to be bewitched, and turned its head to every point of the compass except the right one. He then took the paddle himself, and though I could observe nothing peculiar in his management of it, the Musketaquid immediately became as docile as a trained steed. I suspect that she has not yet transferred her affections from her old master to her new one. By and by, when we are better acquainted, she will grow more tractable; especially after she shall have had the honor of bearing my little wife, who is loved by all things, living or inanimate. We propose to change her name from Musketaquid (the Indian name of Concord river, meaning the river of meadows) to the Pond Lily—which will be very beautiful and appropriate, as, during the summer season, she will bring home many a cargo of pond lilies from along the river's weedy shore. It is not very likely that I shall make such long voyages in her as Mr. Thorow has. He once followed our river down to the Merrimack, and thence, I believe, to Newburyport—a voyage of about eighty miles, in this little vessel.



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Some of this has been rendered into poetry by Robert Peters:

Thoreau Gives Hawthorne Navigation Lessons

I enter the boat
in order to have a lesson
in rowing and paddling.

Mr Thoreau
assures me that the boat
imbued with the spirit of
the steersman (me)
will go in
any direction.

It may be so with him
but it is not so with me.

He has acquired, without
a teacher, the method of
the Indians for propelling
a boat.

Mr Thoreau
takes the paddle
and the *Musketaquid* is
immediately as docile as
a trained steed. I
suspect
that the boat has not yet
transferred her affections
from her old master
to her new one.

Robert Peters. [HAWTHORNE](#): POEMS ADAPTED FROM THE AMERICAN NOTEBOOKS.
Fairfax CA: Poet-Skin / Red Hill Press, 1977

[William Cooper Nell](#) placed an advertisement in [William Lloyd Garrison](#)'s [The Liberator](#), offering colored boys to anti-slavery mechanics and shopkeepers as apprentices.

To Anti-Slavery Mechanics, Merchants, &c.

THE subscriber offers his services to anti-slavery mechanics, merchants, &c. in the city or country, to furnish them with colored boys as apprentices. It is hoped that Abolitionists will direct their attention to the importance of aiding that class who are debarred from those privileges so freely enjoyed by others.

None but those of good qualifications will be recommended. Apply to
WILLIAM O. NELL, 25 Cornhill.



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Thoreau, poor fellow, author not being paid for his work, was in want of money and had to sell for \$7.⁰⁰ his and his brother's famous boat with wheels *MUSKETAQUID* to an author who was being paid. The purchaser promptly re-named it "*POND LILY*."

(Later, when [Ellery Channing](#) moved to Concord, this would be the boat in which [Nathaniel](#) took him fishing. Hawthorne described their fishing expeditions this way: "Strange and happy times were those, when we cast aside all irksome forms and strait-laced habitudes, and delivered ourselves up to the free air, to live like Indians or any less conventional race, during one bright semi-circle of the sun." Not only did the holy vessel that had carried the two brothers off on their adventure on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers not mean anything in particular to this author Hawthorne, but this accomplished author was able to transform even a fishing trip into his own adventure in ethnic chauvinism: "Indians or any less conventional race," indeed!

Not far from this spot, lay an old, leaky punt, drawn up on the oozy river-side, and generally half-full of water. It served the angler to go in quest of pickerel, or the sportsman to pick up his wild-ducks. Setting this crazy barque afloat, I seated myself in the stern, with the paddle, while Hollingsworth sat in the bows, with the hooked pole, and Silas Foster amidships, with a hay-rake.

"It puts me in mind of my young days," remarked Silas, "when I used to steal out of bed to go bobbing for horn-pouts and eels. Heigh-ho! — well! — life and death together make sad work for us all. Then, I was a boy, bobbing for fish; and now I am getting to be an old fellow, and here I be, groping for a dead body! I tell you what, lads, if I thought anything had really happened to Zenobia, I should feel kind o' sorrowful."

Later, Hawthorne allowed the Musketaquid to transfer her affections to Channing. The record of this which [Thoreau](#) chose to retain, in [WALDEN](#), was that the boat had simply "passed from hand to hand" and had "gone



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down the stream of time.”)

WALDEN: The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go out doors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa says, “An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning.” Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager, -the wood-thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field-sparrow, the whippoorwill, and many others.

WHIPPOORWILL
WOOD THRUSH

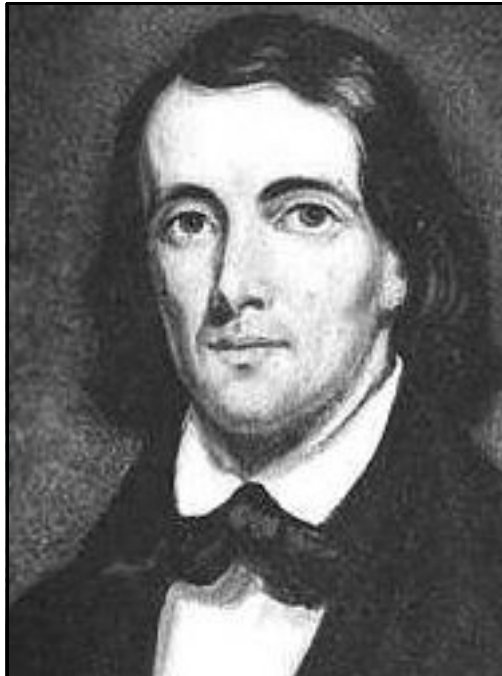


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Later, in 1845, [Hawthorne](#) and others, in the “Musketquid” he had bought from Thoreau for \$7.⁰⁰ and renamed the “Pond Lily,” would pull the body of Martha Hunt out of the river. Did this adventure on the river give Hawthorne a chance to touch the body of True Womanhood, that is, touch an utterly inert and nonresponsive female body? His written record is silent in this regard. All we know is that when Hawthorne left Concord for Salem in 1845, instead of offering to return the “Musketquid” to [Thoreau](#) he gave it to [Ellery Channing](#), along with a blue frock coat he had worn while at Brook Farm. (At that point Hawthorne had gone to law in an attempt to recover the investment of \$1,500.⁰⁰ he had made upon enlisting in that socialist experiment.)



August: [Joseph Smith, Jr.](#) “got married with” Martha McBride and with Ruth Vose Sayers as well.

[Margaret Fuller](#) suggested to [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) and Mrs. [Sophia Peabody Hawthorne](#) that her sister [Mrs. Ellen Fuller Channing](#) and husband [Mr. Ellery Channing II](#) be allowed to board at the Old Manse in [Concord](#) — but by letter this proposition was declined. However, [Henry Thoreau](#) was able to secure for the newlyweds the little red farmhouse next to [Waldo Emerson](#)’s garden, on the Cambridge Turnpike, at a rent of \$55.⁰⁰ (\$5.⁰⁰ more per year than the rental cost of The Manse because its antique rooms were undesirably tiny, and because it was so costly to heat during the winter). Margaret and Ellery stayed with the Emersons for several weeks and when they departed [Emerson](#) was the editor of [THE DIAL](#).



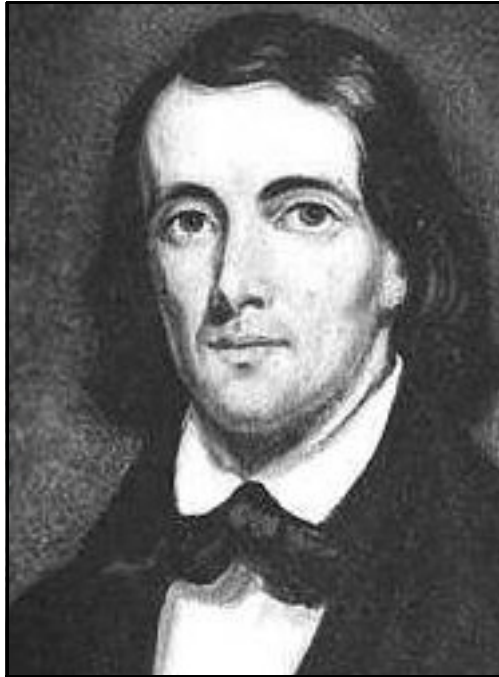
THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

August 5, Friday: [The Liberator](#).

[Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) referred to [Ellery Channing](#) as “a gnome, yclept Ellery Channing.”



September 28, Wednesday: A federal court decided [John Brown](#)'s bankruptcy case, as the culmination of years of dicey business decisions. His creditors were awarded all but the essentials which the Brown family needed to sustain life — but this proceeding did free him.

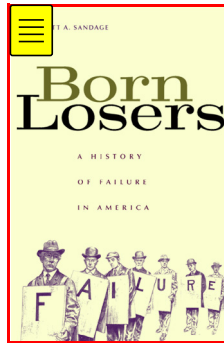
A failed surveyor, farmer, speculator, schoolteacher, tanner, and cattleman, he showed up as a wool dealer in an 1848 credit report: “his condition is questionable.” Winter 1849: “may or may not be good.” Summer 1850: “his means are equally obscure.” Still in his forties, he looked sixty to credit reporters. The agency lost him when he switched lines of work yet again, only to fail yet again. Like many another misfit who pushed a doomed venture too far, he quit when he had no other choice. Having grown whiskers for the first time, his craggy face looked still more ancient. Everyone had an opinion of this broken man. “Served him right.” Overhearing such comments, Thoreau said he felt proud even to know him and questioned why people “talk as if a man’s death were a failure, and his continued life, be it of whatever character, were a success.” The bankrupt court had restored this loser’s freedom in 1842. Now it was 1859, and no earthly court could save [John Brown](#) after his failure at Harpers Ferry.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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[Waldo Emerson](#) continued in his journal:

Next morning, we begun our walk at 6¹/₂ o'clock for the Shaker Village distant 3¹/₂ miles. Whilst the good Sisters were getting ready our breakfast, we had a conversation with Seth Blanchard & Cloutman of the Brethren, who gave an honest account by yea & by nay of their faith & practice. They were not stupid like some whom I have seen of their society, & not worldly like others.... From the Shaker Village we came to Littleton, & thence to Acton, still in the same redundance of splendour. It was like a day of July, and from Acton we sauntered leisurely homeward to finish the nineteen miles of our second day before four in the afternoon.

After the two walkers returned to [Concord](#), [Margaret Fuller](#) came visiting the Emerson home for two weeks.

[Lidian Emerson](#) was on [opium](#) and began to fantasize connections between Margaret and Waldo, and Margaret had to defend by pointing out that on two of the evenings Lidian supposed she spent talking to Waldo, actually she had been with [Ellery Channing](#) or [Henry Thoreau](#) while Waldo had been alone, writing in his study.



There was embarrassment at the dining table when Lidian burst into tears at an imagined slight. After the meal the two women went walking and evidently bonded somewhat, for Lidian confided to Margaret that “she has a lurking hope that Waldo’s character will alter, and that he will be capable of an intimate union.”

Margaret mused on this in her journal:

I suppose the whole amount of the feeling is that women cant bear to be left out of the question. ...when Waldo’s wife, and the mother of that child that is gone [Waldo Jr.] thinks me the most privileged of women, & that EH [[Elizabeth Hoar](#)] was happy because her love [Charles (?) Emerson] was snatched away for a life long separation, & thus she can know none but ideal love: it does seem a little too insulting at first blush. - And yet they are not altogether wrong.



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An entanglement arose when [Ellery Channing](#) wanted to visit his former love Caroline Sturgis on [Naushon Island](#) one last time, at her suggestion, before his new wife [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) would arrive in [Concord](#) from Boston. [Margaret Fuller](#) had no objection and Ellery went to Naushon but then Ellen arrived early in Concord and discovered his absence and Margaret was unwilling to admit where he was — and everyone became rather upset. Margaret recorded:



If I were Waldo's wife, or Ellery's wife, I should acquiesce in all these relations, since they needed them. I should expect the same feeling from my husband, & I should think it little in him not to have it. I felt I should never repent of advising Ellery to go whatsoever happened. Well, he came back next day, and All's Well that Ends Well.... Mama [Emerson's mother [Ruth Haskins Emerson](#)] & Lidian sympathized with me almost with tears. Waldo looked radiant, & HT [Henry Thoreau] as if his tribe had won a victory. Well it was a pretty play, since it turned out no tragedy at last. Ellery told Ellen at once how it was, and she took it just as she ought.

[Bronson Alcott](#), Henry Wright, [Charles Lane](#), and Lane's son William (who was about 9 years of age), embarked at Gravesend on the *Leland* for Boston. They brought a large library of books on mysticism to be used "in the commencement of an Institution for the nurture of men in universal freedom of action, thought, and being." More important, Lane brought his life savings of approximately \$2,000.⁰⁰. Wright's bride and infant waited in England for developments. 



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October 2, Sunday: The [Reverend George Gilfillan](#) preached on the subject of “Hades, or the Unseen” (the Unseen State of the soul after separation from the body), and would soon publish that sermon, causing himself to come to be popularly known as “Gilfillan the Hades Minister.” This contained such novel thoughts before their time as to bring him under the scrutiny of his co-presbyters — and ultimately it would need to be withdrawn from circulation as having been somewhat too adventurous ([Thomas Carlyle](#) would comment “How he contrives to hold such notions, and be a Burgher Minister, one cannot well say”).



The Reverend [William Ellery Channing](#) died at sundown in Old Bennington, Vermont. When news of the event was circulated, the [Unitarian](#) churches of course all tolled their funeral bells, but every other Protestant church was very noticeably silent. On this occasion, in [Boston](#), only the bells of the [Catholic](#) cathedral chimed in with the bells of the Unitarians. Although his statue stands today at the Arlington Street and Boylston Street entrance to the Public Garden, the gravestone which bears his name is behind the Old First Church that fronts on the green in Old Bennington. It happens to be one of the few gravestones ever to refer to the hour of a person’s death:

**“In this Quiet Village
Among the Hills
William Ellery Channing
Apostle of Faith and Freedom
Died at Sunset
October 2, 1842”**





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1843

January 15, Sunday: Mrs. [Lidian Emerson](#) wrote to [Waldo Emerson](#):

Henry is about as well as when you were here – and a great comfort to Edith [second daughter, born in 1841] with whom he dances and for whom he plays the flute. [Richard Fuller](#) [younger brother of [Margaret Fuller](#) and of [Ellery Channing](#)'s wife [Ellen Fuller Channing](#)] sent him a music box as a N. Year's gift and it was delightful to see Henry's child-like joy. I never saw any one made so happy by a new possession. He said nothing could have been so acceptable. After we had heard its performance he said he must hasten to exhibit it to his sisters and mother. My heart really warmed with sympathy and admiration at his whole demeanour on the occasion – and I like human nature better than I did ... Here is Mother [[Ruth Haskins Emerson](#), Waldo's mother, who lived with the Emerson family] just come in from church – where she affirms she saw Henry in your uppermost seat, not without "astonishment." It must be that he is converted to the right doctrine. I had a conversation with him a few days since on his heresies – but had no expectation of so speedy a result.

January 16, Monday: [Richard F. Fuller](#), the younger brother of [Margaret Fuller](#) and of [Ellery Channing](#)'s wife [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) whom [Henry David Thoreau](#) had taken along on his walk to Wachusett and tutored in Latin free of charge, had sent him a music box with "placid [Lucerne](#) on the lid."⁶ On this day Thoreau sent off a thank-you note from [Concord](#) to Fuller in his dorm room at [Harvard College](#) in Cambridge.

Concord Jan 16th 1843.

Dear Richard,

I need not thank you for your present for I hear its music, which seems to be playing just for us two pilgrims marching over hill and dale of a summer afternoon – up those long Bolton hills and by those bright Harvard lakes, such as I see in the placid [Lucerne](#) on the lid— and whenever I hear I hear it it will recall happy hours passed with its donor.

When did mankind make that foray into nature and bring off this booty—? For certainly it is but history that some rare virtue in remote times plundered these strains from above, and communicated them to men. Whatever we may think of it, it is a part of the harmony of the spheres you have sent me, which has condescended to serve us [Admetuses](#), and I hope I may so behave that this may always be the tenor of your thought for me.

If you have any strains, the conquest of your own spear or quill to

6. It would be interesting to know what tune it played, how many prongs it had, where the Fullers had gotten it, and how much it had cost them to make this present after Thoreau had helped them so considerably.



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*accompany these, let the winds waft them also to me.
I write this with one of the “primaries” of my osprey's wings, which
I have preserved over my glass for some state occasion — and now
it offers.*

*Mrs. Emerson sends her love —
Yr friend,
Henry D. Thoreau*

April: The Channings arrived in Concord. Soon [Ellery Channing](#) would be causing the publishing firm of Charles C. Little and James Brown, and the press of Freeman and Bolles on Washington Street in Boston, to produce for him a volume entitled POEMS BY WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING ([Henry Thoreau](#) would send the good news from New-York that, while in Little and Brown's Bookstore one day — he had actually witnessed a man in the act of **purchasing** a copy — but he would fail to enquire whether this purchaser was supposing the author of the volume to be the illustrious Reverend William Ellery Channing or whether this purchaser was adequately aware that the poet in question was **not** the Unitarian Reverend at all, but instead merely some feckless younger namesake).

POEMS (FIRST SERIES)

We now notice a copy of Ellery's volume in Henry's personal library and notice also that he has extracted snippets from his friend's poems “Boat Song” and “The River” for use in [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) (on pages 43, 45, 46, 317).

“Therefore, as doth the pilgrim, whom the night
Hastes darkly to imprison on his way,
Think on thy home, my soul, and think aright
Of what 's yet left thee of life's wasting day:
Thy sun posts westward, passed is thy morn,
And twice it is not given thee to be born.”

April 7, Friday: [The Liberator](#).

[Ephraim Merriam](#) died at the age of 47. He had never married but (as Henry Thoreau would) had lived all his life with his mother.

Mrs. [Sophia Peabody Hawthorne](#) had gone to Boston to visit her sister [Mary Tyler Peabody](#), who was to marry [Horace Mann, Sr.](#) and have a honeymoon in Europe, and [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) had sort of taken a vow of silence during her absence. However, while he was trying to read the current issue of [THE DIAL](#), which contained an article “[A. Bronson Alcott](#)'s Works,” and was seriously considering trying to take a nap, who should knock on his door but [Henry Thoreau](#), with a book to return, bearing the news that he was considering “going to reside at [Staten Island](#), as private tutor in the family of Mr. Emerson's brother,” and bearing the news that [Ellery Channing](#) was coming back to Concord and that Thoreau had on his behalf searched out and rented a house and land for \$55.⁰⁰ the year: “a little red cottage on the road, with one acre attached.” Thoreau had brought his music box gift from [Margaret Fuller](#) and [Richard F. Fuller](#) to leave in Hawthorne's keeping during his absence on Staten Island. Hawthorne and Thoreau discussed the spiritual advantages of change of place (Hawthorne was for it), and discussed [THE DIAL](#), and discussed Bronson Alcott. All in all, Hawthorne was



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glad that Thoreau was going away, on his own account,

AMERICAN NOTEBOOKS: ... I arose, and began this record in the journal, almost at the commencement of which I was interrupted by a visit from Mr. Thoreau, who came to return a book, and to announce his purpose of going to reside at Staten Island, as private tutor in the family of Mr. Emerson's brother. We had some conversation upon this subject, and upon the spiritual advantages of change of place, and upon the Dial, and upon Mr. Alcott, and other kindred or concatenated subjects. I am glad, on Mr. Thoreau's own account, that he is going away; as he is physically out of health, and, morally and intellectually, seems not to have found exactly the guiding clue; and in all these respects, he may be benefitted by his removal;—also, it is one step towards a circumstantial position in the world. On my account, I should like to have him remain here; he being one of the few persons, I think, with whom to hold intercourse is like hearing the wind among the boughs of a forest-tree; and with all this wild freedom, there is high and classic cultivation in him too.

[Hawthorne](#) feared that, for Concord, [Channing](#) would be



but a poor substitute for Mr. Thoreau.

We perhaps best understand this distaste for the ersatz, if we take into consideration the sort of weighty drive that the promising Ellery had to offer to the town of Concord, when he contemplated weighty topics such as the new railroad past [Walden Pond](#):⁷

Oh! transient gleams yon hurrying noisy train,
Its yellow carriages rumbling with might
Of volleyed thunder on the iron rail
Pieced by the humble toil of Erin's hand
Wood and lake the whistle shrill awakening.

7. Notice in the above that the locomotive whistle is still of the “steam trumpet” model, that is, is still of the “whistle shrill” variety which we would associate with slumland factories rather than with bucolic railroads.

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When [Channing](#) had completed his move to Concord, [Hawthorne](#) took him fishing in the *Pond Lily*. Hawthorne described their fishing expeditions this way: “Strange and happy times were those, when we cast aside all irksome forms and strait-laced habitudes, and delivered ourselves up to the free air, to live like Indians or any less conventional race, during one bright semi-circle of the sun.” Not only did the holy vessel *Musketaquid* that had carried the Thoreau brothers off on their adventure on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers not mean anything in particular to this author Hawthorne, but this accomplished author was able to transform even a fishing trip into his own adventure in ethnic chauvinism: “Indians or any less conventional race,” indeed! (Later, Hawthorne would pass the boat on to Channing rather than back to its builder to whom it had meant so much. The record of this which Thoreau chose to retain was that the boat had simply “passed



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from hand to hand” and had “gone down the stream of time.”)

WALDEN: The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go out doors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa says, “An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning.” Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager, —the wood-thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field-sparrow, the whippoorwill, and many others.

WHIPPOORWILL
WOOD THRUSH

THOREAU RESIDENCES



Was this the house that needed work, that Ellery hired Henry to perform? On the list of improvements for Henry to perform was an interesting item:

“Privy — to be moved from where it is now, behind the end of the barn, the filth carried off, & hole filled in. The privy to be whitewashed & have a new door, & the floor either renewed or cleaned up.”

April 20, Thursday: [Frederick Douglass](#) was at the Town Hall of Dedham, Massachusetts for the annual meeting of the



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Norfolk County Anti-Slavery Society.



The Eastern Railroad stopped linking “Jim Crow” cars behind the engines of its trains, thus, effectively, desegregating itself.

At about this point in time a volley of poesy was being discharged from the pen of the promising [Ellery Channing](#) of Concord:

Oh! transient gleams yon hurrying noisy train,
Its yellow carriages rumbling with might
Of volleyed thunder on the iron rail
Pieced by the humble toil of Erin’s hand
Wood and lake the whistle shrill awakening.

(Notice in the above that the locomotive whistle is still of the “steam trumpet” model, that is, is still of the “whistle shrill” variety which we would associate with slumland factories rather than with bucolic railroads.)

In England, [Thomas Carlyle](#) obtained a finished copy of his new volume PAST AND PRESENT from his publishers. He had already forwarded a hand-copy by steamer to [Waldo Emerson](#) in Boston to arrange for



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legitimate publication here — and thus steal a march on the inevitable American pirate printers.⁸



The message of the book is of the nobility, and God-given necessity, of work. Carlyle holds up England, still then standing on medieval foundations of a King in parliament and a feudal system stretching down from him, as an example of what divinely inspired heroes can create if allowed to do so. There is a sub-text about the importance of confronting problems in order to solve them, rather than pursuing compromise: "Double, double toil and trouble; that is the life of all governors that really govern; not the spoil of victory, only the glorious toil of battle can be theirs." This cannot be achieved with "democracy, which means despair of finding any Heroes to govern you," but rather "despotism is essential in most enterprises." Carlyle advises, however:

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Make your despotism just. Rigorous as Destiny; but just too, as Destiny and its Laws. The Laws of God: all men obey these, and have no "freedom" at all but in obeying them. The way is already known, part of the way; — and courage and some qualities are needed for walking on it!

WALDEN: What is the pill which will keep us well, serene, contented? Not my or thy great-grandfather's but our great-grandmother Nature's universal, vegetable, botanic medicines, by which she has kept herself young always, outlived so many old Parrs in her day, and fed her health with their decaying fatness. For my panacea, instead of one of those quack vials of a mixture dipped from Acheron and the Dead Sea, which come out of those long shallow black-schooner looking wagons which we sometimes see made to carry bottles, let me have a draught of undiluted morning air. If men will not drink of this at the fountain-head of the day, why, then, we must even bottle up some and sell it in the shops, for the benefit of those who have lost their subscription ticket to morning time in this world. But remember, it will not keep quite till noon-day even in the coolest cellar, but drive out the stopples long ere that and follow westward the steps of Aurora. I am no worshipper of Hygeia, who was the daughter of that old herb-doctor Æsculapius, and who is represented on monuments holding a serpent in one hand, and in the other a cup out of which the serpent sometimes drinks; but rather of Hebe, cupbearer to Jupiter, who was the daughter of Juno and wild lettuce, and who had the power of restoring gods and men to the vigor of youth. She was probably the only thoroughly sound-conditioned, healthy, and robust young lady that ever walked the globe, and wherever she came it was spring.

THOMAS PARR

8. When we attack the [Chinese](#) nowadays for pirating copyright American materials, we are attacking them for the precise practice which had been the very foundation of our own American printing industry.



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The only liberty worth having is the liberty to work, of securing "a fair day's wage for a fair day's work"; other liberties would be protected because the leaders, or despots, would always remain the servants of God, who would hold them to account. Carlyle did not bother with economics. Those who had resources, whether landed or enriched by the industrial revolution, had an obligation to provide work with that money; it was everyone's responsibility. This proto-socialism sits uneasily with Carlyle's current reputation, but it –almost Saint-Simonian in its force– yells out of the pages of PAST AND PRESENT. Just as the Abbott of St Edmundsbury [Abbot Samson] emerged as leader because he was best fitted to lead, and just as he, with much effort and grief, provided for all in his charge, so should a modern governor. Necessary for this was the rediscovery of God after "these last two centuries of Atheistic Government"; then a government could proceed not on the greatest happiness principle –a liberal doctrine abhorred by Carlyle for its associations with atheism, and one of the causes of his growing estrangement from John Stuart Mill– but on the "Greatest-Nobleness Principle." Happiness was neither here nor there: "Our highest religion is named the 'Worship of Sorrow'." As in earlier writings, he attacks the economic imperative for its effect on human loyalties and faith: "We have profoundly forgotten everywhere that cash-payment is not the sole relation of human beings; we think, nothing doubting, that it absolves and liquidates all engagements of man." "Might is right" is explicitly raised.

April 30, Sunday: [Ewald Flügel](#) would publish and annotate the following [Waldo Emerson](#) letter in 1889. It is a letter that [Charles Stearns Wheeler](#) had received while seeking in Europe relief from the tuberculosis that would take his life at Leipzig on June 13th. At Leipzig he had become intimate with the American consul, Dr. Johann Gottfried Flügel (grandfather of [Ewald Flügel](#)), and had given the manuscript letter to him in token of this relation. The letter included information about [Robert Bartlett](#), who had taken an ocean cruise to [Havana](#) on account of his health, and about Emerson's Latin School chum [Samuel Bradford, Junior](#), and about [Ellery Channing](#), [Elizabeth Sherman Hoar](#), [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), [Henry Thoreau](#), [Bronson Alcott](#), [Charles Lane](#), [Henry G. Wright \(1814?-1846\)](#) the mystic teacher of the Ham Common School near Richmond in Surrey who in 1842 came with Alcott and Lane and joined [Brook Farm](#) and then the Fourierists, [George Partridge Bradford](#) of [Brook Farm](#), Giles Waldo, Henry James, Sr., William Aspinwall Tappan, [Miss Elizabeth Palmer Peabody](#), [Margaret Fuller](#), and [Horace Mann, Sr.](#), as well as [THE DIAL](#).

My dear [Wheeler](#), It is very late for me to begin to thank you by letter for your abundant care & supply of my wants, and, to point the reproach, here has come this day as I am putting pen to paper to send by Mr. Mann tomorrow, a pair of books from Mr. Weiss, brought from your own hands. Two full letters I have received, & printed the substance of the same, & had the reading of a part of two more addressed to [Robert Bartlett](#), since I wrote you. But, all winter, from 1 January to 10 March, I was absent from home, at Washington, Baltimore, Phila & N Y, & would not write letters to Germany, on the road. – What shall I tell you.



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Our Dial, enriched by your manifold Intelligence, yet languishes somewhat in the scantiness of purchasing patrons, so that Miss Peabody wrote me at N.Y. that its subscription list did not now pay its expenses. I hoped that was a hint not to be mistaken, that I might drop it. But many persons expressed so much regret at the thought of its dying, that it is to live one year more. Ellery Channing has written lately some good poems for it, one, especially, called "Death" & a copy of verses addressed by him to Elizabeth Hoar. Channing has just rented the little red house next below mine, on the Turnpike, and is coming to live here next week. His friend, S.G. Ward, is editing a volume (about the size of one of your Tennyson's) of Channing's poetry, which will appear in a week or two. Thoreau goes next week to New York: My brother William at Staten Island has invited him to take charge of the education of his son, for a year or more, & the neighborhood of the city offers many advantages to H T. — Hawthorne remains in his seat, & writes very actively for all the magazines. Alcott & Lane remain also in their cottage. [Henry G.] Wright has withdrawn from them, & joins the Fourierists, who are beginning to buy & settle land. These are all our village news of any import: only, next week, they begin to build a railroad, which may unseat us all, & drive us into new solitudes. I do not notice any very valuable signs about us in the literary & spiritual realm. Yet I found at Washington, & at NY some friends whom I greatly cherish [these had been Giles Waldo, Henry James, Sr., and William Aspinwall Tappan]. I think our wide community with its abundant reading, & a culture not dependant on one city, but taking place everywhere in detached nervous centres, promises to yield, & already yields a great deal of private original unviolated thought & character. Nature is resolved to make a stand against the Market, which has grown so usurping & omnipotent. Everything shall not go to Market; so she makes shy men, cloistered maids, & angels in lone places. Brook Farm is an experiment of another kind, where a hot-bed culture is applied, and everything private is published, & carried to its extreme. I learn from all quarters that a great deal of action & courage has been shown there, & my friend Hawthorn almost regrets that he had not remained there, to see the unfolding & issue of so much bold life. He would have staid to be its historian. My friend Mr Bradford writes me from B.F. [Brook Farm] that he has formed several new friendships with old friends, such new grounds of character have been disclosed. They number in all about 85 souls. — You will have heard of Carlyle's new work "Past & Present." I am just now printing it in Boston (from Ms. partly) braving the chances of piracy from New York. It is certain to be popular from the fear of one class & the hope of another: and is preliminary, Carlyle seems to think, to Cromwell. It is full of brilliant points & is excellent history, true history of England in 1843. — You will have heard of Robert Bartlett's illness, & the great anxiety of his friends respecting him. He went away, I heard, in good spirits, & somewhat amended: but his health is in a most critical



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condition. It is a great grief to me, who was every year learning to value him more, thought there has been something curious, as well as valuable in his unfolding.... [Margaret Fuller](#) thanks you for your account of [\[August von\] Platen\[-Haller Münd\]](#); and wishes further to ask you to send her a copy of the Vol. III of Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe," which you announced. I will pay your brother for it.

[written sideways: German address of Charles Stearns Wheeler]

You have kindly offered to buy for me books or drawings, but I shall not give you that trouble. I read little & not adventurously, but mostly in old & proven books. You shall see & hear for me, and tell me what is the hope of the new mines. Meantime I shall make an experiment on the two new books you have sent me, or at least in person on Theodor Mundt [author of *GESCHICHTE DER LITERATUR DES GEGENWART*, 1842]. [Mr. Mann](#) was to go to Berlin directly, & take on Dials to you; I am sorry, he has changed his plan, & goes slower. In all good hope & assurance, your friend

[R.W. Emerson](#)

May: [Ellery Channing](#) moved with his bride, [Ellen Fuller Channing](#), into Concord's Red Lodge house,⁹ not far from the Emerson home.



"Is a house but a gall on the face of the earth,
a nidus which some insect has provided for its young?"
-JOURNAL May 1, 1857



9. Nowadays in touristy Concord, this is being referred to cheerily as "the honeymoon house," with of course no attention at all being paid to the eventual sad outcome of this marriage.

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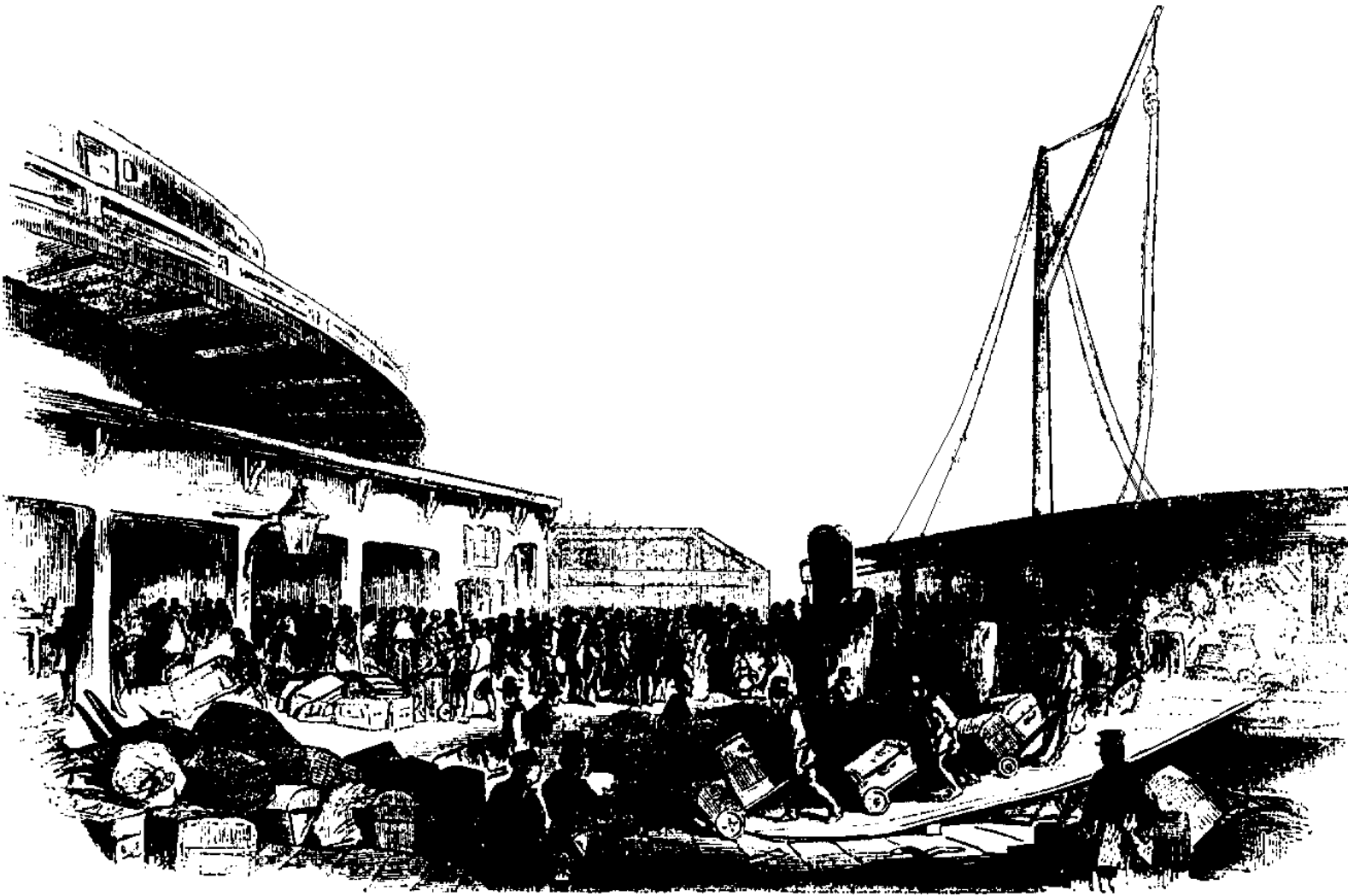
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May 6, Saturday: On the day that [Ellery Channing](#)'s ill-fated POEMS BY WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING was with great fanfare being published, [Henry Thoreau](#) escorted [Mrs. William Emerson](#), bound from Concord for [Staten Island](#).

POEMS (FIRST SERIES)

Henry was to tutor [Judge Emerson's son Haven](#), 7 years old, for wages of \$50.⁰⁰ per year plus room and board, while seeking publishing contacts in New-York. They took a boat from New London, Connecticut to a wharf by [Castle Garden](#) Emigrant Depot in Battery Park on Manhattan Island, and then boarded the ferry to [Staten Island](#).



Immigrants disembarking at Castle Garden Emigrant Depot

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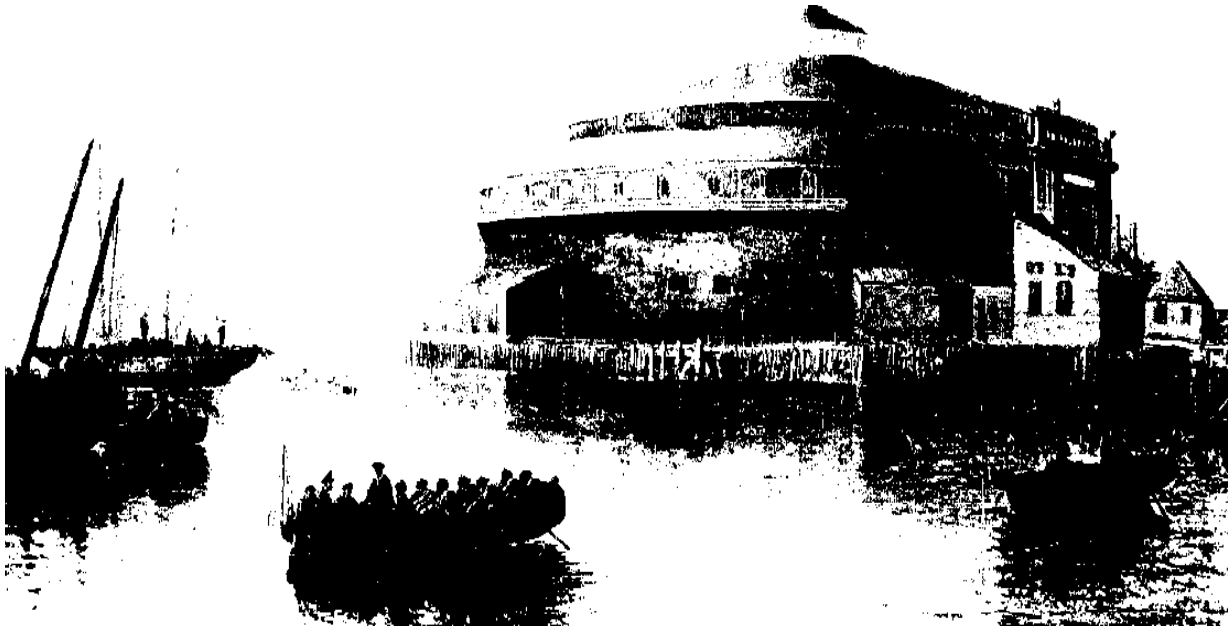
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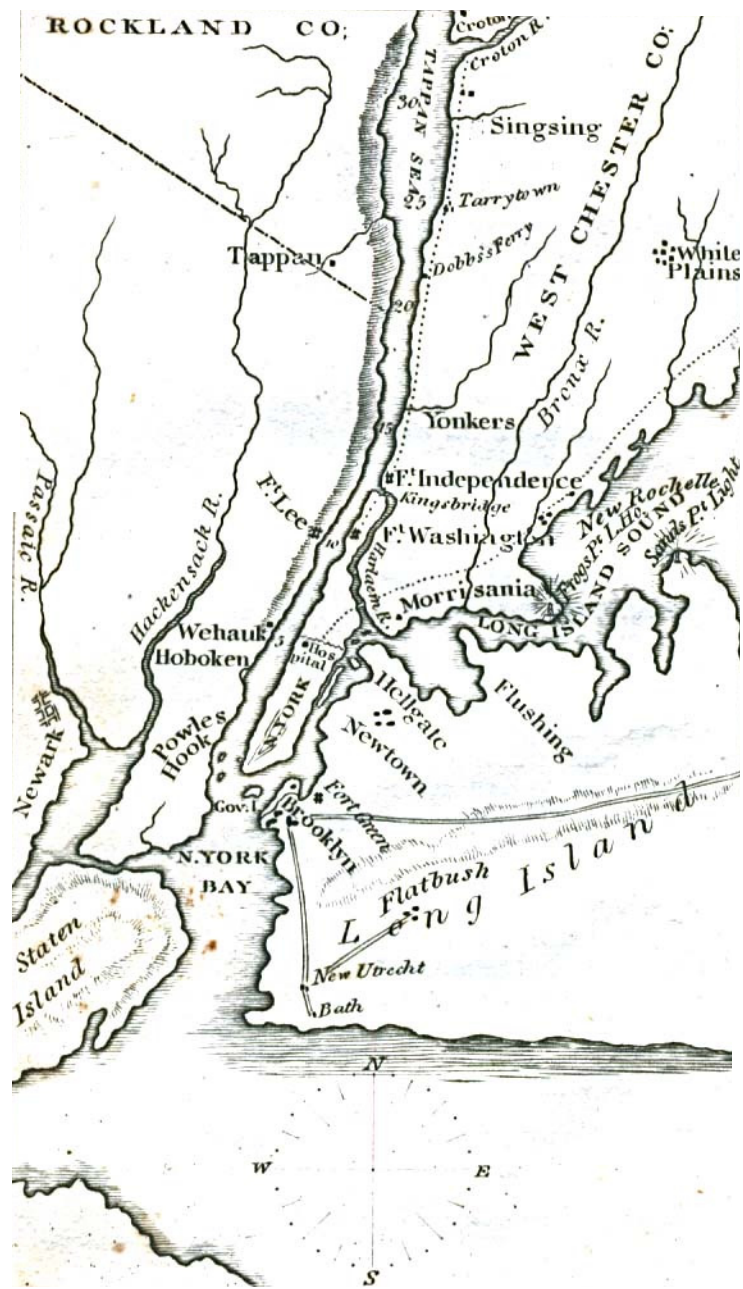
Two more views of a place now forgotten that was important in the memories of a whole lot of people in the 19th Century



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As [Thoreau](#) was departing for [Staten Island](#), [Elizabeth Sherman Hoar](#) made him the present of an inkstand,



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which he would use throughout his life.



This is the one now on exhibit in the Concord Museum:

WALDEN: Housework was a pleasant pastime. When my floor was dirty, I rose early, and, setting all my furniture out of doors on the grass, bed and bedstead making but one budget, dashed water on the floor, and sprinkled white sand from the pond on it, and then with a broom scrubbed it clean and white; and by the time the villagers had broken their fast the morning sun had dried my house sufficiently to allow me to move in again, and my meditations were almost uninterrupted. It was pleasant to see my whole household effects out on the grass, making a little pile like a gypsy's pack, and my three-legged table, from which I did not remove the books and pen and ink, standing amid the pines and hickories. They seemed glad to get out themselves, and as if unwilling to be brought in. I was sometimes tempted to stretch an awning over them and take my seat there. It was worth the while to see the sun shine on these things, and hear the free wind blow on them; so much more interesting most familiar objects look out of doors than in the house. A bird sits on the next bough, life-everlasting grows under the table, and blackberry vines run round its legs; pine cones, chestnut burs, and strawberry leaves are strewn about. It looked as if this was the way these forms came to be transferred to our furniture, to tables, chairs, and bedsteads, -because they once stood in their midst.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

ELIZABETH SHERMAN HOAR



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

One can imagine this inkstand later, on the table in the mottled light under the pines.

While [Thoreau](#) would be living on [Staten Island](#) and putting up with the stodgy [William Emerson](#) the “clear



Jones” in him would be becoming so drowsy, or [narcoleptic](#), that in his efforts to counteract this he would even attempt making spare change by selling magazine subscriptions door to door.

WALDEN: That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas say, “All intelligences awake with the morning.” Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

May 21, Sunday: We learn, from a letter that published author [Ellery Channing](#) wrote to [Margaret Fuller](#) on this date, that Emerson had taken, as a new amanuensis, the 20-year-old resident of Concord and graduate of Dartmouth College [Benjamin West Ball](#), to make a genius out of — now that “oakum-brained Thoreau,” “Pick-character Thoreau,” had been passed along to Emerson’s brother Judge [William Emerson](#) on [Staten Island](#).¹⁰

[THOREAU RESIDENCES](#)

On this same day, this “Pick-character Thoreau” was being written to by [Waldo Emerson](#) in a letter addressed to “[Henry D. Thoreau](#), care of Mr. Emerson, Esq., 64 Wall Street, New York”:

Concord, Sunday Eve, 21 May, 1843.
My Dear Friend, — Our Dial is already printing, and you must, if you can, send me something good by the 10th of June, certainly, if not before. If William E. can send by a private opportunity, you shall address it to “Care of Miss Peabody, 13 West Street,” or, to be left at Concord Stage Office. Otherwise send by Harnden, — W.E. paying to Boston and charging to me. Let the paquet bring letters also from you, and from [Giles] Waldo and Tappan, I entreat.
You will not doubt that you are well remembered here, by young, older, and old people; and your letter to your mother was borrowed and read with great interest, pending the arrival of direct accounts and of later experiences, especially in the city. I am sure that you are under sacred protection, if I should not hear from you for years.
Yet I shall wish to know what befalls you on your way.
Ellery Channing is well settled in his house, and works very steadily thus far, and our intercourse is very agreeable to me. Young [Benjamin West] Ball has been to see me, and is a prodigious reader and a youth of great promise, — born, too, in the good town. Mr. Hawthorne is well, and Mr. Alcott and Mr. Lane are revolving a purchase in Harvard of ninety acres.
Yours affectionately, R.W. Emerson.

10. Would this Ball family have been residing on a farm in the vicinity of Ball’s Hill (Gleason D9)? Would Benjamin be the son or the grandson of Nehemiah Ball?



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

CAPE COD: I used to see packs of half-wild dogs haunting the lonely beach on the south shore of Staten Island, in New York Bay, for the sake of the carrion there cast up; and I remember that once, when for a long time I had heard a furious barking in the tall grass of the marsh, a pack of half a dozen large dogs burst forth on to the beach, pursuing a little one which ran straight to me for protection, and I afforded it with some stones, though at some risk to myself; but the next day the little one was the first to bark at me. Under these circumstances I could not but remember the words of the poet:-

“Blow, blow, thou winter wind
Thou art not so unkind
 As his ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
 Although thy breath be rude.

“Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
 As benefits forgot;
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
 As friend remembered not.”

Sometimes, when I was approaching the carcass of a horse or ox which lay on the beach there, where there was no living creature in sight, a dog would unexpectedly emerge from it and slink away with a mouthful of offal.

DOG

Summer: [Henry Thoreau](#) gave [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) his boat. ([Ellery Channing](#) would later inherit the boat from Hawthorne. When it would finally begin to go to pieces, Ellery would take it to the village blacksmith, Mr. Farrar, for repairs.)



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

August: In declining pulmonary health, [Charles James Fox](#) embarked upon a restorative voyage to the Mediterranean, where he would visit countries such as Spain and [Egypt](#).

[Richard F. Fuller](#) joined [Ellery Channing](#) and [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) of Concord for a week's tour in the Berkshires. [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s savage review of Channing's POEMS appeared in [Graham's Magazine](#):



They are full of all kinds of mistakes, of which the most important is that of their having been written at all.

POEMS (FIRST SERIES)

Poe was accusing the novice poet with the famous name of having written in “Channingese.” This review has been termed “perhaps the most contemptuous he ever wrote” — although considering the quality of the material he was reviewing, this was perhaps too kind.



I am not earth-born, though I here delay;
Hope's child, I summon infiniter powers,
And laugh to see the mild and sunny day
Smile on the shrunk and thin autumnal hours.
I laugh, for Hope hath happy place with me;
If my bark sinks, 'tis to another sea.

However, to supplement the income from his writing, the Concord PO8 would be able to earn some money this month chopping wood for the [Emersons](#) in their nearby Coolidge mansion, for which labor he would be paid \$0.⁵⁰ per cord (presumably therefore he was able to produce about two cords per working day). Ellen had started an elementary school at their little red farmhouse, and was enrolling [Ellen Tucker Emerson](#) and others at a charge of \$1.⁰⁰ per month.



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September 8, Friday: [The Liberator](#).

[Waldo Emerson](#) wrote from Concord to [Henry Thoreau](#) on [Staten Island](#) about his [review](#) of [Ellery Channing's](#) volume [POEMS](#) that was currently appearing in [The United States Magazine and Democratic Review](#):

I beg you to tell my brother William that the review of Channing's poems, in the Democratic Review, has been interpolated with sentences and extracts, to make it long, by the editor, and I acknowledge, as far as I remember, little beyond the first page.

READ ELLERY'S POEMS

READ THE REVIEW

He reported on the continuation of the railroad right-of-way beyond Concord: "The mole which crosses the land of Jonas Potter and Mr. Stow [Cyrus Stow], from Ephraim Wheeler's high land to the depot, is eighteen feet high, and goes on two rods every day. A few days ago a new contract was completed, – from the terminus of the old contract to Fitchburg, –the whole to be built before October, 1844; so that you see our fate is sealed." This railroad would be described as follows:

☰ The FITCHBURG RAILROAD, after leaving the depot in Causeway Street, passes through

Somerville,	South Acton,
Porter's,	West Acton,
Wellington Hill,	Littleton,
Waverley,	Groton Junction
Waltham,	Shirley,
Stony Brook,	Lunenburg,
Weston,	Leominster,
Lincoln,	Fitchburg.
Concord,	

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[Waldo](#) had been editing [Henry](#)'s "A Winter Walk" essay to remove its "mannerisms," shortening the piece by a couple of pages so it could appear in [THE DIAL](#).



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1844

February 6, Tuesday: [Waldo Emerson](#) paid the Concord PO8 [Ellery Channing](#) \$5.⁰⁰ for chopping 10 cords of wood. Needed wood, it must have been, in that cold weather.

Sometime between January and March, maybe in February, [Emerson](#) wrote in his journal:

Precisely what the painter or the sculptor or the epic rhapsodist feels, I feel in the presence of this house, which stands to me for the human race, the desire, namely, to express myself fully, symmetrically, gigantically to them, not dwarfishly & fragmentarily. H.D.T., with whom I talked of this last night, does not or will not perceive how natural this is, and only hears the word Art in a sinister sense. But I speak of instincts. I did not make the desires or know anything about them: I went to the public assembly, put myself in the conditions, & instantly feel this new craving – I hear the voice, I see the beckoning of this Ghost. To me it is vegetation, the pullulation & universal budding of the plant man. Art is the path of the creator to his work. The path or methods are ideal and eternal, though few men ever see them: not the artist himself for years, or for a lifetime, unless he comes into the conditions. Then he is apprised with wonder what herds of daemons hem him in. He can no more rest: he says, "By god, it is in me & must go forth of me." I go to this place and am galvanized, and the torpid eyes of my sensibility are opened. I hear myself speak as a stranger – Most of the things I say are conventional; but I say something which is original & beautiful. That charms me. I would say nothing else but such things. In our way of talking, we say, that is mine, that is yours; but this poet knows well that it is not his, that it is as strange & beautiful to him as to you; he would fain hear the like eloquence at length. Once having tasted this immortal ichor, we cannot have enough of it. Our appetite is immense. And, as "an admirable power flourishes in intelligibles," according to Plotinus, "which perpetually fabricates," it is of the last importance that these things get spoken. What a little of all we know, is said! What drops of all the sea of our science are baled up! And by what accident it is that these are spoken, whilst so many thoughts sleep in nature! Hence the oestrum of speech: hence these throbs & heart beatings at the door of the assembly to the end, namely, that the thought may be ejaculated as Logos or Word. The text of our life is accompanied all along by this commentary or gloss of dreams.



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April 15, Monday: In [Boston](#), Charles Bulfinch died. The body would be interred in the burial ground adjacent to [King's Chapel](#):



[Waldo Emerson](#) paid the Concord PO8 [Ellery Channing](#) \$7.⁵⁰ for chopping 15 cords of wood. After one year of renting the red farmhouse next to the Emersons for \$55.⁰⁰, the Channings were moving to a larger house, on the Lexington Road, that was available for the same rent.


At about this point [Isaac Hecker](#) was returning from New-York to the [Boston](#) area. First of course he visited the family of [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#). Then he stopped off at Brook Farm and the Shaker Village, before taking up residence in the Concord boardinghouse of the Thoreau family. When he arrived in Concord, [Emerson](#) suggested that he solicit the schoolmaster George Partridge Bradford to tutor him in classic languages, and Bradford agreed to do this during his noon hours of freedom. Bradford and Hecker went off to find Hecker a rooming house, and the first house they found asked too much, \$75.⁰⁰ per year, but then they chanced on [Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau](#) and found that at the Thoreau rooming house Hecker would have to pay only \$0.⁷⁵ per week, light included — although Cynthia stipulated that Hecker would have to purchase his own firewood if he wanted to use the fireplace in his room. Hecker's plan was to spend his days learning Greek and Latin from Schoolmaster Bradford and his evenings meditating over literary and theological works, including THE CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT, but as it turned out his spirit was so disturbed that he was unable to make headway in his studies.



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 May 18, Saturday: An announcement of regret for the closing of THE DIAL appeared in the New-York Daily Tribune, noting that that journal had been “sustained for three years by the free-will contributions of” Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Ellery Channing, the Reverend Theodore Parker, Charles Lane, Charles A. Dana, Henry Thoreau, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, “and others of the deepest thinkers and most advanced minds of our country.”¹¹

Here then are the accumulated issues of this publication, from midyear 1840 to midyear 1844:

THE DIAL, 1840
THE DIAL, 1841
THE DIAL, 1842
THE DIAL, 1843
THE DIAL, 1844

Midsummer: Henry Thoreau joined up with Ellery Channing where he was waiting for him in the railroad station in Pittsfield MA at the foot of Saddleback (Mount Greylock, that is) after coming up from New-York, and the two young men went on a midsummer walking tour of the Berkshires and the Catskills. While in the Catskill Mountains, Thoreau would notice an attractive little habitation not unlike William Cowper's 18th-Century English “Peasant’s Nest” along the River Ouse, that would figure large in his later thoughts and plans:

WALDEN: To my imagination it [the shanty on Walden Pond] retained throughout the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited the year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth every where.

11. There would be a successor magazine, and one of the first principles of this successor magazine would be that no contribution would ever be accepted from Thoreau — his participation would be ruled out categorically from the get-go.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

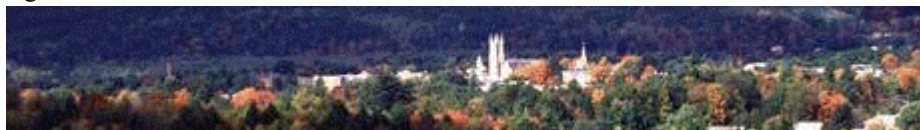
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN



BERKSHIRE, MASS.

[Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) would allege in 1905 that much of the material Thoreau would insert into his account of his adventure with his brother [John Thoreau, Jr.](#) on the Concord and the Merrimack rivers into the mountains of southern New Hampshire in 1849 actually had originated during this 1844 hiking tour with Channing into the mountains of western Massachusetts and New York state: “This journey Thoreau in WEEK breaks into two parts, printing the last first, near the beginning of his “Tuesday,” where it runs on for fourteen pages. Then ... he takes up the tale of his tramp from Shelburne Falls on the Deerfield River, up the valley of that stream, and over the Hoosac Mountain, through which the railroad has since bored its way.” This is the famous chronicle in which Thoreau is attracted by a young lady intimately combing out her long black hair while attired merely in her housedress: “Its mistress was a frank and hospitable young woman, who stood before me in a dishabille, busily and unconcernedly combing her long black hair while she talked, giving her head the necessary toss with each sweep of the comb, with lively sparkling eyes, and full of interest in that lower world from which I had come, talking all the while as familiarly as if she had known me for years, and reminding me of a cousin of mine.”



Thoreau supposed he could view [Williams College](#) from at or near the summit of Mount Greylock, or “Saddleback.” Correcting some of the details, the central campus is not visible from the peak itself, the



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college was never named [Williamstown](#), and the summit of Greylock is at 3491 feet rather than 3600:

A WEEK: I had come over the hills on foot and alone in serene summer days, plucking the raspberries by the wayside, and occasionally buying a loaf of bread at a farmer's house, with a knapsack on my back which held a few traveller's books and a change of clothing, and a staff in my hand. I had that morning looked down from the Hoosack Mountain, where the road crosses it, on the village of North Adams in the valley three miles away under my feet, showing how uneven the earth may sometimes be, and making it seem an accident that it should ever be level and convenient for the feet of man. Putting a little rice and sugar and a tin cup into my knapsack at this village, I began in the afternoon to ascend the mountain, whose summit is three thousand six hundred feet above the level of the sea, and was seven or eight miles distant by the path. My route lay up a long and spacious valley called the Bellows, because the winds rush up or down it with violence in storms, sloping up to the very clouds between the principal range and a lower mountain. There were a few farms scattered along at different elevations, each commanding a fine prospect of the mountains to the north, and a stream ran down the middle of the valley on which near the head there was a mill. It seemed a road for the pilgrim to enter upon who would climb to the gates of heaven. Now I crossed a hay-field, and now over the brook on a slight bridge, still gradually ascending all the while with a sort of awe, and filled with indefinite expectations as to what kind of inhabitants and what kind of nature I should come to at last. It now seemed some advantage that the earth was uneven, for one could not imagine a more noble position for a farm-house than this vale afforded, farther from or nearer to its head, from a glen-like seclusion overlooking the country at a great elevation between these two mountain walls.



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Thoreau has recently been accused of a plagiarism. He must have been carrying along in his knapsack, according to Lauren Stevens (a tour guide who has coauthored a history of Mount Greylock), not only sugar, rice, and a change of clothes, but also the Reverend [Timothy Dwight](#)'s TRAVELS IN NEW ENGLAND AND NEW YORK –to plagiarize from– for Dwight had described a view from Mount Greylock and had described Williamstown, and Thoreau wrote that he could view Williamstown from the peak although that is simply not possible. Stevens, reading between the lines, sees in this sufficient evidence to allege, in his history which has been reviewed in the Boston [Globe](#) in 1998 by B.J. Roche, that he has caught Thoreau red-handed.

Upon reaching the summit Thoreau read some stock price quotations in a castoff newspaper and lay down to sleep next to the outside wall of the only building, an [observatory](#), on the summit:

A WEEK: This observatory was a building of considerable size, erected by the students of Williamstown College, whose buildings might be seen by daylight gleaming far down in the valley. It would be no small advantage if every college were thus located at the base of a mountain, as good at least as one well-endowed professorship. It were as well to be educated in the shadow of a mountain as in more classical shades. Some will remember, no doubt, not only that they went to the college, but that they went to the mountain. Every visit to its summit would, as it were, generalize the particular information gained below, and subject it to more catholic tests.





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After hiking in Massachusetts mountains, Thoreau and Channing boarded an excursion boat on the Hudson River and went on into the Catskill Mountains of New York state.

According to [Channing](#), the sentence I have emphasized here from [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) pertains not to the shanty on the pond but to his boat ride on the Hudson River with [Thoreau](#) of this summer:

[WALDEN](#): I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route, and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pond-side; and though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is still quite distinct. It is true, I fear that others may have fallen into it, and so helped to keep it open. The surface of the earth is soft and impressible by the feet of men; and so with the paths which the mind travels. How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity! I did not wish to take a cabin passage, but rather to go before the mast and on the deck of the world, for there I could best see the moonlight amid the mountains. I do not wish to go below now.

Because the moon was bright, they spent the night in the bow of the excursion boat.

Thoreau would be back in Concord by August 1st.

July 9, Tuesday: [Margaret Fuller](#) arrived in [Concord](#). Greta had just been born to [Ellery Channing](#) and [Ellen Fuller Channing](#).

Fall: [Ellery Channing](#) obtained a position on the staff of [Horace Greeley](#)'s [New-York Tribune](#) but, before reporting for work, he spent mid-November in the Catskills, three days of which vacation he spent with Caroline Sturgis and [Margaret Fuller](#) who were also in the Catskills, at Fishkill on the Hudson River. Fuller was living with Sturgis for six weeks while revising her "Great Lawsuit" paper from [THE DIAL](#) for publication as WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. While working at the [Tribune](#), Ellery chummed around with Giles Waldo and William Tappan,¹² but declined an invitation to visit the William Emersons at their home on Staten Island.

12.This William would have been what to the rich New York abolitionists Arthur Tappan and Lewis Tappan??



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1845

The housesitting [Nathaniel Hawthornes](#) were obliged to leave the Manse when its owner, Samuel Ripley the son of Ezra Ripley, decided to move his family back to Concord — despite the fact that Hawthorne had a book in press about the house, *MOSESSES FROM AN OLD MANSE* [Per Lawrence Buell's *THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMAGINATION*, pages 323-4]:

The emotional fact of the matter, if not the literal truth, is that from the very start of the transcendentalist movement Concord was poised to become a spot to which literary pilgrims might repair in the sense of having forsaken the profane metropolis for the sacred grove; the attraction of Thoreau's haunts as a magnet for pilgrims was an intensification of a liminoid structure extant from the time Margaret Fuller started visiting the Emersons in the 1830s, long before Thoreau became famous. Thoreau, indeed, can be said to have realized the Emersonian vision and gone beyond it. The first canonical work outside the transcendentalist ranks that celebrated Concord as a place of notable bucolic philosophers and literati was the title essay of Hawthorne's *MOSESSES FROM AN OLD MANSE* (1845), which renders in a a droller and more ruminative way the epistolary lyricism expressed, especially by Sophia Hawthorne, during the Hawthornes' honeymoon period in the house where [Waldo Emerson](#) composed *NATURE*. In "Mosses," too, we see the start of the tradition of urbanite self-consciousness about entering this liminal world and falling under its spell. Hawthorne achieves a certain distance from it by poking fun at the mystics as well as at his own self-rustication during this interval of lotus-eating. In time, the Hawthornian formula of mythic pastoralism made more earthy [??] or plausible through a bemused detachment became the well-worn formula of popular journalistic reports of Concord visits.

When [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) left Concord for Salem, he gave [Ellery Channing](#) the blue frock coat he had worn while at [Brook Farm](#).

HDT

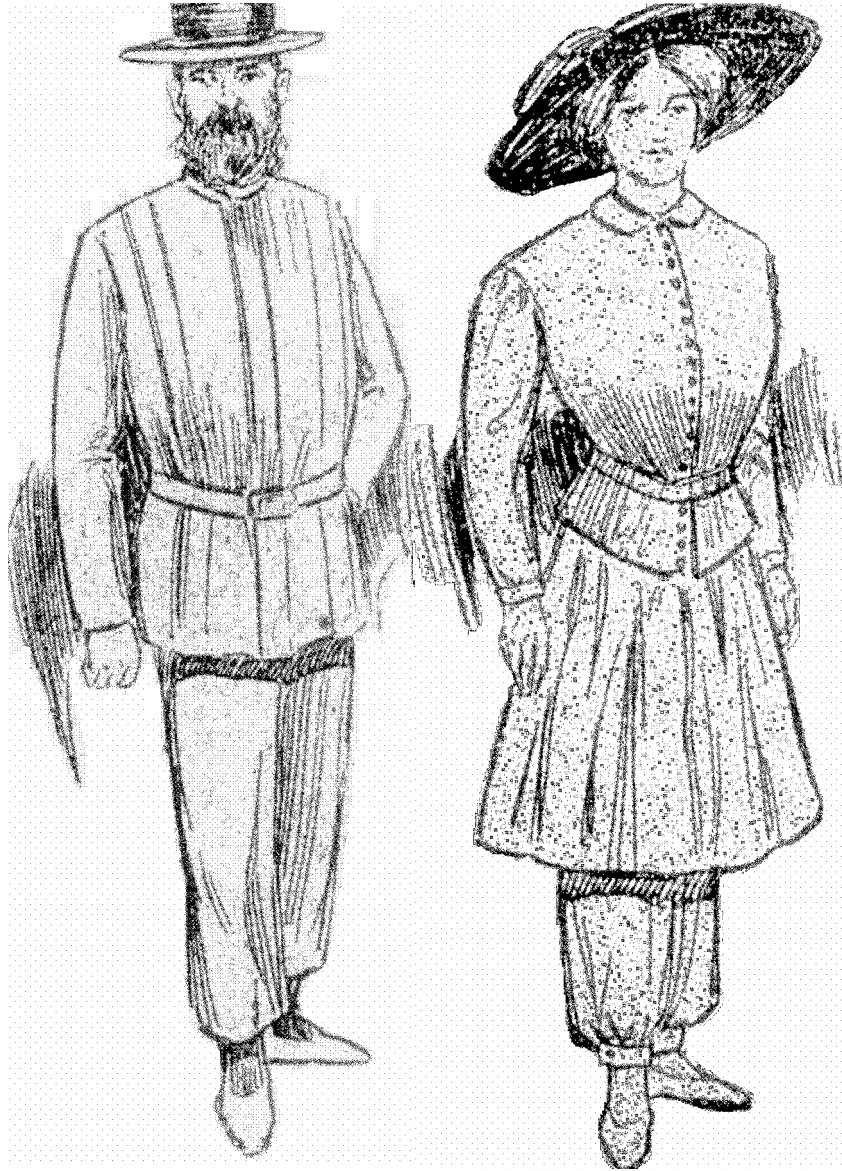
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(At that point Hawthorne had gone to law in an attempt to recover the investment of \$1,500.⁰⁰ he had made



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upon joining this commune.)



AGENDA OF BROOK FARM: "In order more effectually to promote the great purposes of human culture; to establish the external relations of life on a basis of wisdom and purity; to apply the principles of justice and love to our social organization in accordance with the laws of Divine Providence; to substitute a system of brotherly coöperation for one of selfish competition; to secure to our children, and to those who may be entrusted to our care, the benefits of the highest, physical, intellectual, and moral education in the present state of human knowledge, the resources at our command will permit...."

AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

Here is what he would have to say about this transition in his life, later, in THE SCARLET LETTER

THE SCARLET LETTER: Such were some of the people with whom I now found myself connected. I took it in good part, at the hands of Providence, that I was thrown into a position so little akin to my past habits; and set myself seriously to gather from it whatever profit was to be had. After my fellowship of toil and impracticable schemes with the dreamy brethren of Brook Farm; after living for three years within the subtle influence of an intellect like Emerson's; after those wild, free days on the Assabeth, indulging fantastic speculations, beside our fire of fallen boughs, with Ellery Channing; after talking with Thoreau about pine-trees and Indian relics in his hermitage at Walden; after growing fastidious by sympathy with the classic refinement of Hillard's culture; after becoming imbued with poetic sentiment at Longfellow's hearthstone - it was time, at length, that I should exercise other faculties of my nature, and nourish myself with food for which I had hitherto had little appetite. Even the old Inspector was desirable, as a change of diet, to a man who had known Alcott. I looked upon it as an evidence, in some measure, of a system naturally well balanced, and lacking no essential part of a thorough organization, that, with such associates to remember, I could mingle at once with men of altogether different qualities, and never murmur at the change.

BROOK FARM

WALDO EMERSON

ELLERY CHANNING

LONGFELLOW

BRONSON ALCOTT



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

The following is from Hawthorne's 1852 THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE and describes the situation at the communitarian experiment during this period:

The ["Blithedale"] Community were now beginning to form their permanent plans. One of our purposes was to erect a Phalanstery (as I think we called it, after Fourier; but the phraseology of those days is not very fresh in my remembrance) where the great and general family should have its abiding-place. Individual members, too, who made it a point of religion to preserve the sanctity of an exclusive home, were selecting sites for their cottages, by the wood-side, or on the breezy swells, or in the sheltered nook of some little valley, according as their taste might lean towards snugness or the picturesque. Altogether, by projecting our minds outward, we had imparted a show of novelty to existence, and contemplated it as hopefully as if the soil, beneath our feet, had not been fathom-deep with the dust of deluded generations, on every one of which, as on ourselves, the world had imposed itself as a hitherto unwedded bride.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

[Professor Walter Roy Harding](#). THE DAYS OF HENRY THOREAU: A BIOGRAPHY. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966; enlarged and corrected edition, NY: Dover, 1982; Princeton NJ: Princeton UP, 1992:

"A Review From Professor Ross's Seminar"

Chapter 10 (1845-1847) -[Thoreau](#) began building his hut on [Emerson](#)'s newly purchased land adjacent to [Walden Pond](#). [Ellery Channing](#), who had advised Thoreau to move there and begin "the grand process of devouring himself alive," described the cabin as "a wooden inkstand."

When he moved in on July 4, 1845, he furnished it very simply and added a fireplace in the fall.

The site was not, as has been popularly presumed, isolated. "Hardly a day went by" when Thoreau didn't have visitors such as his sister and mother, [Channing](#), [Emerson](#), [Bronson Alcott](#) and other locals, or go to town himself.

He completed the first drafts of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) and the first two drafts of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) as well as making several lyceum appearances in which he discussed [Thomas Carlyle](#) and his Walden experiment.

But by 1847 Thoreau felt he had "exhausted the benefits of life there" and moved in with the Emerson family while Ralph Waldo was in Europe. However, Thoreau considered the Walden experiment a "resounding success" in which he advanced "confidently in the direction of his dreams."

(Robert L. Lace, January-March 1986)





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

The last person named Estabrook from Estabrook Woods had lived (and presumably died) at the old Paul Adams farm. Her name had been Rebecca. The first Estabrook (indeed probably the first settler) in Estabrook Woods had been Thomas Estabrook, who had gone there with his bride from the Spencer Brook Valley in the 1680s to build a home next to what was probably even then a track, now referred to as the old Estabrook road. This drawing of the old place near [Concord](#) was created during the 1850s, we suppose by a neighbor:



The drawing actually is in color: it's at the Concord Museum, if you want to see it. The drawing, you will notice, features on the right a fresh pile of manure outside the stall windows. This old Paul Adams Place on the old Estabrook Road, as a farmstead (not just as the cellar hole that remains visible as a dent in the earth), would according to the Massachusetts Historic Commission constitute a National Register-eligible Historic Site. The old cellar hole is up the hill from the causeway, on the right just after the road bends to the south to pass by Bateman's Pond. There are some old fruit trees on the right side of the road and the cellar dent is just behind them. The old farm well shown in the drawing is still in existence, in a bunch of puckerbrush out back. Stone walls now border both sides of this old road, which is the road about which [Ellery Channing](#) was writing at about this point in time the poem "The Lonely Road," while this poet-wannabee was in residence in a rental cottage on Punkatasset Hill:

No track had worn the lone deserted road,
Save where the Fox had leapt from wall to wall;
There were the swelling, glittering piles of snow,
Up even with the walls, and save the Crow
Who lately had been pecking Barberries,
No other signs of life beyond ourselves.

We strayed along, beneath our feet the lane
Creaked at each pace, and soon we stood content
Where the old cellar of the house had been,
Out of which now a fruit-tree wags its top.

Some scraggy orchards hem the landscape round,
A forest of sad Apple-trees unpruned,
And then a newer orchard pet of him,
Who in his dotage kept this lonely place.

In this wild scene, and shut-in Orchard dell,
Men like ourselves, once dwelt by roaring fires,
Loved this still spot, nor had a further wish.

A little wall half falling bounds a square
Where choicer fruit-trees showed the Garden's pride,
Now crimsoned by the Sumach, whose red cones
Displace the colors of the cultured growth.

I know not how it is, that in these scenes



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There is a desolation so complete,
It tarries with me after I have passed,
And the dense growth of woodland, or a sight
Of distant Cottages or landscapes wide,
Cannot obscure the dreary, cheerless thought.

But why should I remember those once there,
And think of childish voices, or that kind
Caressing hands of tender parents gone,
Have twined themselves in that soft golden hair,
All fled, and silent as an unlit Cave.

Why should I stand and muse upon their lives,
Who for me truly never had more life,
Than in the glancing mind's eye; or in Fancy
Wear this irrespective form, thus fleeting.

I people the void scene with Fancy's eye,
Her children do not live too long for me,
They vibrate in the house whose walls I rear,
The mansions as themselves, the fugitives
Of my Intent in this soft Winter day.

Nor will I scatter these faint images,
Idle as shadows that the tall reeds cast
Over the silent ice, beneath the moon,
For in these lonely haunts where Fancy dwells,
And evermore creating weaves a veil
In which all this that we call life abides,
There must be deep retirement from the day,
And in these shadowy vistas we shall meet,
Sometime the very Phantom of ourselves.—

A long Farewell, thou dim and silent spot,
Where serious Winter sleeps, or the soft hour,
Of some half dreamy Autumn afternoon;
And may no idle feet tread thy domain,
But only men to Contemplation vowed,
Still as ourselves, creators of the Past.



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March 5, Wednesday: [David Greene Haskins, Jr.](#) was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts.

[Ellery Channing](#) wrote to [Henry Thoreau](#) in New-York and, interestingly, in this letter presumed some acquaintance not only on his own part but also on Thoreau's part with the writings of Blaise Pascal: "That baker, —Hecker, who used to live on two crackers a day I have not seen, nor Black, nor Vathek, nor Danedaz, nor Rynders, or any of Emerson's old cronies, excepting James, a little fat, rosy Swedenborgian amateur, with the look of a broker & the brains & heart of a Pascal."



*New York March 5, 45
My dear Thoreau—
The hand-writing of your letter
is so miserable, that I am not sure I have made
it out. If I have it seems to me you are the same
old sixpence you used to be, rather rusty, but a genuine
piece.
I see nothing for you in this earth but that
field which I once christened "Briars"; go out
upon that, build yourself a hut, & there begin the
grand process of devouring yourself alive. I see no
alternative, no other hope for you. Eat yourself
up; you will eat nobody else, nor anything else.
Concord is just as good a place as any
other; there are indeed, more people in the streets
of that village, than in the streets of this. This is
a singularly muddy town; muddy, solitary, & silent.
They tell us, it is March; it has been*



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all March in this place, since I came. It is much warmer now, than it was last November, foggy, rainy, stupefactive weather indeed.

In your line,

I have not done a great deal since I arrived here; I do not mean the Pencil line, but the Staten Island line, having been there once, to walk on a beach by the Telegraph, but did not visit the scene of your dominical duties. Staten Island is very distant from No. 30 Ann St.

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I saw polite William Emerson in November last but have not caught any glimpse of him since then. I am as usual suffering the various alternations from agony to despair, from hope to fear, from pain to pleasure. Such wretched one-sided productions as you, know nothing of the universal man; you may think yourself well off.

That baker, — Hecker, who used to live on two crackers a day I have not seen, nor Black, nor Vathek, nor Danedaz, nor Rynders, or any of Emerson's old cronies, excepting James, a little fat, rosy Swedenborgian amateur, with the look of a broker & the brains & heart of a Pascal.— W^m Channing I see nothing of him; he is the dupe of good feelings, & I have all-too-many of these now.

I have seen something of your friends, Waldo, and Tapp[a]n, & have also seen our good man "McKean", the keeper of that stupid place the "Mercantile Library". I have been able to find there no book which I should like to read.

H. S. MCKEAN

Respecting the country about this city, there is a walk at Brooklyn rather pleasing, to ascend upon the high ground, & look at the distant Ocean. This, is a very agreeable sight. I have been four miles up the island in addition, where I saw, the bay; it looked very well, and appeared to be in good spirits.

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I should be pleased to hear from Kamkatscha occasion[] ally; my last advices from the Polar Bear are getting stale. In addition to this, I find that my Corresponding members at Van Dieman's land, have wandered into



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limbo. I acknowledge that I have not lately corresponded very much with that section.

I hear occasionally from the World; everything seems to be promising in that quarter, business is flourishing, & the people are in good spirits. I feel convinced that the Earth has less claims to our regard, than formerly; these mild winters deserve a severe censure; But I am well aware that the Earth will talk about the necessity of routine, taxes, &c. On the whole, it is best not to complain without necessity.

Mumbo Jumbo is recovering from his attack of sore eyes, & will soon be out, in a pair of canvas trousers, scarlet jackets, & cocked hat. I understand he intends to demolish all the remaining species of Fetishism at a meal; I think it is probable it will vomit him. I am sorry to say, that Roly-Poly has received intelligence of the death of his only daughter, Maria; this will be a terrible wound to his paternal heart. I saw Teufelsdröck a few days since; he is wretchedly poor, has an attack of the colic, & expects to get better immediately. He said a few words to me, about you. Says he, that fellow Thoreau might be something, if he would only take a journey through the "Everlasting No", thence for the North Pole.

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"By God", said the old Clothes-bag "warming up", I should like to take that fellow out into the Everlasting No, & explode him like a bomb-shell; he would make a loud report. He needs the Blumine flower business; that would be his salvation. He is too dry, too confused, too chalky, too concrete. I want to get him into my fingers. It would be fun to see him pick himself up". I "camped" the old fellow in a majestic style.

{written perpendicularly to text in center of page:

Postmark: Single

BOSTON

MAR 3

MASS

Address: Henry Thoreau

Concord.

Mass.}

Does that execrable compound of Sawdust & stagnation, Alcott still prose about nothing, & that nutmeg-grater



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*of a Hosmer yet shriek about nothing, — does anybody
still think of coming to Concord to live, I mean new people?
If they do, let them beware of you philosophers.
Ever yrs my dear Thoreau
WEC
{written upside down: W E. Channing}*

Spring: [Ellery Channing](#) quit his job on [Horace Greeley](#)'s [New-York Tribune](#) and came back to Concord, living with the Emersons and going on walks with [Waldo](#) — while shopping for a farm.



"What a gump!...On the whole, he is but little better than an idiot. He should have been whipt often and soundly in his boyhood; and as he escaped such wholesome discipline then, it might be well to bestow it now."

— [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), about [Ellery Channing](#)



February: The [Ellery Channings](#) decided to try farming in Massachusetts —because it was something this feckless provider had not failed at yet— rather than newspapering in New-York.

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April 30, Wednesday: The [Ellery Channings](#) had agreed to pay the Browns of Concord \$600.⁰⁰ for 20 acres of woods and fields on the slope of Ponkawtasset Hill, a mile out of Concord on the Carlisle road, and was shopping for a laborer to construct a cottage and barn on this land for them. [Waldo Emerson](#) recorded “Ellery has just bought his land. [Mr. Thoreau](#) is building himself a solitary house by [Walden Pond](#).”



[EMERSON'S SHANTY](#)
[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)



[Brigham Young](#) “got married with” Emmeline Free.



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Two uncles and his father having died leaving him as their heir, [William Chapman Hewitson](#) suddenly found himself with significant wealth (he would take up residence at Hampstead and devote himself to scientific research, and three years later would be in residence in a home specially designed for him by the architect John Dobson in Oatlands in Surrey near the Thames River leading into London).



An Elizabethan royal palace had been nearby the home Hewitson would have constructed for him at Oatlands, although due to demolitions and fires over the centuries, other smaller houses had taken the place of the regal structure that had been depicted on this 1825 meat platter:



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Early May: [Henry Thoreau](#) hired a horse and pulled stumps in [Waldo Emerson](#)'s 11-acre plot, for firewood as well as to clear it, and then plowed 2¹/₂ acres to plant in *Phaseolus vulgaris* var. *humilis* common small navy pea bush white beans.¹³ This clearing of the exhausted farmland beyond the Concord Alms House and Poor Farm, which had been timbered some time before and had lain fallow for some 17 years partly restoring its fertility, was Thoreau's deal with Emerson by which he would be allowed to build a cabin for his occupancy in Emerson's woodlot where it touched on [Walden Pond](#). Thoreau then bought the shanty of a departing family



of impoverished Irish immigrants, the [James Collinses](#) who were moving on at the completion of work on the railway, standing near the new tracks, for its materials, tore it apart, and hauled the recovered boards some rods

13. Brad Dean has calculated that to plant 7 miles of rows, each row 15 rods in length, spaced 3 feet apart, the dimensions of the beanfield would have been 247.5 by 447 feet or 110,632.5 square feet, and that this amounts to 2.534 acres or slightly over a hectare.

These are beans that ripen prior to harvest and are threshed dry from the pods. Only the ripe seeds reach market. The main types are grown as follows: (1) the Pea or Navy which Henry was growing; (2) Medium type, which includes Pinto, Great Northern, Sutter, Pink Bayo, and Small Red or Mexican Red; (3) Kidney; and (4) Marrow. Seeds vary in size from about 1/3-inch long in Thoreau's pea or navy bean to 3/4-inch in the Kidney. All these plants are of bush type. They are usually cut or pulled when most pods are ripe, and then vines and pods are allowed to dry before threshing. This is a bean thought to have originated in Central America from southern Mexico to Guatemala and Honduras. Evidence of the common bean has been found in two widely separated places. Large seeded common beans were found at Callejon de Hualylas in Peru, and small seeded common beans were found in the Tehuacan Valley in Mexico, with both finds carbon-dating as earlier than 5,000 BCE. This crop is associated with the maize and squash culture which predominated in pre-Columbian tropical America. In our post-Columbian era this bean has come to be grown in all areas of the world.

However, that's only the literal bean, not the metaphorical or literary bean, and once upon a time in Europe, there had been a form of commercial counting in use very much like the abacus of the East, in which beans were used. In those days to "know how many beans make up five" was to be commercially numerate. –Sort of like today knowing how to count one's change. It might be suggested therefore that Thoreau's determination to know beans was a play upon this archaic usage in which not knowing one's beans amounted to innumeracy, and in addition a play upon the common accusation "You don't know beans about xxxxx!" It might also be suggested that this is scatological humor similar to Shakespeare's — the following is from his "Comedy of Errors":

A man may break a word with you sir; and words are but wind;
Ay, and break it in your face, so he break it not behind.



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along the hilltop and down to [Walden Pond](#) on a hand-cart of some sort, to dry in the sun:



A 19th-Century Irish shanty in the Merrimack Valley

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

THE BEANFIELD



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WALDEN: At length, in the beginning of May, with the help of some of my acquaintances, rather to improve so good an occasion for neighborliness than from any necessity, I set up the frame of my house. No man was ever more honored in the character of his raisers than I. They are destined, I trust, to assist at the raising of loftier structures one day. I began to occupy my house on the 4th of July, as soon as it was boarded and roofed, for the boards were carefully feather-edged and lapped, so that it was perfectly impervious to rain; but before boarding I laid the foundation of a chimney at one end, bringing two cartloads of stones up the hill from the pond in my arms. I built the chimney after my hoeing in the fall, before a fire became necessary for warmth, doing my cooking in the mean while out of doors on the ground, early in the morning; which mode I still think is in some respects more convenient and agreeable than the usual one. When it stormed before my bread was baked, I fixed a few boards over the fire, and sat under them to watch my loaf, and passed some pleasant hours in that way. In those days, when my hands were much employed, I read but little, but the least scraps of paper which lay on the ground, my holder, or tablecloth, afforded me as much entertainment, in fact answered the same purpose as the Iliad.

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WALDEN

BRONSON ALCOTT

ELLERY CHANNING

WALDO EMERSON

EDMUND HOSMER

EDMUND HOSMER, JR

JOHN HOSMER

ANDREW HOSMER

JAMES BURRILL CURTIS

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

The “acquaintances” who participated in this rustic “raising”¹⁴ ceremony on the [Walden Pond](#) shore were:

- [Bronson Alcott](#)
- [Ellery Channing](#)
- [Waldo Emerson](#)
- [Edmund Hosmer](#)
- [Hosmer](#)’s sons [Edmund Hosmer, Jr.](#), John Hosmer, and Andrew Hosmer



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- the brothers [George William Curtis](#) and [James Burrill Curtis](#)



[Emerson](#) of course resided in the Coolidge mansion just on the other side of the poorhouse farm (Gleason F7) and was the owner of the woodlot in which this shanty was being erected, and would be the owner of that shanty, and the Curtis brothers, having come from [Brook Farm](#) to Ponkawtasset Hill (Gleason D7) a year earlier, and the [Alcotts](#), having only recently returned to [Concord](#) from their [Fruitlands](#) near [Harvard, Massachusetts](#) to reside near the [Edmund Hosmer](#) home on a road leading toward Lincoln (Gleason G9/66), were of course quite conveniently situated to come over to the pond for this neighborly little ceremony.



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14. "No man was ever more honored in the character of his raisers than I." I would maintain that [WALDEN](#) is chock-full of references to the gallows, references that nowadays we don't "get" simply because we no longer live in the sort of culture, in which public execution is an unchallenged holiday convention. For instance, I would maintain that this particular paragraph, apparently so innocent, includes an implicit reference to being [hanged](#). While the raisers of a house frame are the friends and neighbors who push with poles and pull with ropes as a frame is being lifted from its temporary horizontal position to its permanent vertical position, the raisers of a person may by extension be the outraged citizens who are pulling on the rope that elevates a criminal by the neck toward the extending horizontal branch of a tree. This is not the sort of gallows humor which would have gone unnoticed in the first half of the 19th Century, not in America it wouldn't. This is an implicit reference to [Thoreau's](#) [Huguenot](#) ancestors of honored memory, who rather than tugging together upon the indecent public end of that hanging rope, in *la belle France*, had sometimes found themselves tugging alone upon the noose at the decent end. [But there is more on this topic at:](#)



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WALDEN: It was a singular experience that long acquaintance which I cultivated with beans, what with planting, and hoeing, and harvesting, and threshing, and picking over, and selling them, -the last was the hardest of all,- I might add eating, for I did taste. I was determined to know beans. When they were growing, I used to hoe from five o'clock in the morning till noon, and commonly spent the rest of the day about other affairs. Consider the intimate and curious acquaintance one makes with various kinds of weeds, -it will bear some iteration in the account, for there was no little iteration in the labor,- disturbing their delicate organizations so ruthlessly, and making such invidious distinctions with his hoe, levelling whole ranks of one species, and sedulously cultivating another. That's Roman wormwood, -that's pigweed, -that's sorrel, -that's piper-grass, -have at him, chop him up, turn his roots upward to the sun, don't let him have a fibre in the shade, if you do he'll turn himself t'other side up and be as green as a leek in two days. A long war, not with cranes, but with weeds, those Trojans who had sun and rain and dews on their side. Daily the beans saw me come to their rescue armed with a hoe, and thin the ranks of their enemies, filling up the trenches with weedy dead.

Many a lusty crest-waving Hector, that towered a whole foot above his crowding comrades, fell before my weapon and rolled in the dust.

Those summer days which some of my contemporaries devoted to the fine arts in Boston or Rome, and others to contemplation in India, and others to trade in London or New York, I thus, with the other farmers of New England, devoted to husbandry. Not that I wanted beans to eat, for I am by nature a Pythagorean, so as far as beans are concerned, whether they mean porridge or voting, and exchanged them for rice; but, perchance, as some must work in fields if only for the sake of tropes and expression, to serve a parable-maker one day. It was on the whole a rare amusement, which, continued too long, might have become a dissipation. Though I gave them no manure, and did not hoe them all once, I hoed them unusually well as far as I went, and was paid for it in the end, "there being in truth," as Evelyn says, "no compost or lætation whatsoever comparable to this continual motion, repastination, and turning of the mould with the spade." "The earth," he adds elsewhere, "especially if fresh, has a certain magnetism in it, by which it attracts the salt, power, or virtue (call it either) which gives it life, and is the logic of all the labor and stir we keep about it, to sustain us; all dungings and other sordid temperings being but the vicars succedaneous to this improvement." Moreover, this being one of those "worn-out and exhausted lay fields which enjoy their sabbath," had perchance, as Sir Kenelm Digby thinks likely, attracted "vital spirits" from the air. I harvested twelve bushels of beans.



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But to be more particular; for it is complained that Mr. Colman has reported chiefly the expensive experiments of gentlemen farmers; my outgoes were,-

For a hoe,	\$0 54
Ploughing, harrowing, and furrowing, ...	7 50, Too much.
Beans for seed,	3 12 ¹ / ₂
Potatoes “	1 33
Peas “	0 40
Turnip seed,	0 06
White line for crow fence,	0 02
Horse cultivator and boy three hours, ...	1 00
Horse and cart to get crop,	0 75

In all,\$14 72¹/₂

My income was, (patrem familias vendacem, non emacem esse oportet,) from

Nine bushels and twelve quarts of beans sold,	\$16 94
Five “ large potatoes,	2 50
Nine “ small “	2 25
Grass,	1 00
Stalks,	0 75

In all,\$23 44

Leaving a pecuniary profit, as I have elsewhere said, of \$8 71¹/₂.

This is the result of my experience in raising beans. Plant the common small white bush bean about the first of June, in rows three feet by eighteen inches apart, being careful to select fresh round and unmixed seed. First look out for worms, and supply vacancies by planting anew. Then look out for woodchucks, if it is an exposed place, for they will nibble off the earliest tender leaves almost clean as they go; and again, when the young tendrils make their appearance, they have notice of it, and will shear them off with both buds and young pods, sitting erect like a squirrel. but above all harvest as early as possible, if you would escape frosts and have a fair and saleable crop; you may save much loss by this means.



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This further experience also I gained. I said to myself, I will not plant beans and corn with so much industry another summer, but such seeds, if the seed is not lost, as sincerity, truth, simplicity, faith, innocence, and the like, and see if they will not grow in this soil, even with less toil and manurance, and sustain me, for surely it has not been exhausted for these crops. Alas! I said this to myself; but now another summer is gone, and another, and another, and I am obliged to say to you, Reader, that the seeds which I planted, if indeed they were the seeds of those virtues, were wormeaten or had lost their vitality, and so did not come up. Commonly men will only be brave as their fathers were brave, or timid. This generation is very sure to plant corn and beans each new year precisely as the Indians did centuries ago and taught the first settlers to do, as if there were a fate in it. I saw an old man the other day, to my astonishment, making the holes with a hoe for the seventieth time at least, and not for himself to lie down in! But why should not the New Englander try new adventures, and not lay so much stress on his grain, his potato and grass crop, and his orchards? -raise other crops than these? Why concern ourselves so much about our beans for seed, and not be concerned at all about a new generation of men? We should really be fed and cheered if when we met a man we were sure to see that some of the qualities which I have named, which we all prize more than those other productions, but which are for the most part broadcast and floating in the air, had taken root and grown in him. Here comes such a subtle and ineffable quality, for instance, as truth or justice, though the slightest amount or new variety of it, along the road. Our ambassadors should be instructed to send home such seeds as these, and Congress help to distribute them over all the land. We should never stand upon ceremony with sincerity.

We should never cheat and insult and banish one another by our meanness, if there were present the kernel of worth and friendliness. We should not meet thus in haste. Most men I do not meet at all, for they seem not to have time; they are busy about their beans. We would not deal with a man thus plodding ever, leaning on a hoe or a spade as a staff between his work, not as a mushroom, but partially risen out of the earth, something more than erect, like swallows alighted and walking on the ground.-

“And as he spake, his wings would now and then
Spread, as he meant to fly, then close again,”

so that we should suspect that we might be conversing with an angel. Bread may not always nourish us; but it always does us good, it even takes stiffness out of our joints, and makes us supple and buoyant, when we knew not what ailed us, to recognize any generosity in man or Nature, to share any unmixed and heroic joy.

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Ancient poetry and mythology suggest, at least, that husbandry was once a sacred art; but it is pursued with irreverent haste and heedlessness by us, our object being to have large farms and large crops merely. We have no festival, nor procession, nor ceremony, not excepting our Cattle-shows and so called Thanksgivings, by which the farmer expresses a sense of the sacredness of his calling, or is reminded of its sacred origin. It is the premium and the feast which tempt him. He sacrifices not to Ceres and the Terrestrial Jove, but to the infernal Plutus rather. By avarice and selfishness, and a grovelling habit, from which none of us is free, of regarding the soil as property, or the means of acquiring property chiefly, the landscape is deformed, husbandry is degraded with us, and the farmer leads the meanest of lives.

He knows Nature but as a robber. Cato says that the profits of agriculture are particularly pious or just, (*maximeque pius quæstus*,) and according to Varro the old Romans "called the same earth Mother and Ceres, and thought that they who cultivated it led a pious and useful life, and that they alone were left of the race of King Saturn."

We are wont to forget that the sun looks on our cultivated fields and on the prairies and forests without distinction. They all reflect and absorb his rays alike, and the former make but a small part of the glorious picture which he beholds in his daily course. In his view the earth is all equally cultivated like a garden. Therefore we should receive the benefit of his light and heat with a corresponding trust and magnanimity. What though I value the seed of these beans, and harvest that in the fall of the year? This broad field which I have looked at so long looks not to me as the principal cultivator, but away from me to influences more genial to it, which water and make it green. These beans have results which are not harvested by me. Do they not grow for woodchucks partly? The ear of wheat, (in Latin *spica*," obsolete *specā*, from *spe*, hope,) should not be the only hope of the husbandman; its kernel or grain (*granum*, from *gerendo*, bearing,) is not all that it bears. How, then, can our harvest fail? Shall I not rejoice also at the abundance of the weeds whose seeds are the granary of the birds? It matters little comparatively whether the fields fill the farmer's barns. The true husbandman will cease from anxiety, as the squirrels manifest no concern whether the woods will bear chestnuts this year or not, and finish his labor with every day, relinquishing all claim to the produce of his fields, and sacrificing in his mind not only his first but his last fruits also.

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July 9, Wednesday: [Theophilus Brown](#) and Sarah Ann Knowlton were wed in Worcester, Massachusetts. Their children would be William Theophilus Brown, born December 15, 1846, Alice Brown, born 1852, and Fanny Brown, who would die a year after her birth.

On the night of July 9th, [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) used the *Pond Lily* to help others search for the body of a [suicide](#), a Miss [Martha Emmeline Hunt](#) about 19 years of age who had been superintendent of one of the district schools, with 60 pupils.¹⁵ She had left her bonnet and shoes and handkerchief at a spot

Not far from this spot, lay an old, leaky punt, drawn up on the oozy river-side, and generally half-full of water. It served the angler to go in quest of pickerel, or the sportsman to pick up his wild-ducks. Setting this crazy barque afloat, I seated myself in the stern, with the paddle, while Hollingsworth sat in the bows, with the hooked pole, and Silas Foster amidships, with a hay-rake.

“It puts me in mind of my young days,” remarked Silas, “when I used to steal out of bed to go bobbing for horn-pouts and eels. Heigh-ho! — well! — life and death together make sad work for us all. Then, I was a boy, bobbing for fish; and now I am getting to be an old fellow, and here I be, groping for a dead body! I tell you what, lads, if I thought anything had really happened to Zenobia, I should feel kind o’ sorrowful.”

on the bank of the river some ways below the bridge, a half a mile across a pasture from her parents’ home,

15. During his summer vacation in Concord in 1853, the Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) was boarding with some Misses Hunt at a pleasant cottage on Ponkawtasset Hill and they informed him that they had been Martha’s cousins, and were concerned that [George William Curtis](#), in his [HOMES OF AMERICAN AUTHORS](#), “had suggested that Martha’s suicide was due to the contrast between her transcendental ideals and the coarseness of her home.” Conway continued, in his late-life autobiography, that “They described the family of their cousin as educated people. One of these sisters walked with me to the river and pointed out all the places connected with the tragedy, and some years later another cousin drowned herself there.”

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early that morning, and to have walked to and fro on the bank for several hours.



This was a sexual opportunity not to be missed, and every male in Concord who had heard of the matter had thronged to the river bank (but apparently [Henry Thoreau](#) was out in his cabin on the pond, behaving himself).

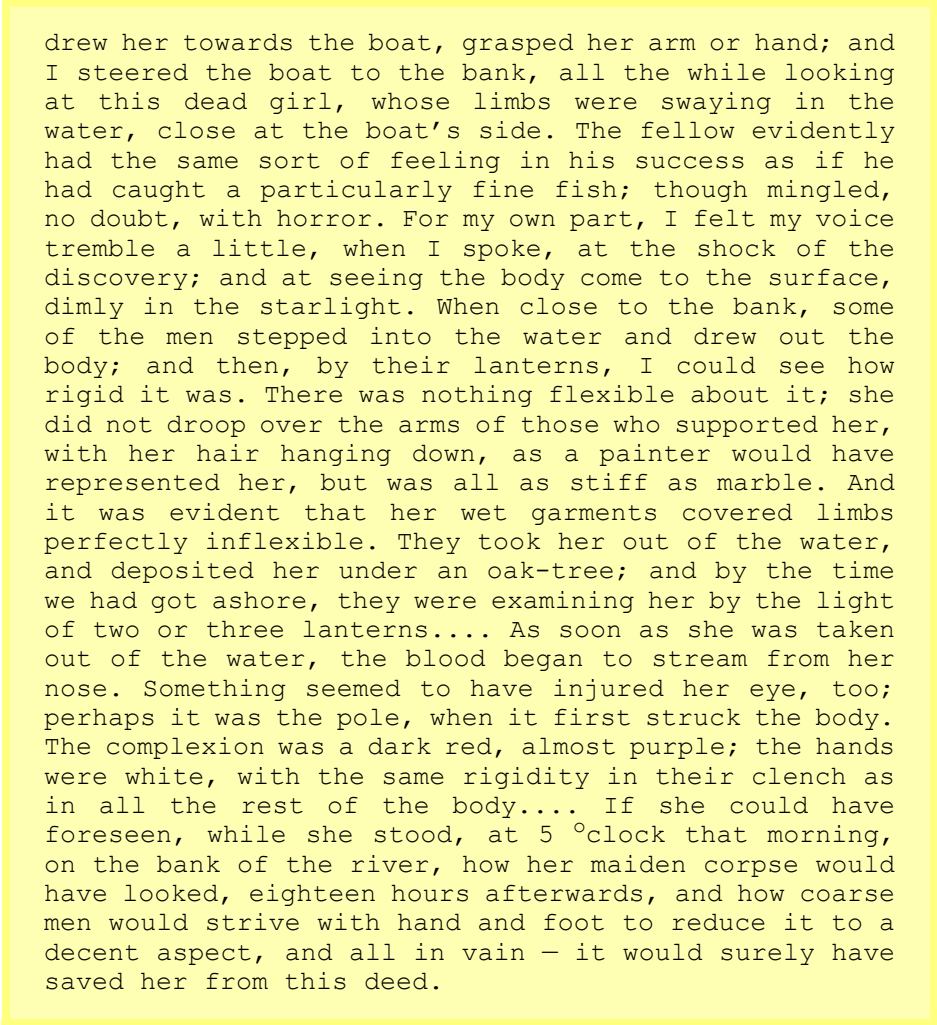


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In the *Pond Lily*, the young man with the long pole



drew her towards the boat, grasped her arm or hand; and I steered the boat to the bank, all the while looking at this dead girl, whose limbs were swaying in the water, close at the boat's side. The fellow evidently had the same sort of feeling in his success as if he had caught a particularly fine fish; though mingled, no doubt, with horror. For my own part, I felt my voice tremble a little, when I spoke, at the shock of the discovery; and at seeing the body come to the surface, dimly in the starlight. When close to the bank, some of the men stepped into the water and drew out the body; and then, by their lanterns, I could see how rigid it was. There was nothing flexible about it; she did not droop over the arms of those who supported her, with her hair hanging down, as a painter would have represented her, but was all as stiff as marble. And it was evident that her wet garments covered limbs perfectly inflexible. They took her out of the water, and deposited her under an oak-tree; and by the time we had got ashore, they were examining her by the light of two or three lanterns.... As soon as she was taken out of the water, the blood began to stream from her nose. Something seemed to have injured her eye, too; perhaps it was the pole, when it first struck the body. The complexion was a dark red, almost purple; the hands were white, with the same rigidity in their clench as in all the rest of the body.... If she could have foreseen, while she stood, at 5 °clock that morning, on the bank of the river, how her maiden corpse would have looked, eighteen hours afterwards, and how coarse men would strive with hand and foot to reduce it to a decent aspect, and all in vain – it would surely have saved her from this deed.

My personal interpretation of what these eager male hookers were up to, on the river that night, is that, when their pole finally hooked the corpse in an eye socket, and it was hauled to the surface, what [Nathaniel](#) got a good look at, and perhaps a feel of, was his ideal of the perfectly passive female body. The realization of this sexual ideal of True Womanhood proved to be much too much for him:

I never saw or imagined a spectacle of such perfect horror.

David Buttrick fainted, but an old carpenter commented that he would as lief handle dead bodies as living ones, and the men gathered around and twisted and stomped on the girl's limbs locked in *rigor mortis* in a prolonged pretense that they were forcing her to assume a proper posture for the dead. The family told the hookers who had just been thus pawing the body that the poor girl had attempted to drown herself before, by walking into the river up to her chin, but that a sister had gotten her to come back out of the water. Hawthorne would use

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10 paragraphs of his journal of this day in THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE, as an account of the recovery of the body of the suicide “Zenobia”¹⁶ who had drowned as an “Arcadian affectation,” omitting the unromantic description of the continuous flow of blood from the nose (a description which I also omitted, above). Hawthorne also changed the grapple wound from the eye socket to the “breast.”¹⁷

Since a “young brother of the deceased, apparently about twelve or fourteen years old” was on the bank watching this, we may presume that the hooking party was being witnessed by Daniel Otis Hunt, who had been born in 1831.

When they got the makeshift bier back to the Hunt farmhouses on Punkatasset Hill, Mrs. Maria Pratt and others laid the body out for its interment.



16. [Margaret Fuller](#) was held by authorities in the 19th Century to have evinced a death wish, for, staring across the gap of raging surf at the dead bodies of her husband and her baby stretched upon the beach, drowned one after the other in the attempt to get to shore, she could not force herself to leap into the ocean, and was still on the ship clutching the mast when it broke up in the waves. And, she had been a school superintendent, **just** like this Concord River suicide Martha Hunt!


17. Were [Margaret](#)'s breasts **that** fascinating, in spite of her twisted spine?



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Here is a puzzle. Where is the body of Martha Emmeline [Hunt](#) buried? Was there a burial service? (If this event had occurred in England, we know from the act of July 4, 1823  what would have needed to have happened to such a corpse: the body of the suicide could be interred in a churchyard or public burial place only if such interment occurred within 24 hours of the coroner's inquest and certificate, took place after 9PM and before midnight, and was bereft of any accompanying Christian religious observance. We know, further, that in the case of an English suicide, any goods and chattels of the deceased would be forfeit to the Crown. We need to research and discover how American law bore on this circumstance, and what happened specifically in Concord.)

Here then is [Hawthorne](#)'s entry in his AMERICAN NOTEBOOKS, as rendered into poetry by Robert Peters:

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The Drowned Girl

I

We caused the boat to float
once or twice past the spot
where the bonnet was found.
The poles or the rake caught
in bunches of water-weed, which
in the star-light, looked like
garments. All this time
persons on the bank were anxiously
waiting.

II

'What's this?' cried he.
I suppose the same electric shock
went through everybody in the boat.
'Yes, I've got her!'

III

I felt my voice tremble
at the first shock of
seeing the body come
to the surface, dimly
in the star-light.

IV

I could see how rigid
she was. She did not droop
over the arms of those who
supported her, with her hair
hanging down, but was all
stiff, as marble.
They examined her
by the light of two or three lanterns.
Her arms had stiffened
and were bent before her.
She was the very image of death-agony.

V

They deposited her under an oak-tree.
When the men tried to compose her figure,
her arms would return to that same position.
One of the men put his foot upon
her arm, for the purpose of reducing it
by her side; but, in a moment, it rose again.
Blood began to stream from her nose.
Something had injured her eye, too.
Perhaps it was the pole, when it first
struck the body. The complexion
was a dark red, almost purple. The hands
were white, with the same rigidity in
their clench as in all the rest of the body.
Two of the men got water and washed away the
blood from her face. But it flowed and flowed
and continued to flow.



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Hawthorne also had a few choice words to say about his rowing companion on this expedition, Ellery:



"What a gump!...On the whole, he is but little better than an idiot. He should have been whipt often and soundly in his boyhood; and as he escaped such wholesome discipline then, it might be well to bestow it now."

— Nathaniel Hawthorne, about Ellery Channing



Summer: James Burrill Curtis spent the summer of this year (as in the previous year) studying and farming at Concord. He had made friends with Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Henry Thoreau.

Toward the end of this summer, it would appear, Ellery Channing would be sleeping not in his own rental cottage on Punkatasset Hill but under Henry's cot in Thoreau's (Emerson's) shanty at Walden Pond.¹⁸

WALDEN: I took a poet to board for a fortnight about those times, which caused me to be put to it for room. He brought his own knife, though I had two, and we used to scour them by thrusting them into the earth. He shared with me the labors of cooking. I was pleased to see my work rising so square and solid by degrees, and reflected, that, if it proceeded slowly, it was calculated to endure a long time. The chimney is to some extent an independent structure, standing on the ground and rising through the house to the heavens; even after the house is burned it still stands sometimes, and its importance and independence are apparent. This was toward the end of summer. It was now November.

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18. Thoreau's shanty measured but 10' x 15'. Is that big enough for two people? In 1620, when the English settlers constructed their initial post-and-beam homes at Plymouth, these family dwellings commonly consisted of one room with a loft, and commonly measured 12' x 14'. In 1770, when Thomas Jefferson began the 13-year building project of his mansion at Monticello, he first had his slaves construct a 14' x 15' brick building in which he would live while supervising the construction. During his 5-year stay in the house, he had his slaves prepare a 2nd floor bedroom and then brought his new bride to live there. After the great San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906 the US Army built 5,610 tiny redwood and fir "Relief Houses" as homes for nearly 20,000 refugees. The refugee shacks, as they came to be known, were available in three sizes, the most common being 10' x 14'. (By late 1908, most of the refugees had been relocated and the shacks were being carted by horse to locations around the city and converted into rental cottages, garages, storage spaces, and shops.)



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The furniture of the shanty, some of which [Thoreau](#) made himself, consisted of:

- bed
- 3-legged table
- desk
- three chairs
- looking-glass three inches in diameter
- pair of tongs and andirons
- kettle
- skillet
- frying-pan
- dipper
- wash-bowl
- two knives and forks
- three plates
- one cup
- one spoon
- jug for oil
- jug for molasses
- japanned lamp

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

Dwight MacKerron has made an attempt to reformat some of the mentions in [WALDEN](#), as poetry:

When I return to my house I find
that visitors have been there and left
their cards,
a bunch of flowers,
a wreath of evergreen,
a name in pencil on a yellow walnut leaf or a chip.

They who come rarely to the woods
take some little piece of the forest



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into their hands
to play with by the way.

One has peeled a willow wand,
woven it into a ring,
and dropped it on my table.
I could always tell
if visitors had called
in my absence,
either by the bended twigs or grass,
or the print of their shoes,
some slight trace left,
as a flower dropped,
or a bunch of grass plucked
and thrown away,
even as far off as the railroad.

Here is another such attempt by Dwight to render the prose of WALDEN into poetry:

Evening Song

In warm evenings I frequently sat in the boat
playing the flute, and saw the perch,
which I seemed to have charmed,
hovering around me, and the moon
travelling over the ribbed bottom,
strewn with the wrecks of the forest.

Formerly I had come to this pond,
from time to time, in dark summer nights,
with a companion,
and making a fire close to the water's edge,
which we thought attracted the fishes,
we caught pouts with a bunch of worms strung on a thread;
and when we had done, far in the night,
threw the burning brands high into the air like skyrockets,
which, coming down into the pond, were quenched
with a loud hissing, and we were
suddenly groping in total darkness.

Through this, whistling a tune,
we took our way to the haunts of men again.
But now I had made my home by the shore.

Sometimes, after staying in a village parlor
till the family had all retired,
I have returned to the woods, and,
partly with a view to the next day's dinner,
spent the hours of midnight fishing from a boat by moonlight,
serenaded by owls and foxes,
and hearing, from time to time,
the creaking note of some unknown bird close at hand.

Anchored in forty feet of water,
and twenty or thirty rods from the shore,
surrounded sometimes by thousands of small perch and shiners,
dimpling the surface with their tails in the moonlight,
and communicating
by a long flaxen line
with mysterious nocturnal fishes
which had their dwelling forty feet below,
or sometimes dragging sixty feet of line
as I drifted in the gentle night breeze,
now and then feeling a slight vibration



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along it,
some life prowling about its extremity,
of dull uncertain blundering purpose there,
and slow to make up its mind.
At length you slowly raise,
pulling hand over hand, some horned pout
squeaking and squirming to the upper air.

It was very queer,
especially in dark nights,
when your thoughts had wandered
to vast and cosmogonical themes in other spheres,
to feel this faint jerk,
which came
to interrupt your dreams
and link you to Nature again.

It seemed as if I might next cast my line
upward into the air,
as well as downward into this element
which was scarcely more dense.

...Two fishes
as it were
with one hook.

Amy Belding Brown has also constructed a poem out of this material:

Evening Song

Warm evenings when I played my flute
to charm the perch and track the silent moon
past ribbed pond bottoms from my boat,
I recalled other times and old companions,
dark summer nights beside a fire by water's edge.
We believed it drew the fish, and so we caught
fat pouts with worms strung on a thread.
When done, we threw the burning brands
high in the air. Like rockets, they fell into the pond
and hissed out, so we groped again through dark.
Sometimes, after sitting in a parlor in the town
until the family had retired, I went back to woods
and spent the midnight hours fishing,
serenaded by the fox and owl and some bird
creaking in a nearby tree. In moonlight,
thirty rods from shore, I watched perch and shiners
dimple surface with their silver tails
and, with a line, spoke to mystery fish
forty feet below. I drifted, waiting for the tug
of talk, the slight vibration of life prowling
in dull uncertain blundering intent.
At length I raised some horned pout
in squeaking squirm to upper air.
How strange, when my thoughts wandered,
to feel this faint tug back to Nature.
It seemed as if I might the next time
cast my line both upward, to the air,
and down into the element of water,
and therein catch two kinds of fish
with but a single hook.



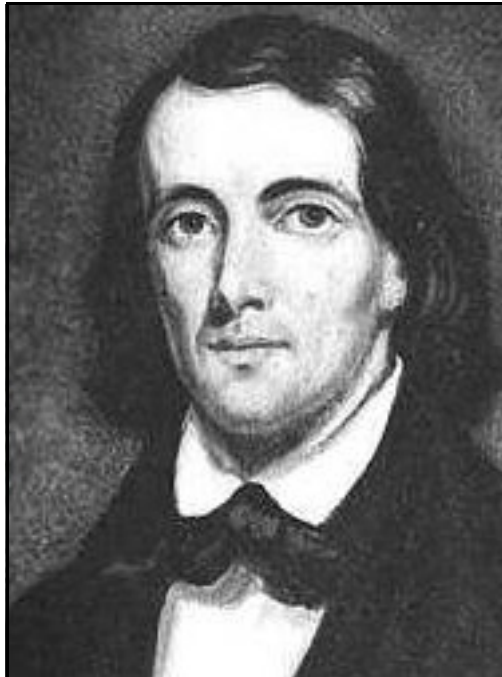
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Early September: Their new cottage complete at a construction cost of \$800.⁰⁰ (more or less an average cost for a home in Concord), the [Ellery Channings](#) moved in.

November: Caroline Sturgis paid a visit to the new farm home of [Ellery Channing](#) and his family in Concord and commented “I never saw a prettier external life, but pearls are hollow.”



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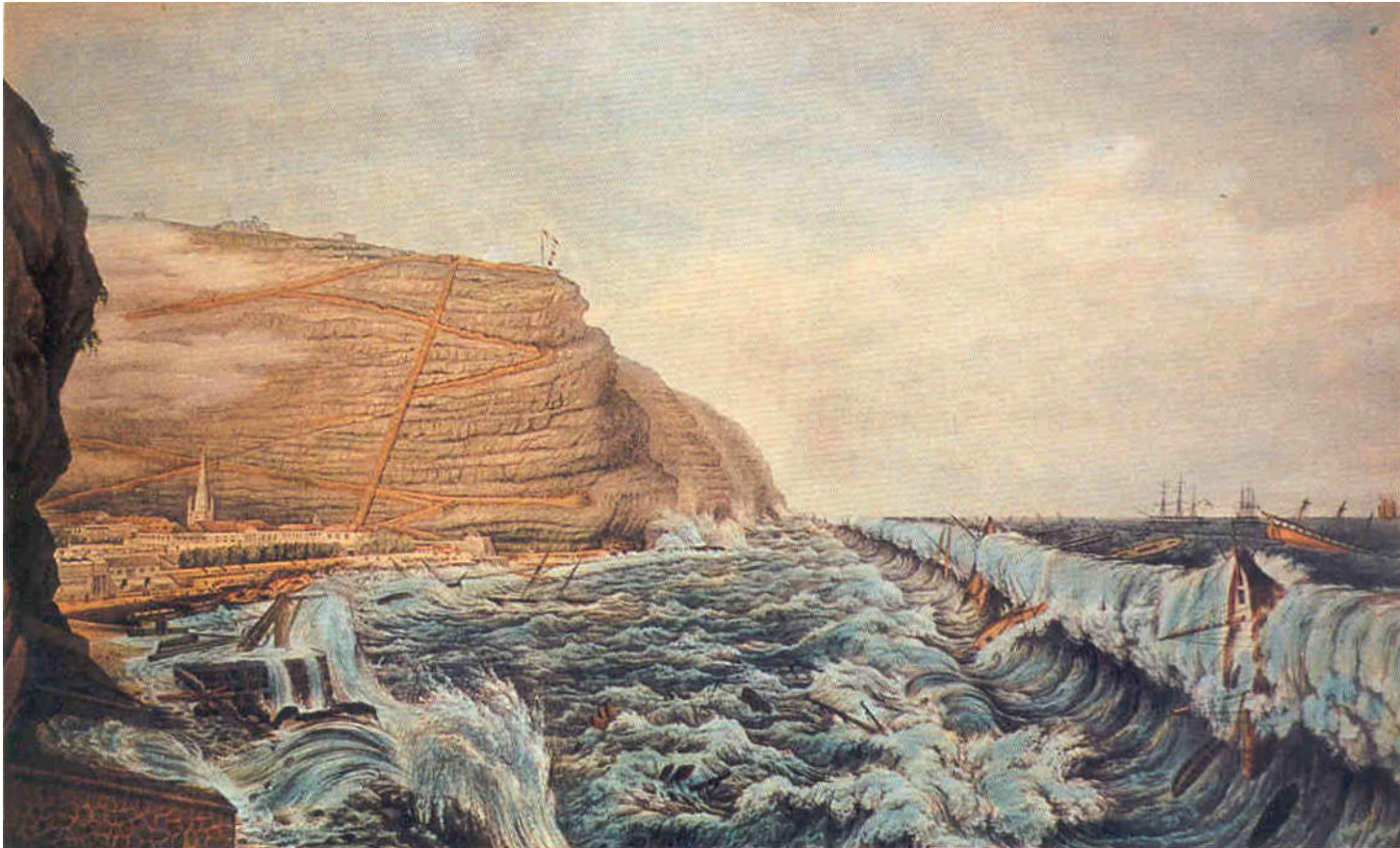
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1846

February: Having gotten his wife pregnant again, [Ellery Channing](#) decided not to be a Massachusetts farmer and not to listen to an infant crying, and began to solicit help from his friends because he needed for his personal development as a poet to travel in Europe and inspect masterpieces of art. He manage to raise the sum of \$300.⁰⁰, which he considered to be adequate since he planned to travel steerage class at a cost of \$25.⁰⁰ each way across the Atlantic. [Margaret Fuller](#) commented reasonably on “the unnatural selfishness of a man who, having brought a woman into this situation of suffering peril and care, proposes to leave her without even knowing whether she lives or dies under it,” but Ellery explained to her what “a bugbear in the house” he was “during the first year of a child’s life.”

[Charles Lane](#) wrote [Bronson Alcott](#) in [Concord](#) telling him of a Valentines Day party in Brooklyn, New York at which the guest list had included such sweethearts as Albert Brisbane, Christopher Pearse Cranch, [George William Curtis](#), William Henry Furness, [Margaret Fuller](#), and [Edgar Allan Poe](#). Fuller had acted as postmistress and the guests had fabricated Valentine cards to post to one another.

At [St. Helena](#), 13 ships were destroyed and the sea wall and wharf damaged by 3 days of heavy rollers.



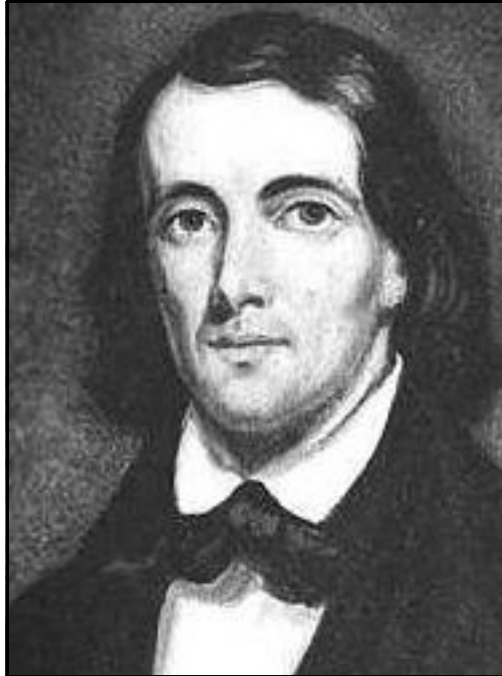


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Beginning of March: While trundling his bags down the road toward the Concord railroad station, [Ellery Channing](#) passed a Concord resident who hollered out asking where he was going. “To [Rome](#),” he hollered back.



March 3, Tuesday: [Ellery Channing](#) sailed from New-York harbor on the packet *Nebraska* bound for Marseilles, [Genoa](#), Leghorn, and *Civita Vecchia* (the modern port associated with [Rome](#)).



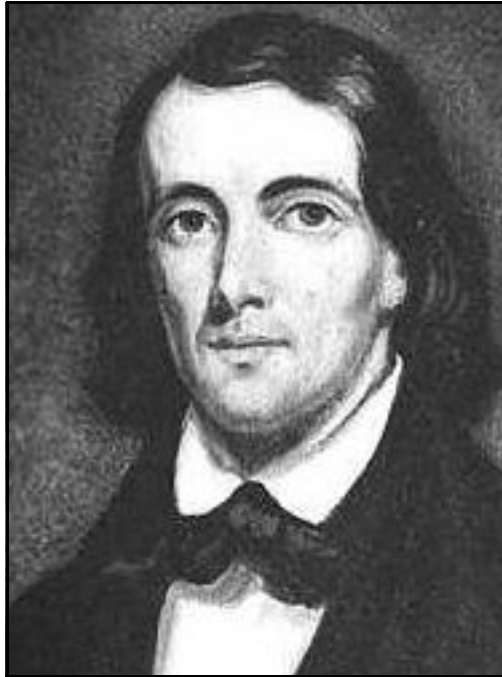


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June: After having spent 16 days in [Rome, Italy](#), toward the end of the month [Ellery Channing](#) sailed back toward New-York harbor on the return voyage of the packet *Nebraska* — and thus it is that we can discover buried in [WALDEN](#) a reference to “a true Mediterranean sky”!



[following screen]



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WALDEN: SOMETIMES I had a companion in my fishing, who came through the village to my house from the other side of the town, and the catching of the dinner was as much a social exercise as the eating of it.

Hermit. I wonder what the world is doing now. I have not heard so much as a locust over the sweet-fern these three hours. the pigeons are all asleep upon their roosts, -no flutter from them. Was that a farmer's noon horn which sounded from beyond the woods just now? The hands are coming in to boiled salt beef and cider and Indian bread. Why will men worry themselves so? He that does not eat need not work. I wonder how much they have reaped. Who would live there where a body can never think for the barking of Bose? And O, the housekeeping! to keep bright the devil's door-knobs, and scour his tubs this bright day! Better not keep a house. Say, some hollow tree; and then for morning calls and dinner-parties! Only a woodpecker tapping. O, they swarm; the sun is too warm there; they are born too far into life for me. I have water from the spring, and a loaf of brown bread on the shelf. -Hark! I hear a rustling of the leaves. Is it some ill-fed village hound yielding to the instinct of the chase? or the lost pig which is said to be in these woods, whose tracks I saw after the rain? It comes on apace; my sumachs and sweet-briars tremble. -Eh, Mr. Poet, is it you? How do you like the world to-day?

Poet. See those clouds; how they hang! That's the greatest thing I have seen to-day. There's nothing like it in old paintings, nothing like it in foreign lands, -unless when we were off the coast of Spain. That's a true Mediterranean sky. I thought, as I have my living to get, and have not eaten to-day, that I might go a-fishing. That's the true industry for poets. It is the only trade I have learned. Come, let's along.

Hermit. I cannot resist. My brown bread will soon be gone. I will go with you gladly soon, but I am just concluding a serious meditation. I think that I am near the end of it. Leave me alone, then, for a while. But that we may not be delayed, you shall be digging the bait meanwhile. Angle-worms are rarely to be met with in these parts, where the soil was never fattened with manure; the race is nearly extinct. The sport of digging the bait is nearly equal to that of catching the fish, when one's appetite is not too keen; and this you may have all to yourself today. I would advise you to set in the spade down yonder among the ground-nuts, where you see the johnswort waving. I think that I may warrant you one worm to every three sods you turn up, if you look well in among the roots of the grass, as if you were weeding. Or, if you choose to go farther, it will not be unwise, for I have found the increase of fair bait to be very nearly as the squares of the distances.

Hermit alone. Let me see; where was I? Methinks I was nearly in this frame of mind; the world lay about at this angle. Shall I go to heaven or a-fishing? If I should soon bring this meditation to an end, would another so sweet occasion be likely to offer? I was as near being resolved into the essence of things as ever I was in my life. I fear my thoughts will not come back to me. If it would do any good, I would whistle for them. When they make us an offer, is it wise to say, We will think of it? My thoughts have left no track, and I cannot find the path again. What was it that I was thinking of? It was a very hazy day. I will just try these three sentences of Con-fut-see; they may fetch that state about again. I know not whether it was the dumps or a budding ecstasy. Mem. There never is but one opportunity of a kind.

Poet. How now, *Hermit*, is it too soon? I have got just thirteen whole ones, beside several which are imperfect undersized; but they will do for the smaller fry; they do not cover up the hook so much. Those village worms are quite too large; a shiner may make a meal off one without finding the skewer.

Hermit. Well, then, let's be off. Shall we to the Concord? There's good sport there if the water be not too high.

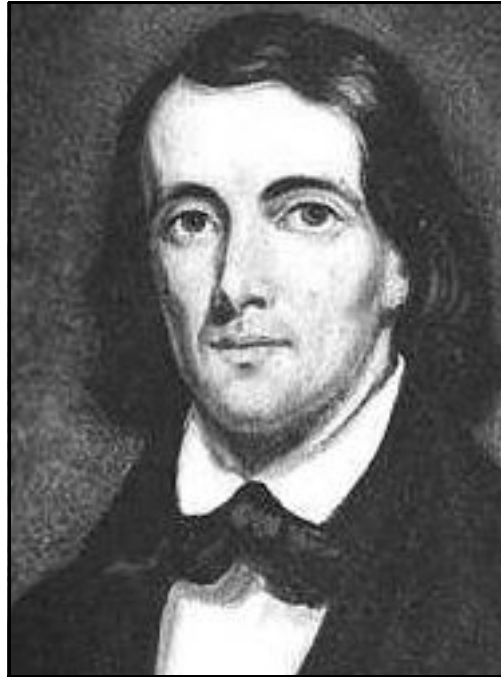


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July 4, Saturday: [Ellery Channing](#) returned to Concord and encountered his new daughter, [Caroline Sturgis Channing](#), who had of course been named in honor of his former girlfriend Caroline Sturgis.



[Jefferson Davis](#) left Washington DC to take up his duties as colonel in charge of the 1st Mississippi Regiment.

December: [James Burrill Curtis](#) joined his brother [George William Curtis](#) to spend the winter in [Rome](#) and they continued for an extended tour of the Continent, including Leghorn, Pisa, and Florence. Burrill would go on into Africa and the Near East while James would continue his explorations in Italy.

[Ellery Channing](#) elected to sin a 2d time against the muse of poetry — on terms that he was to receive 70% of the retail on each volume sold, once the full cost of publication had been recovered.

The original sin had been:

POEMS (1843)

This time the volume was arranged by James Munroe and Company and printed by Thurston, Torrey and Company at 81 Devonshire Street in Boston.

POEMS (SECOND SERIES)



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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1847

October: [Ellery Channing](#) spent two weeks with [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) in Salem while Hawthorne was “batching it,” Sophia and the two children being out of town. At that time Hawthorne was “Surveyor for the District of Salem and Beverly and Inspector of the Revenue for the Port of Salem.” Needing to test some barrels of rum destined for Africa, we have a record that he commented humorously about providing “the niggers” with as good liquor as any one gets from New England.

I think I have an obligation to comment on this remark of Hawthorne’s, by quoting something [Waldo Emerson](#) wrote in March-June, 1845:

What argument, what eloquence can avail against the power of that one word niggers? The man of the world annihilates the whole combined force of all the antislavery societies of the world by pronouncing it.



“I know histhry isn’t thru, Hinnissy, because it ain’t like what I see ivry day in Halsted Street. If any wan comes along with a histhry iv Greece or Rome that’ll show me th’ people fightin’, gettin’ dhrunk, makin’ love, gettin’ married, owin’ th’ grocery man an’ bein’ without hard coal, I’ll believe they was a Greece or Rome, but not befur.”



— Dunne, Finley Peter,
OBSERVATIONS BY MR. DOOLEY,
New York, 1902



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At the Boston Lying-In Hospital, [Ellery Channing](#)'s father, [Doctor Walter Channing](#), began to experiment with the use of [sulfurous ether](#) as an anesthetic in obstetrics.

[Fanny Appleton Longfellow](#) was the 1st to experiment with use of this anesthetic to cope with the pain of childbirth.

I feel proud to be the pioneer to less suffering for
poor weak womankind.

Her experimental baby would live only a year. Presumably this wasn't due to the dangerous experimental childbirth technique which it had initially needed to survive, but also — one cannot help but note that today no-one would any longer consider the administration of **ether** to help mothers cope with the pain of childbirth just as no-one would any longer consider the administration of **thalidomide** to help mothers cope with the trauma of pregnancy.

Late June: [Ellery Channing](#)'s CONVERSATIONS IN ROME BETWEEN AN ARTIST, A [CATHOLIC](#), AND A CRITIC — mutually exclusive categories, one presumes (Boston: William Crosby and H.P. Nichols, 111 Washington St.; Cambridge: Metcalf and Company, Printers to the University).

CONVERSATIONS IN ROME



"What a gump!...On the whole, he is but little better than an idiot. He should have been whipt often and soundly in his boyhood; and as he escaped such wholesome discipline then, it might be well to bestow it now."

— [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), about [Ellery Channing](#)



October: [Ellery Channing](#) spent two weeks with [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) in Salem while Hawthorne was "batching it," Sophia and the two children being out of town. At that time Hawthorne was "Surveyor for the District of Salem and Beverly and Inspector of the Revenue for the Port of Salem." Needing to test some barrels of rum destined for Africa, we have a record that he commented humorously about providing "the niggers" with as good liquor as any one gets from New England.

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"I know histhry isn't thru, Hinnissy, because it ain't like what I see ivry day in Halsted Street. If any wan comes along with a histhry iv Greece or Rome that'll show me th' people fightin', gettin' dhrunk, makin' love, gettin' married, owin' th' grocery man an' bein' without hard coal, I'll believe they was a Greece or Rome, but not befur."



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1848

[Nicholas Marcellus Hentz](#) relocated from Tuskegee, Alabama to Columbus, Georgia.

[Gregor Mendel](#), in his 4th year of studies at the Theological College, attended additional lectures on agriculture at the Brünn Philosophical Institute. The teacher was Professor Franz Diebl (1770-1859). In June, Mendel received a certificate of completion from the College, and in early August he became a parish priest in the collegiate church at Altbrünn.

The [Boston Society of Natural History](#), which had been organized in 1830 out of what remained of the Linnaean Society that had flourished from 1813 to 1823, moved into its new quarters on Mason Street in the building known as the Massachusetts Medical College.

PROCEEDINGS, FOR 1848

[Dr. Henry Jacob Bigelow](#) got married with Susan Sturgis (1825-1853), a daughter of William Sturgis and Elizabeth Davis Sturgis of Boston.

Up to this point [Professor Jacob Bigelow](#)'s *FLORULA BOSTONIENSIS*, A COLLECTION OF PLANTS OF BOSTON AND ITS VICINITY had been the standard flora for the New England region. With the publication of [Fisher Professor of Natural History in Harvard College Asa Gray, M.D.](#)'s A MANUAL OF THE BOTANY OF THE NORTHERN UNITED STATES, FROM NEW ENGLAND TO WISCONSIN AND SOUTH TO OHIO AND PENNSYLVANIA

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B O T A N Y
OF THE
NORTHERN UNITED STATES,
FROM NEW ENGLAND TO WISCONSIN AND SOUTH TO OHIO
AND PENNSYLVANIA INCLUSIVE,
(THE MOSSES AND LIVERWORTS BY WM. S. SULLIVANT,)
ARRANGED
ACCORDING TO THE NATURAL SYSTEM;
WITH AN INTRODUCTION, CONTAINING A REDUCTION OF THE GENERA
TO THE LINNEAN ARTIFICIAL CLASSES AND ORDERS,
OUTLINES OF THE ELEMENTS OF BOTANY,
A GLOSSARY, ETC.
BY ASA GRAY, M. D.,
FISHER PROFESSOR OF NATURAL HISTORY IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY.
BOSTON & CAMBRIDGE:
JAMES MUNROE AND COMPANY.
LONDON: JOHN CHAPMAN.
1848.



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MANUAL OF THE BOTANY

In this year [Professor Gray](#) also put out the 1st volume of his GENERA OF THE PLANTS OF THE UNITED STATES (you can now purchase a polyester necktie, guaranteed not to eat you alive, printed with [Isaac Sprague](#)'s illustration of the Venus Flytrap *Dionaea muscipula* from this volume).





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At 12 West Street in [Boston](#), [Bronson Alcott](#)'s "Conversations" were usually given in a series of seven, once a week, at a charge of \$2.⁰⁰ per series. Here is a sample, a sleeper on Silence.²⁰

Bronson Alcott: *"As God alone is the sleepless, so is he the only silent one. Silence is ever grand and beautiful – but from its loss comes noise and hubbub – and we live in wrangling– We speak because we know not how to be silent. Is it not so with the morning call– How is it with the priests. Do they know how to be silent?"*

[Ellery Channing](#): *"I think we talk small talk – that the silence may be uttered. It is not what we speak but what is unsaid that is valuable."*

[Mrs. Channing](#): *"It is a test of perfect communion that we can keep silence."*

Miss Parsons: *"A friend is one with whom we may be silent."*

Ednah Dow Littlehale: *"Is not silence the background of all speech, as the Earth was silent for thousands of years?"*

Bronson Alcott: *"All music is best in proportion as it partakes of silence, as it is resolved again into silence... Silence is soundless. Is it not soundless only as light as colorless because it is the union of all sound?..."*

THE ALCOTT FAMILY

A young lady, 24 years of age, who had been one of [Margaret Fuller](#)'s pupils, Ednah Dow Littlehale, began to attend Alcott's series of Conversations on "Man — His History, Resources and Expectations." After a while she would begin to act as his amanuensis and transcribe these Conversations, as above.

20. And you just might want to compare and contrast this with the essay on silence that Thoreau positioned at the end of WEEK.

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15 WEST STREET

NOVELIST NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE ONCE DESCRIBED 15 WEST STREET AS "MRS. PEABODY'S GARAVANSARY," IN REFERENCE TO THE DIVERSE ACTIVITIES OF THE PEABODY FAMILY WHO FROM 1840 TO 1854 MADE THEIR HOME IN THIS BUILDING. IN THE FRONT PARLOR, DAUGHTER, ELIZABETH OPENED A BOOKSTORE, THE FIRST IN BOSTON TO OFFER WORKS BY FOREIGN AUTHORS. HERE SHE AND RALPH WALDO EMERSON PUBLISHED *THE DIAL*, THE QUARTERLY PERIODICAL OF THE TRANSCENDENTALIST POETS. HERE ALSO, JOURNALIST-CRITIC MARGARET FULLER HELD HER FAMOUS "CONVERSATIONS" WHICH TODAY ARE CONSIDERED LANDMARK TRACTS IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN FEMINISM. IN THE PRIVATE, REAR PARLOR, DAUGHTER SOPHIA IN 1842 MARRIED HAWTHORNE, AND DAUGHTER MARY IN 1843 MARRIED HORACE MANN, THE FATHER OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN AMERICA. DURING THE YEARS THE PEABODY FAMILY LIVED ON WEST STREET, THEY WERE HOSTS — AND FRIEND — TO MANY WHO HELPED BROADEN AMERICAN THOUGHT AND LITERATURE.



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July-November: During this timeframe [KTAADN](#) was appearing in [Sartain's Union Magazine](#).

[Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) went on a 4-day walking tour through southern [New Hampshire](#): Mount Uncanninuc, Goffstown, Hooksett, Hampsted, Plaistow (new materials for [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#)). During this trip Thoreau encountered his original “desperate man”: the hikers had just encountered an Italian organ grinder far from Rome and then along came a fellow so desperate for a job as to be perplexing.²¹

TIMELINE OF A WEEK

[Take into consideration, however, the manuscript “HM924, D” in the Huntington Library, on two leaves of type 14 white wove paper, as recorded by Linck C. Johnson (this is Appendix 11 on page 471 to his THOREAU’S COMPLEX WEAVE) while it was temporarily part of the manuscript “Thursday” chapter of [A WEEK](#).]

21. We will discover, however, that although this man perplexed Thoreau and was the First Cause of his writing some lines, our author would do nothing in particular with these writings until after he had had some other encounters with some other desperate types, perhaps yet more desperate and yet more dangerous and yet more perplexing, and had decided that that condition was in desperate need of being spoken to. In other words, the governing consideration here will be offered to have been (playing around with Aristotelian terminology for purposes of making my point) not the First Cause, but the Effective Cause. Not to put too sharp an edge on this, I will be offering that the occasion for this script written in the summer of 1848 eventually seeing print as it did in [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) (rather than being relegated to the cutting-room floor) was not this guy in the mountains who desperately needed a job, but: Thoreau’s presence on the lecture platform during the burning of the US Constitution, on a pewter dish, by William Lloyd Garrison.



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This passage occasioned the digression on traveling, which in the manuscript begins with a quotation from Saadi (WALDEN 304) and concludes, "There are many ways in which a man can live on the road without carrying a barrel organ." Thoreau deleted that sentence, recopied the remarks on traveling for WEEK, and revised the remainder of the passage for WALDEN (see Shanley, pages 52-53). Since his revisions were for WALDEN, they have not been followed in the text below. The two leaves of white wove paper (type 14), probably drafted in 1848, are in the Huntington Library (HM 924, D).

We were astonished to meet away up here in New Hampshire an Italian with his hand organ, so far from Rome, for no youth had yet been born here who could bring his mind to follow this kind of life.

Here was also a poor wretch asking for a lodging, whom it was almost no pleasure to befriend he was so helpless. He said that he came from New York and was seeking work. He did not know where he lodged the night before, nor where he was then—"What place is this sir?"—but only that he had travelled 30 miles that day. He could do work about a stable, but he declared in a disconsolate voice that there was no work for him, as if the fates had a spite against him. He thought that he had seriously injured himself by lying out.

I asked him why he travelled so far in a day, and farther each successive day — if he was any better off at night than in the morning? Why 3 miles would not do as well as 30 and better. He allowed that I had the right of it.

I concluded that he was a desperate man, who had committed some crime, or whose life was a crime, who was endeavoring to escape from himself. He travelled far superficially because he would not budge an inch in the direction of reform and a good conscience. He thought that nobody wished to employ or would respect him, because he felt himself unfit to be employed and did not respect himself. If he could have had one half hour of sanity he would have found a job at the next door, and all the world would have appeared kind to him.

He had travelled 250 miles from New York in a straight line with desperate steps 25 to 30 miles a day, offering himself with a down look anticipating failure, to do stable work at such stable yards as that radius happened to intersect, doing his part, as he would fain have believed toward getting work — but there was none for him. He only wished to convince the fates that he was willing to do his part when he knew that he was not. And so he would go on if his constitution held out to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, where he would probably jump in. It had never occurred to him how few stable yards such a radius might [*illegible word, possibly strike*], or that a shorter radius describing a circle might have advantages.

It is the sum of all wisdom not to do desperate things. The great mass of mankind lead lives of quiet desperation. What is called resignation is confirmed desperation— From the desperate city you go into the desperate country and have to console yourself with the bravery of minks and muskrats.

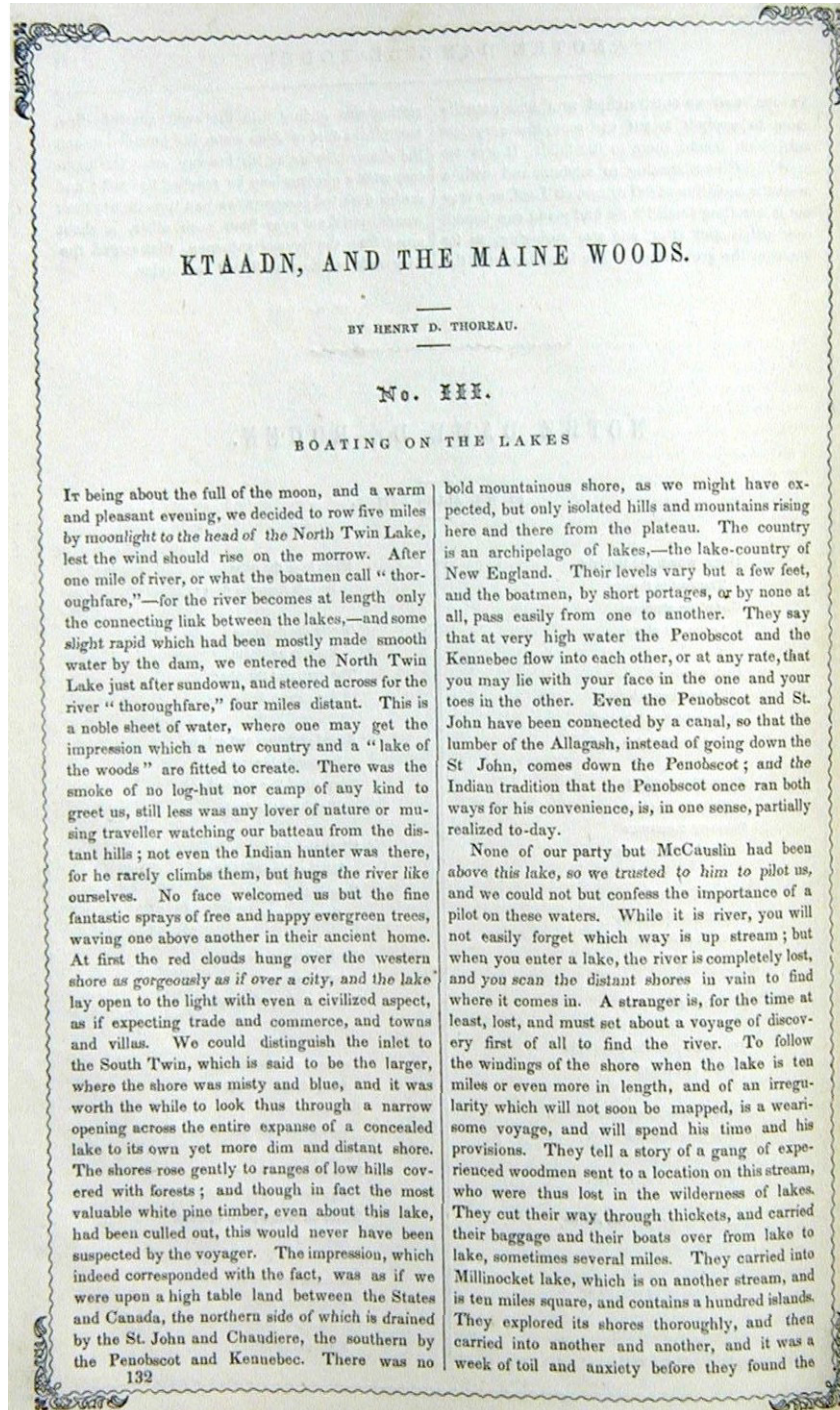
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September: Publication of "[KTAADN](#)" in the [Union Magazine](#):



TIMELINE OF THE MAINE WOODS

[Waldo Emerson](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) were walking together twice a week. Emerson confided the following to



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his journal (and here you can see again that the man simply could not grasp what [Henry Thoreau](#) had tried to tell him, or even that Thoreau had tried to tell him something):

I go twice a week over Concord with Ellery, &, as we sit on the steep park at Conantum, we still have the same regret as oft before. Is all this beauty to perish? Shall none remake this sun & wind, the skyblue river, the riverblue sky, the yellow meadows spotted with sacks & sheets of cranberry pickers, the red bushes, the irongray house with just the colour of the granite rock, the paths of the thicket, in which the only engineers are the cattle grazing on yonder hill; the wide straggling wild orchard in which nature has deposited every possible flavour in the apples of different trees. Whole zones & climates she has concentrated into apples. We think of the old benefactors who have conquered these fields; of the old man Moore who is just dying in these days, who has absorbed such volumes of sunshine like a huge melon or pumpkin in the sun – who has owned in every part of Concord a woodlot, until he could not find the boundaries of these, and never saw their interiors. But we say, where is he who is to save the present moment, & cause that this beauty be not lost?



An Austrian-inspired Croat army invaded Hungary and [Lajos Kossuth](#) became head of a Magyar committee of national defense.

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October 25, Wednesday: [James Russell Lowell](#)'s "A Fable for Critics" was published on Broadway in Manhattan by G.P. Putnam (bearing the date October 21st).



A FABLE FOR CRITICS

He had farted our nation's first attempt at literary self-examination!²²

(Actually there is a long tradition of such literary *bavardage*, and, actually, this "Fable for Critics" thingie doesn't even get close to coming up to the lowest acceptable standard for it. For instance, a Thoreau ancestor who was a poet, [William Dunbar](#), had in the 16th Century authored a "[Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie](#)" more or less as a royal roast, or as a "doing of the numbers," and into 69 stanzas he had packed an extraordinary number of insults of the genre "Your mama is so ugly ... let me tell you how ugly your mama is." Had Henry deigned to respond to Lowell's effort, you can be sure that his retort would have been devastating — but Lowell was so notoriously thin-skinned that this wouldn't have been a good idea. If his derogatory drivell had been responded to in kind, there's no telling what his response might have been — a duel maybe, or lurking in some dark alley with a short knife.)

In this curious but far inferior piece Lowell satirized the [Margaret Fuller](#) who had had the temerity to remark on how "stereotyped" Lowell's attempts at poetry were, and who had predicted (accurately enough, it now seems!) that "posterity would not remember him" for his literary endeavors. In this curious piece Lowell also

22. His was a busy pen in this year of 1848: in one year appeared his POEMS: SECOND SERIES, his THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL, and the first series of THE BIGELOW PAPERS. It really is too bad that none of this work has survived the test of time by remaining highly regarded!



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satirized [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#), depicting them as [Waldo Emerson](#) impersonators.²³

- His dismissal of [Bronson Alcott](#) as a writer who does not follow the first rule of writing—that to learn to write one must write and write and write—but who will never be able to write intelligibly because he lives on some other planet:

Yonder, calm as a cloud, Alcott stalks in a dream,
And fancies himself in thy groves, Academe,
With the Parthenon nigh, and the olive-trees o'er him,
And never a fact to perplex him or bore him,
With a snug room at Plato's, when night comes, to walk to,
And people from morning till midnight to talk to,
And from midnight till morning, nor snore in their listening;
So he muses, his face with the joy of it glistening,
For his highest conceit of a happiest state is
Where they'd live upon acorns, and hear him talk gratis;
And indeed, I believe, no man ever talked better—
Each sentence hangs perfectly poised to a letter
He seems piling words, but there's royal dust hid
In the heart of each sky-piercing pyramid.
While he talks he is great, but goes out like a taper,
If you shut him up closely with pen, ink, and paper;
Yet his fingers itch for 'em from morning till night,
And he thinks he does wrong if he don't always write;
In this, as in all things, a lamb among men,
He goes to sure death when he goes to his pen.

- His uncritical adulation of [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#):

There is Hawthorne, with genius so shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there;
A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,
So earnest, so graceful, so lithe and so fleet,
Is worth a descent from Olympus to meet;
'Tis as if a rough oak that for ages had stood,
With his gnarled bony branches like ribs of the wood,
Should bloom, after cycles of struggle and scathe,
With a single anemone trembly and rathe;
His strength is so tender, his wildness so meek,
That a suitable parallel sets one to seek—
He's a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan Tieck;
When Nature was shaping him, clay was not granted
For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,
So, to fill out her model, a little she spared
From some finer-grained stuff for a woman prepared,
And she could not have hit a more excellent plan
For making him fully and perfectly man.

- His dismissal of [Edgar Allan Poe](#) as a man whose intellect has overruled his affect:¹

There comes Poe, with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,
Three fifths of him genius and two fifths sheer fudge,
Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,
In a way to make people of common-sense damn metres,
Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,
But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the mind,...



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- His abrupt categorical trashing of “Miranda” ([Margaret Fuller](#)):

But here comes Miranda. Zeus! where shall I flee to?
She has such a *penchant* for bothering me, too!
She always keeps asking if I don't observe a
Particular likeness 'twixt her and Minerva.
...
She will take an old notion and make it her own,
By saying it o'er in her sibylline tone;
Or persuade you 't is something tremendously deep,
By repeating it so as to put you to sleep;
And she may well defy any mortal to see through it,
When once she has mixed up her infinite *me* through it.
...
Here Miranda came up and said: Phœbus, you know
That the infinite soul has its infinite woe,
As I ought to know, having lived cheek by jowl,
Since the day I was born, with the infinite soul.

- His dismissal of [Waldo Emerson](#) as a man who worships himself in place of God:

All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he's got
To I don't (nor do they either) exactly know what;
For though he builds glorious temples, 't is odd
He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.
'T is refreshing to old-fashioned people like me
To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,
In whose mind all creation is duly respected
As parts of himself — just a little projected;
And who's willing to worship the stars and the sun,
A convert to — nothing but Emerson.

- His dismissal of [Henry Thoreau](#) as a low-rent [Waldo](#) clone:

There comes [Thoreau], for instance; to see him's rare sport,
Tread in Emerson's tracks with legs painfully short;
How he jumps, how he strains, and gets red in the face,
To keep step with the mystagogue's natural pace!
He follows as close as a stick to a rocket,
His fingers exploring the prophet's each pocket.
Fie, for shame, brother bard; with good fruit of your own,
Can't you let neighbor Emerson's orchards alone?
Besides 't is no use, you'll not find e'en a core,—
_____ has picked up all the windfalls before.

23. The year 1848 was to be, according to his biographers, his *annus mirabilis*, for in the course of the year a total of four volumes would see publication: not only his A FABLE FOR CRITICS but also his POEMS: SECOND SERIES, his THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL, and the first series of THE BIGELOW PAPERS. In one of these volumes he managed to accurately anticipate, some 14 years in advance, what would be Emerson's attitude toward the [Civil War](#):

Ez fer the war, I go agin it,—
I mean to say I kind o' du,—
Thet is, I mean thet, bein' in it,
The best way wuz to fight it thru;
Not but wut abstract war is horrid,
I sign to thet with all my heart,—
But civlyzation **doos** git forrid
Sometimes upon a powder-cart.



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READER! walk up at once (it will soon be too late) and buy at a perfectly ruinous rate

A

FABLE FOR CRITICS:

OR, BETTER,

*(I like, as a thing that the reader's first fancy may strike,
an old-fashioned title-page,
such as presents a tabular view of the volume's contents)*

A GLANCE

AT A FEW OF OUR LITERARY PROGENIES

(Mrs. Malaprop's word)

FROM

THE TUB OF DIOGENES;

A VOCAL AND MUSICAL MEDLEY,

THAT IS,

A SERIES OF JOKES

BY A WONDERFUL QUIZ

who accompanies himself with a rub-a-dub-dub, full of spirit and grace, on the top of the tub.

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“There comes Emerson first, whose rich words, every one,
Are like gold nails in temples to hang trophies on,
Whose prose is grand verse, while his verse the Lord knows,
Is some of it pr— No, ’t is not even prose;
I’m speaking of metres; some poems have welled
From those rare depths of soul that have ne’er been excelled;
They’re not epics, but that does n’t matter a pin,
In creating, the only hard thing’s to begin;
A grass-blade’s no easier to make than an oak,
If you’ve once found the way, you’ve achieved the grand stroke;
In the worst of his poems are mines of rich matter,
But thrown in a heap with a crush and a clatter;
Now it is not one thing nor another alone
Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,
The something pervading, uniting the whole,
The before unconceived, unconceivable soul,
So that just in removing this trifle or that, you
Take away, as it were, a chief limb of the statue;
Roots, wood, bark, and leaves, singly perfect may be,
But, clapt hodge-podge together, they don’t make a tree.

“But, to come back to Emerson, (whom by the way,
I believe we left waiting,) — his is, we may say,
A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range
Has Olympus for one pole, for t’ other the Exchange;
He seems, to my thinking, (although I’m afraid
The comparison must, long ere this, have been made,)
A Plotinus-Montaigne, where the Egyptian’s gold mist
And the Gascon’s shrewd wit cheek-by-jowl coexist;
All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he’s got
To I don’t (nor they either) exactly know what;
For though he builds glorious temples, ’t is odd
He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.
’T is refreshing to old-fashioned people like me,
To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,
In whose mind all creation is duly respected
As parts of himself — just a little projected;
And who’s willing to worship the stars and the sun,
A convert to — nothing but Emerson.
So perfect a balance there is in his head,
That he talks of things sometimes as if they were dead;
Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of that sort,
He looks at as merely ideas; in short,
As if they were fossils stuck round in a cabinet,
Of such vast extent that our earth’s a mere dab in it;
Composed just as he is inclined to conjecture her,
Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-nine parts pure lecturer;
You are filled with delight at his clear demonstration,
Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the occasion,
With the quiet precision of science he’ll sort ’em,
But you can’t help suspecting the whole a *post mortem*.

“There are persons, mole-blind to the soul’s make and style,
Who insist on a likeness ’twixt him and Carlyle;
To compare him with Plato would be vastly fairer,
Carlyle’s the more burly, but E. is the rarer;
He sees fewer objects, but clearer, truelier,
If C.’s as original, E.’s more peculiar;
That he’s more of a man you might say of the one,
Of the other he’s more of an Emerson;
C.’s the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of limb, —
E. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and slim;

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The one's two-thirds Norseman, the other half Greek,
Where the one's most abounding, the other's to seek;
C.'s generals require to be seen in the mass, —
E.'s specialties gain if enlarged by the glass;
C. gives nature and God his own fits of the blues,
And rims common-sense things with mystical hues, —
E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,
And looks coolly around him with sharp common sense;
C. shows you how every-day matters unite
With the dim transdiurnal recesses of night, —
While E., in a plain, preternatural way,
Makes mysteries matters of mere every day;
C. draws all his characters quite *à la* Fuseli, —
Not sketching their bundles of muscles and thews illy,
He paints with a brush so untamed and profuse
They seem nothing but bundles of muscles and thews;
E. is rather like Flaxman, lines strait and severe,
And a colorless outline, but full, round, and clear; —
To the men he thinks worthy he frankly accords
The design of a white marble statue in words.
C. labors to get at the centre, and then
Take a reckoning from there of his actions and men;
E. calmly assumes the said centre as granted,
And, given himself, has whatever is wanted.

“He has imitators in scores, who omit
No part of the man but his wisdom and wit, —
Who go carefully o'er the sky-blue of his brain,
And when he has skimmed it once, skim it again;
If at all they resemble him, you may be sure it is
Because their shoals mirror his mists and obscurities,
As a mud-puddle seems deep as heaven for a minute,
While a cloud that floats o'er is reflected within it.

“There comes, for instance; to see him's rare sport,
Tread in Emerson's tracks with legs painfully short;
How he jumps, how he strains, and gets red in the face,
To keep step with the mystagogue's natural pace
He follows as close as a stick to a rocket,
His fingers exploring the prophet's each pocket.
Fie, for shame, brother bard; with good fruit of your own,
Can't you let neighbor Emerson's orchards alone?
Besides, 't is no use, you'll not find e'en a core, —
E. has picked up all the windfalls before.
They might strip every tree, and E. never would catch 'em,
His Hesperides have no rude dragon to watch 'em
When they send him a dishfull, and ask him to try 'em,
He never suspects how the sly rogues came by 'em;
He wonders why 't is there are none such his trees on,
And thinks 'em the best he has tasted this season.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

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Yonder, calm as a cloud, Alcott stalks in a dream,
And fancies himself in thy groves, Academe,
With the Parthenon nigh, and the olive-trees o'er him,
And never a fact to perplex him or bore him,
With a snug room at Plato's, when night comes, to walk to,
And people from morning till midnight to talk to,
And from midnight till morning, nor snore in their listening;
So he muses, his face with the joy of it glistening,
For his highest conceit of a happiest state is
Where they'd live upon acorns, and hear him talk gratis;
And indeed, I believe, no man ever talked better —
Each sentence hangs perfectly poised to a letter
He seems piling words, but there's royal dust hid
In the heart of each sky-piercing pyramid.
While he talks he is great, but goes out like a taper,
If you shut him up closely with pen, ink, and paper;
Yet his fingers itch for 'em from morning till night,
And he thinks he does wrong if he don't always write;
In this, as in all things, a lamb among men,
He goes to sure death when he goes to his pen.

The famous “Water Celebration” on Boston Common, as the first of Loammi Baldwin III’s upland water reached the Boston metropolitan area from the new Cochituate System. A jet of Lake Cochituate water rose from the fountain in [Boston](#)’s Frog Pond. For the next two generations Boston would have an adequate supply of clean water.²⁴

[James Pierson Beckwourth](#) and his party of travelers arrived at Los Angeles, [California](#). From there they would continue north to Monterey, which at the time was the capital of California. Jim would take on a job as a courier for a ranch near the present-day city of Santa Maria, north of Los Angeles. On his way there he would come across the remains of a massacre, of the Reed family who had been living in the old Mission of San Miguel, and would lead a posse that would apprehend the murderers.

[Niles' Register](#) published an account of the Women’s Rights Convention that had occurred in Rochester, New York:

WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION.

A Convention appointed to be held in Rochester, (N.Y.) to advocate Women's Rights, was organized some weeks ago, in that city in the Unitarian Church. There was quite a respectable attendance, the body of the church being pretty well filled, mostly with females, some of whom seemed to have deeply at heart the professed objects of the meeting, but many more seemed to be drawn thither by motives of curiosity. Soon after the appointed hour the committee (all ladies) reported the following list of officers, who were duly appointed

Mrs. ABIGAIL BUSH, President.

Mrs. LAURA MURRAY, Vice President.

Mrs. CATHARINE A. T. STEBBENS, }

Mrs. SARAH L. HALLOWELL, }Sec'taries.

24. These Framingham MA reservoirs have not been tapped by Boston since 1931. Pollution forced the metropolis to turn first to the Wachusett Reservoir, and then to the Quabban Reservoir some 65 miles inland. The Sudbury Reservoirs are, however, on a standby basis to be utilized in times of emergency, after heavy chlorination.



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Mrs. MARY H. HALLOWELL, }

The officers being appointed, Mr. William C. Nell proposed to read an essay upon Woman's Rights, but the President said it was not then in order to do so, and one of the Secretaries commenced reading the minutes of the preliminary meeting, but in so low a tone that she could not be heard by only a few {sic}, when a gentleman in a remote part of the house said the proceedings, to be made interesting, should be understood by all. After one or two more interruptions, Lucretia Mott, who was present, said it was not a fitting excuse for a woman to make that her voice could not be heard. The call for the Secretary to read louder was right, and, with sufficient practice, women could and would make themselves heard in a public assembly. Finally, Mrs. Burtis read the minutes, and they were adopted.

The President then called upon Mr. Nell to read his essay, which he did. After the reading, Lucretia Mott stated her objections to a portion of the paper read. She did not believe in holding up woman as a superior to man, because it was untrue -- she was only an equal. When invested with power woman as well as man was tyrannical. Mr. Nell briefly replied.

A letter was read from Gerritt Smith, assigning his bodily infirmities and private business as reasons for his non-attendance, but concurring in the objects sought to be accomplished.

Mrs. Elizabeth Stanton {Elizabeth Cady Stanton}, of Seneca Falls, read the declaration adopted at the meeting held in that village, and the discussion of this document appeared to be the principal business of the forenoon session. The President having called for remarks for and against the sentiments it embodied, one gentleman said his objection was that there was too much truth in it! Mr. Burtis approved of the declaration, and was glad to see the women asserting their rights. Mr. Colton, of New Haven, briefly stated his objections, which appeared to be of a general nature.

Lucretia Mott wished to know what the speaker considered the proper sphere of woman. It was not strange that he thought she should not be in the pulpit, he having been educated in New Haven, Connecticut. He should read his Bible again, as he may have pinned his faith upon the sleeve of some minister.

W.C. Bloss, Esq. made some very humorous remarks, which were received with much applause. He then went on to show the different tastes of male and female children, and inquired whether these were not in accordance with the instincts of nature.

Mrs. Sanford, of Michigan, made a forcible and eloquent address, in which she contended for the right of women to exercise the elective franchise, and their eligibility to office. It might, she said, be for women to break the bands of slavery, and she urged them to nerve for the effort. One of the consequences of the proposed enfranchisement of women would be less extravagance and waste in dress -- fashion would be neglected. They could be



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as daughters, as wives, and as mothers, dutiful, gentle, and submissive, even if we hang the domestic wreath upon the eagle's talons! Her remarks called forth considerable applause.

At the suggestion of Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth McClintock read a poetical composition, by Mrs. Chapman, of Boston.

Mr. Cutting objected to that part of the declaration which held out the idea that voting was the first right of women. He regarded education as the first right, and it was the peculiar province of women to teach. If mothers teach their sons, wives their husbands, and sisters their brothers, how to vote, it was all the same as though they voted themselves.

Mr. Sanford deprecated the occupation of so much time by the men. He hoped the ladies would assert their rights.

Frederick Douglass went for equal rights of all classes, without regard to sex. After he had finished, the Convention adjourned till two o'clock P.M.

When we went in at the afternoon session the house was crowded, and Mrs. Owen was reading a report.

Several resolutions were adopted, of which the following was one "That, as obedience and submission to the husband is taught and enjoined in the marriage service, we will hereafter use our endeavors to have such a law entirely abrogated."

Lucretia Mott objected to them, as being too milk and water. She was not only for declaring, but for taking and maintaining her rights, and something more than these tame resolutions was necessary. In the course of her remarks, Lucretia said she was not a theologian, but yet she believed that people were as much inspired now as in former times.

Mrs. Roberts made a report in relation to the condition of females who are employed as seamstresses in the city, setting forth the hardships under which they labor, &c. She said they were compelled to work fourteen or fifteen hours a day to earn from thirty-one to thirty-eight cents; that they seldom earned fifty cents, or, if they did, it was by the most extreme exertion. It appeared that those who can endure the most are only able to save some fifty cents per week beyond their board.

Mrs. Stanton offered another resolution, asserting that it is duty of those who believe females are oppressed in their wages to pay them better prices.

Lucretia Mott thought little good would be done by efforts to improve the physical condition of woman. The axe must be laid to the root of the corrupt tree. A radical change must be effected in her civil condition before much improvement would be visible. "Overturn, overture {sic}, overturn," must be the motto, until these changes are effected, until all classes are levelled to the same common platform of equality. A slave, however treated, cannot be materially bettered until made free. It is the nature of slavery to debase. Just so it is with women; and, so long as the present usages of society prevailed, nothing would be done by passing resolutions.

Mrs. Stanton offered another resolution, asserting that it is the duty of women, whatever their complexion, to assume as soon



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as possible their true position of equality, in the social circle, in church and in State.

Other resolutions were also offered, when Mrs. Owen proposed the appointment of a committee to form a society for redressing the wrongs and hardships of laboring females, but Lucretia Mott thought this was foreign to the objects of the Convention.

This has been a remarkable Convention. It was composed of those holding to some one of the various "isms" of the day, and some, we should think, who embraced them all. The only practical good proposed -- the adoption of measures for the relief and amelioration of females -- was almost scouted by the leading ones composing the meeting. The great effort seemed to be to bring out some few, impracticable, absurd, and ridiculous propositions, and the greater their absurdity the better. In short, it was a regular "emeute" of a congregation of females, gathered from various quarters, who seem to be really in earnest in their aim at revolution, and who evince entire confidence that "the day of their deliverance" is at hand. Verily, this is a "progressive" era. -- "Rochester Democrat."



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November 18, Saturday: John Beardsley visited the offices of Lewis Tappan’s Mercantile Agency in New-York, taking along with him a business associate who was refusing to do any further business with him on account of the bad credit report being put out on him by this credit agency. He termed the report on him a slander — Tappan was entirely unimpressed. There would need to be a resort to the courts.

The results of the popular election were announced. All that remained was to wait and see what the Electoral College would do with these popular results (don’t hold your breath).

ELECTIONS.—The returns from nearly all of the States have now been received, and they confirm the result as indicated in our last paper. It is needless to give the details of the several States, as the official vote is not yet reported.

Electors of President and Vice President ascertained to be chosen.

<i>Taylor.</i>		<i>Cass.</i>	
Vermont,	6	Maine,	9
Massachusetts,*	12	New Hampshire,	6
Rhode Island,	4	Ohio,	23
Connecticut,	6	Virginia,	17
New York,	36	Illinois,	9
New Jersey,	7	Michigan,	5
Pennsylvania,	26	Indiana,	12
Delaware,	3	South Carolina,	9
Maryland,	8	Missouri,	7
Kentucky,	12		
North Carolina,	11		
Tennessee,	13		
Georgia,	10		
Louisiana,	6		
	160		97

*By Legislature.

It is supposed that the remaining States have voted as follows:

<i>Taylor.</i>		<i>Cass.</i>	
Florida,	3	Alabama,	9
Add	100	Mississippi,	6
	—	Arkansas,	3
Taylor,	163	Iowa,	4
Cass,	127	Texas,	4
	—	Wisconsin,	4
Taylor's majority,	36		
		Add	30
			97
		Total for Cass,	127

The electors in each State meet in the capital of their respective States on the fifth day of December, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. If any elector is absent, his place is supplied by a vote of the others. The vote is then cast for President and Vice President, and one certified copy is sent by special messenger to Washington, and another by mail, and the certificates

After going on a ride with [Ellery Channing](#) to Sudbury and Nobscot hill, [Waldo Emerson](#) delivered a brief and well-received address at the Grand Soirée of the Manchester Athenæum in the Manchester Free Trade Hall, a hall that seated 8,000 persons.



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Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, I feel myself a little in the position of some countrymen of mine who I remember, when a deputation of the Sauks and Foxes came to the capital of Massachusetts, and were received there at the senate house by Governor Everett. Impressed a little with the greatness of the population about them and certainly with the new splendour and wealth of such cities as they had passed through and entered, the red men said, after hearing the congratulations of the governor, "We have no land to put our words on, sir, and yet our words are true." I have no land here to put my words on, and yet I hope they are true.

It gives me great pleasure to see this anniversary of the Athenaeum; it gives me pleasure to sit near the distinguished gentlemen who have addressed you; and yet it has seemed to me whilst they spoke, that for many years I have never been near to them. The arguments of the league and its leaders are known and repeated in every quarter of the globe, and certainly by all the friends of free-trade in America. And, sir, when I came to sea, in the ship which brought me here, on the table in the cabin lay your History of Europe; the property, I suppose, of the ship, or the captain, as a sort of pro-gramme or play bill to instruct the seafaring New Englander, who was coming to Europe, in the events and institutions that awaited him here. I have seen other gentlemen here this evening whose gaiety and genius is certainly almost as familiarly known to my own friends and countrymen as it is here. Why, the drawings, caricatures, and the wit of Punch, go duly every fortnight, to every book shop and every book club, and to every boy and girl, in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. So I find it with all the names with which your institution and your present meeting presents me.

But these compliments, though true, would come better from those who better understood and felt these matters than I can hope to do; and I pass from that to what I know will interest those gentlemen very much more than their own praises namely, that which really draws me to the shores of England that which is good on holidays and working days that which is good in one century and in another century; that which draws the solitary American to wish to see England, sir, is the moral peculiarity of the Saxon race. It is that commanding sense of right and wrong, it is that honesty of performance, it is that which is the imperial trait which has given to this race the sceptre of the globe. I see it equally as the foundation of the aristocratic character of the people, which, though it may perhaps sometimes lose sight of its origin, and wander into strange vagaries, if it lose that moral quality, will be paralysed, and cease to be; and I see it no less in the honesty of performance in trade and manufactures, and in the mechanics' shops, in that solidity and thoroughness of work which is the national badge. This conscience is one element; and the other is that habit of friendship, if I may so call it, that fidelity of fellowship, which I see here running through all classes, that elects all worthy individuals to a fraternity of kind offices, filling them



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with a warm, staunch fellowship and support from year to year, from youth to age; and which stands in very strong contrast with the short-lived connection, with the excess of courtesy and the very superficial attachments which exist in other races an affection, an attachment, a permanence of regard, which is alike lovely and honourable to those who render and to those who receive it. (Applause.)

Mr. Chairman, in looking at these traits in the English character, it has given me great pleasure to observe that in this time of commercial disaster, in this time of gloom, of bankruptcy / of affliction, and of beggary in the neighbouring districts, the Athenæum has chosen to hold, with its usual spirit, this its anniversary. It seemed to me, because of these peculiarities which belong to the English character, a certain duty well becoming the managers of the institution; they seemed to me to say, "For all that has come and gone, yet we shall not abate the spirit or the splendour of our annual feast; no, not by an oak leaf; no, not by a chaplet." And I wish to say that I was brought up from my childhood in the belief that this British island from which my forefathers came was not a lotus garden, was not a paradise of serene skies and roses, a masque and merriment all the year round; no! but a cold, foggy, mournful country, bearing no fruit well in the open air, but robust men and virtuous women, and these, too, of a certain wonderful fibre and endurance a certain people whose very good qualities were not very swift to show themselves whose virtues, as I was told, never came out until they quarrelled. (Laughter and applause.)

I Was told, to use a country phrase of ours, that they did not strike twelve the first time (laughter) good lovers they were, and good haters they were: that you could not know much of them till you had seen them long, and could not know anything good of them until you had seen them in action; in their prosperity, it was said, they were apt to be a little moody, a little nervous and dumpish, but that in adversity they were grand. (Laughter.) And I ask you if the wise ancient did not hold in less esteem that bark which was parting from its native port with all colours flying, than that ship which was a proved sailor, which was coming back with battered sides, and torn canvass, and stripped of all her banners, yet having ridden out the storm?

And so I felt towards this aged England. When I see her now, that the possessions, the trophies, the honours, and also the infirmities of a thousand years are gathered around her, connected, irretrievably as she is to so many ancient customs not suddenly to be changed; oppressed as she is by the transitions of trade, by the new and all-incalculable modes, and fabrics, and arts, and machines, and competing populations; yet, with all this pressing upon her, that she is not dispirited, not weak, but strong, very well remembering that she has seen many dark days before, knowing with a kind of instinct that she can see, with her old eyes, a little better in a cloudy day; and in the battle, in the storm, and in calamity, feeling a stout vigour and a pulse like a cannon. (Applause.) When I see this when I



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see that in her old age she is not decrepit, but is still daring to believe in her power of endurance, of expansion, then I say "Hail, mother of nations, mother of heroes, all hail; still equal to the time, with a strength still equal to the hour, with a spirit wise to entertain, and swift to execute, a policy that the heart and mind mankind at this moment requires, and thereby hospitable to the foreigner, and a true home to her own generous and thoughtful children" So be it; long, long be it so from age to age! If it is not so if her courage is to go down with the momentary calamities of her commerce and her trade I will go back to the capes of Massachusetts and to my little Indian stream, and say to my countrymen, "The old race is all gone, and if the hope and elasticity of mankind exist, they must be found on the ranges of the Alleghanies, or nowhere." (Loud applause.)



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Lecture²⁵

DATE	PLACE	TOPIC
March 1848 (?)	Lexington MA; Robbins Building (?)	“Economy” (?)
November 22, Wednesday, 1848, at 7:30PM	Salem MA; Lyceum Hall	“Student Life in New England, Its Economy”
December 20, Wednesday, 1848, at 7:30PM	Gloucester MA; Town Hall	“Economy — Illustrated by the Life of a Student”

25. From Bradley P. Dean and Ronald Wesley Hoag's THOREAU'S LECTURES BEFORE WALDEN:
AN ANNOTATED CALENDAR.



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Narrative of Event:

On May 19, 1848, [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote a letter to his friend Horace Greeley, the editor of the widely read New-York [Tribune](#) (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, pages 223-25). In it he included a long paragraph on the economy of his life in the woods at [Walden Pond](#), a paragraph that paraphrased portions of “Economy,” his first “Walden; or, Life in the Woods” lecture. Much impressed, Greeley printed the slightly revised passage in his newspaper, along with some of his own laudatory remarks, under the title “A Lesson for Young Poets.” [You will find Greeley’s 25 May 1848 article on the following screen.]



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We are continually receiving letters from young gentlemen who deem themselves born to enlighten the world in some way – to “strike the sounding lyre,” or from the Editorial tripod dispense wisdom and guidance to an instructed and admiring world. These generally want to know why they cannot be employed in our establishment, or find a publisher for their poems, or a chance in some shape to astonish mankind and earn a livelihood by letters. – To this large and increasing class, we wish to propound one question: “Suppose all who desire to live by Literature or Trade could find places, who would hoe the needful corn or dig the indispensable potatoes?” – But we purposed in beginning to ask their attention to the following extract from a private letter we have just received from a very different sort of literary youth – a thorough classical scholar, true poet (though he rarely or never wrote verses,) and never sought to make a livelihood by his writings, though there are not six men in America who can surpass them. We feel indeed honored by his friendship, and in the course of a private letter we have just received from him he casually says:

“For the last five years, I have supported myself solely by the labor of my hands. I have not received one cent from any other source; and this has cost me so little time – say, a month in the Spring and another in the Autumn – doing the coarsest work of all kinds, that I have probably enjoyed more leisure for literary pursuits than any contemporary. For more than two years past, I have lived alone in the woods, in a good plastered and shingled house entirely of my own building, earning only what I wanted, and sticking to my proper work. The fact is, Man need not live by the sweat of his brow – unless he sweats easier than I do – he needs so little. For two years and two months, all my expenses have amounted to but 27 cents a week, and I have fared gloriously in all respects. If a man must have money – and he needs but the smallest amount – the true and independent way to earn it is by day-labor with his “Scholars are apt to think themselves privileged to complain as if their lot were a peculiarly hard one. How much have we heard about the attainment of knowledge under difficulties – of poets starving in garrets – of literary men depending on the patronage of the wealthy, and finally dying mad! It is time that men sang another song. – There is no reason why the scholar, who professes to be a little wiser than the mass of men, should not do his work in the ditch occasionally, and, by means of his superior wisdom, make much less suffice for him. A wise man will not be unfortunate. How otherwise would you know that he was not a fool?”

– We trust our friend will pardon the liberty we have taken in printing the foregoing, since we are sure of effecting signal good thereby. We have no idea of making a hero of him. Our object is simply to shame the herd of pusillanimous creatures who whine out their laziness in bad verses, and execrate the stupidity of publishers and readers who will not buy these maudlin effusions at the paternal estimate of their value, and thus spare them the dire necessity of doing something useful for a living. It is only **their** paltriness that elevates our independent friend above the level of ordinary manhood, and whenever they shall rise to the level of true self-respect, his course will no longer be remarkable.

“What!” says one of them, “do you mean that every one must hoe corn or swing the sledge – that no life is useful or honorable but one of rude manual toil.” – No, Sir; we say no such thing. – If any one is sought out, required, demanded, for some vocation specially intellectual, let him embrace it and live by it. But the general rule is that Labor – that labor which produces food and clothes and shelter – is every man’s duty and destiny, for which he should be fitted, in which he should be willing to do his part manfully. But let him study, and meditate, and cultivate his nobler faculties as he shall find opportunity; and when ever a career of intellectual exertion shall open before him, let him embrace it if he be inclined and qualified. But to coin his thoughts into some marketable semblance, disdain useful labor of the hands because he had a facility of writing, and go crying his mental wares in the market, seeking to exchange them for bread and clothes – this is most degrading and despicable. Shall not the world outgrow such shabbiness?



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Greeley's article attracted much national attention and comment (for discussion, see lecture 20 below). [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), who was living in Salem at the time, may have informed the managers of the local lyceum that Thoreau was the anonymous author of the paragraph in the [Tribune](#) and that the paragraph was part of a lecture Thoreau had written about his life in the Walden Woods. In any event, soon after the [Tribune](#) article appeared, the managers voted to invite Thoreau to deliver this lecture. The invitation, however, didn't reach him until October, when Hawthorne himself, as the new corresponding secretary of the Salem Lyceum, sent the following letter on the twenty-first:²⁶

The Managers of the Salem Lyceum, some time ago, voted that you should be requested to deliver a Lecture before that Institution, during the approaching season. I know not whether Mr Chever, the late corresponding Secretary, communicated the vote to you; at all events, no answer has been received, and, as Mr Chever's succesor in office, I am instructed to repeat the invitation. Permit me to add my own earnest wishes that you will accept it – and also, laying aside my official dignity, to express my wife's desire and my own that you will be our guest, if you do come.

In case of your compliance, the Managers would be glad to know at what time it will best suit you to deliver the Lecture.

Hawthorne added in a postscript, "I live at No 14, Mall Street — where I shall be very happy to see you. The stated fee for Lectures is \$20." Very likely this was the first lecture Thoreau was actually paid to deliver.

After receiving Thoreau's acceptance, Hawthorne wrote to him again on 20 November²⁷ to request his almost immediate presence in Salem:

I did not sooner write you, because there were pre-engagements for the two or three first lectures, so that I could not arrange matters to have you come during the present month. But, as it happens, the expected lectures have failed us; and we now depend on you to come this very next Wednesday. I shall announce you in the paper of tomorrow, so you must come. I regret that I could not give you longer notice.

We shall expect you on Wednesday, at No 14 Mall. Street.

After his signature, Hawthorne added two more thoughts:²⁸

If it is utterly impossible for you to come, pray write me a line so that I may get it Wednesday morning. But, by all means, come.

This Secretaryship is an intolerable bore. I have travelled thirty miles, this wet day for no other business.

Short notice notwithstanding, Thoreau answered Hawthorne's call and, two days after the letter was penned, gave the second lecture in a course of twenty before the Salem Lyceum. Other lecturers that year included [Daniel Webster](#), [Louis Agassiz](#), Theodore Parker, [Waldo Emerson](#), Charles Sumner, and [Horace Mann, Sr.](#) (THE MASSACHUSETTS LYCEUM DURING THE AMERICAN RENAISSANCE, page 19).

The day after his lecture, Thoreau accompanied Hawthorne to Craigie House, the Cambridge home of [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#), where they dined with Longfellow and [Ellery Channing II](#).

26. CORRESPONDENCE, pages 230-31.

27. CORRESPONDENCE, page 233.

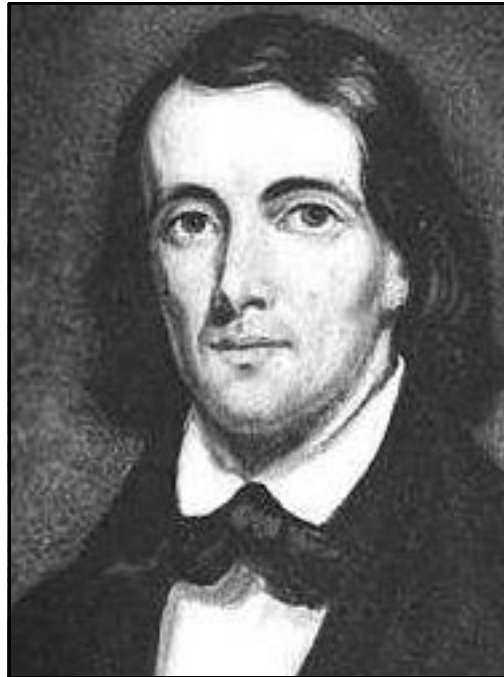
28. CORRESPONDENCE, pages 233-34.



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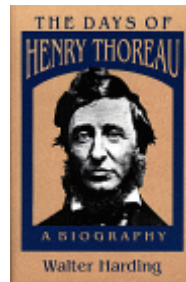


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On 21 November Hawthorne had written to Longfellow about Thoreau, remarking, “You would find him well worth knowing: he is a man of thought and originality; with a certain iron-poker-ishness, and uncompromising stiffness in his mental character, which is interesting, though it grows wearisome on close and frequent acquaintance.”²⁹ Longfellow, however, had likely already formed his own impression of Thoreau, for the two men had dined together at Emerson’s house only a week earlier (Walter Roy Harding’s *THE DAYS OF HENRY THOREAU: A BIOGRAPHY*, page 237).



Advertisements, Reviews, and Responses:

On the last day of October and throughout the first half of November 1848, the Salem Register, Salem Observer, and Salem Tri-Weekly Gazette announced a partial list of “eminent lecturers” who would appear in the course. Among them were Webster, Agassiz, Horace Mann, Sr., Emerson, and “Henry S. Thoreau, of Concord, N.H.” (For the Wednesday evening lectures, the “whole number of tickets has been limited to six hundred and thirty,” the Register reported.) Although Hawthorne had told Thoreau he would advertise Thoreau’s appearance at the Salem Lyceum in the local newspapers beginning on 21 November, we have been unable to locate any advertisements in Salem newspapers for that or the following day.

The Salem Observer on 25 November 1848 carried the following review, praising Thoreau’s lecture, identifying him as the reclusive scholar of New-York Tribune fame, and remarking — not uncharitably —

29.Samuel Longfellow, *THE LIFE OF HENRY WORDSWORTH LONGFELLOW*, 2 volumes (Boston: Ticknor, 1886), 2:136.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Thoreau's likeness to Emerson:

Mr. Thoreau, of Concord, gave his auditors a lecture on Wednesday evening, sufficiently **Emersonian** to have come from the great philosopher himself. We were reminded of Emerson continually. In thought, style & delivery, the similarity was equally obvious. There was the same keen philosophy running through him, the same jutting forth of "brilliant edges of meaning" as Gilfillan has it. Even in tone of voice, Emerson was brought strikingly to the ear; and in personal appearance also, we fancied some little resemblance. The close likeness between the two would almost justify a charge of plagiarism, were it not that Mr. Thoreau's lecture furnished ample proof of being a native product, by affording all the charm of an original. Rather than an imitation of Emerson, it was the unfolding of a like mind with his; as if the two men had grown in the same soil and under the same culture.

The reader may remember having recently seen an article from the N. Y. Tribune describing the recluse life led by a scholar, who supported himself by manual labor, and on a regime which cost only **twenty seven cents a week**, making it necessary to labor but six weeks to provide sufficient of the necessaries of life to serve the balance of the year. Mr. Thoreau is the hero of that story — although he claims no heroism, considering himself simply as an economist.

The subject of this lecture was Economy, illustrated by the experiment mentioned. — This was done in an admirable manner, in a strain of exquisite humor, with a strong under current of delicate satire against the follies of the times. Then there were interspersed observations, speculations, and suggestions upon dress, fashions, food, dwellings, furniture, &c.&c., sufficiently queer to keep the audience in almost constant mirth, and sufficiently wise and new to afford many good practical hints and precepts.

The performance has created "quite a sensation" amongst the Lyceum goers.

Another newspaper review of sorts was the summary of the then-concluding lecture season in the area by a correspondent to the Boston Daily Evening Traveller. Without specifying which of Thoreau's Salem lectures was intended — he had given another there on 28 February 1849 — the correspondent on 16 March 1849 cited "a delectable compound of oddity, wit and transcendentalism, from Mr. Thoreau, of Concord," among a few other worthy presentations.

Notably, on the day of Thoreau's second Salem lecture that season, Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, in a letter to



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[Mrs. Mary Peabody Mann](#), praised his earlier November delivery as follows:³⁰

This evening Mr. Thoreau is going to lecture and will stay with us. His lecture before was so enchanting; such a revelation of nature in all its exquisite details of wood-thrushes, squirrels, sunshine, mists and shadows, fresh, vernal odors, pine-tree ocean melodies, that my ear rang with music, and I seemed to have been wandering through copse and dingle! Mr. Thoreau has risen above all his arrogance of manner, and is as gentle, simple, ruddy, and meek as all geniuses should be; and now his great blue eyes fairly outshine and put into shade a nose which I once thought must make him uncomely forever.

Description of Topic:

During the twenty-one months that had elapsed since Thoreau's delivery of "History of Myself" in mid-February 1847, he had carefully revised his earlier "Walden; or, Life in the Woods" manuscript. As J. Lyndon Shanley points out, "The effect and apparent intention of his work ... was to tidy up and to increase the clarity and force of the first version, which he had written at the pond."³¹ Shanley also notes that the second version of the manuscript is not much longer than the first (both versions contained the text of three lectures, although Thoreau never delivered a third lecture from the earlier manuscript) and that Thoreau's handwriting in the second version "is the most clearly formed in the whole manuscript" of WALDEN.³² But because Shanley sees the WALDEN manuscript almost solely as an evolving book, he failed to consider why the earlier (Shanley's "version I") and later (his versions II and III) manuscripts are about the same length and why Thoreau wrote the later of the two manuscripts more carefully. The reason is not that Thoreau was simply revising a book manuscript but that he was using the earlier version of the manuscript, version I, as the basis for preparing the reading drafts for a course of three lectures, versions II and III. Once written, he apparently planned to keep those reading drafts intact as lectures so that he could read from them while continuing to expand the larger "Walden; or, Life in the Woods" manuscript into a book. If that was indeed his plan, it was well-founded, for the first lecture in that course, his early "Economy" lecture, shares with his early "Life without Principle" lecture the honor of being his most frequently delivered lecture, each being delivered nine times.

The lecture Thoreau delivered in Salem on this date is much shorter than but nonetheless quite similar to the "Economy" chapter of WALDEN. A small amount of material in the lecture was subsequently omitted from the published chapter. For example, a close summary of a later delivery of this same lecture text published in the Portland [Transcript](#) of 31 March 1849 (see lecture 20 below) includes the paraphrase, "Here we walked

30. Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, *MEMORIES OF HAWTHORNE* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1897), pages 92-93.

31. Shanley, *THE MAKING OF WALDEN*, page 28.

32. In *THE MAKING OF WALDEN*, page 28, Shanley makes what we regard as a misleading distinction between versions II and III of the WALDEN manuscript. After noting that Thoreau "revised [version II] and then wrote version III so close upon II that they almost seem one piece," Shanley says, "It is certain, however, that there are two versions here and that Thoreau wrote III after II; not only are the ink and handwriting different, but also III contains revisions of parts of II" (p. 28). We submit that Thoreau wrote version II sequentially, from front to back, as three clear-text reading drafts for lecturing and that version III represents various types of revisions to those reading drafts. For instance, the first eight pages of version II are not extant, but the first five pages of version III are. Because the pin perforations in the center-left margins of the leaf containing version II, page 9, match exactly the pin perforations of the leaves containing version III, page 5, Thoreau clearly used both versions in a single text at one time, and we can surmise that he derived the text of version III, pages 1-5, from revising the text on the now non-extant pages 1-8 of version II. Generally speaking, Thoreau's organic or incremental method of composition, by which we mean the way he added material to and suppressed material from his constantly evolving texts over time rather than simply rewrote his revised texts, renders misleading almost any description employing mechanical terms, such as "draft," "stage," or "version." For descriptions and discussions of Thoreau's method of composition, see William L. Howarth, *THE LITERARY MANUSCRIPTS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1974), pages xxix-xxx; Bradley P. Dean, "Reconstructions of Thoreau's Early 'Life without Principle' Lectures," *STUDIES IN THE AMERICAN RENAISSANCE* 1987, pages 288-91; and Dean, "The Sound of a Flail: Reconstructions of Thoreau's Early 'Life without Principle' Lectures," M.A. thesis, Eastern Washington University, 1984, pages 99-118. Copies of Dean's thesis are available at WaChenE; CtU; the Thoreau Textual Center, CU-SB; and the Thoreau Society Archives, MCo.



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cautiously about the earth, but in Typee trees grew to the height of 60 feet, and the natives easily ran up to their tops.”

With just a few exceptions, the manuscript pages Thoreau read from in Salem are now housed at CSmH (HM 924). Many of those pages refer to the “audience” or those who “hear” the “lecture,” whereas in the published version of those passages in WALDEN the corresponding references are to “readers” or those who “read” the “book.” Thoreau also made a few minor changes for this lecture, or possibly a later delivery of this lecture, to accommodate his audience. For instance, where he had originally written “I have travelled a good deal in Concord,” he interlined over “Concord” in pencil “my native town”; and elsewhere in the manuscript he changed “this town” (Concord) to “this city” (either Salem or a later venue).

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)



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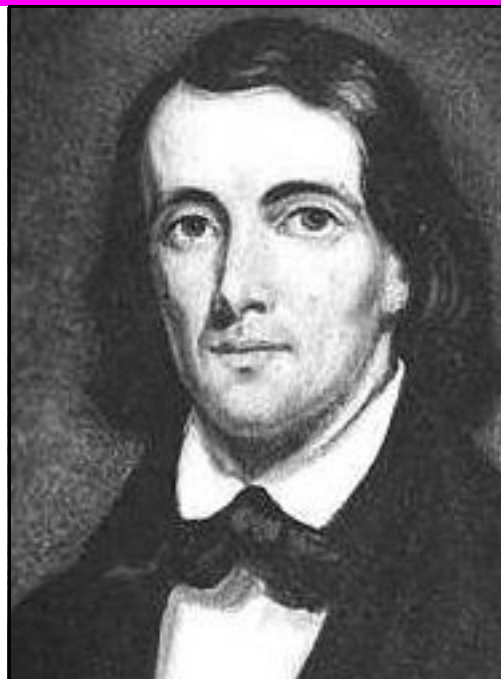
1849

[James Thomas Fields](#)'s POEMS were published in [Boston](#) by the firm in which he was becoming a junior partner, the firm of [William D. Ticknor & Co.](#)

JAMES T. FIELD'S POEMS

[Ellery Channing](#)'s THE WOODMAN, AND OTHER POEMS (Boston: James Munroe & company).

THE WOODMAN, &C., &C.



This volume would be in [Henry Thoreau](#)'s personal library. He would include a portion of "Baker Farm" and a portion of "Walden Spring" in [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), and a portion of "Old Sudbury Inn" in his journal for the autumn of this year.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

BAKER FARM.

Thy entry is a pleasant field,
Which some mossy fruit trees yield
Partly to a ruddy brook,
By gliding musquash undertook,
And mercurial trout
Darting about.

Cell of seclusion,
Haunt of old time,
Rid of confusion,
Empty of crime,

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Landscape! where the richest element
Is a little sunshine innocent;
In thy insidious marsh,
In thy cold opaque wood,
Thy artless meadow,
And forked orchard's writhing mood,
Still Baker Farm!
There lies in them a fourfold charm.

Alien art thou to God and Devil!
Man too forsakes thee,
No one om's to revel
On thy rail-fenced lea,
Save gleaning Silence gray-headed,
Who drains the frozen apple red,
Thin jar of winter's jam,
Which he will with gipsy sugar cram.

And here a Poet builded,
In the completed years,
For behold a trivial cabin
That to destruction steers.
Should we judge it was built?
Rather by kind nature spilt
To interfere with circumstance,
And put a comma to the verse
And west trends blue Fairhaven bay,
O'er whose stained rocks the white pines sway,
And south slopes Nobscot grand,
And north the still Cliffs stand.

Pan of unwrinkled cream,
May some Poet dash thee in his churn,
And with thy beauty mad,
Verse thee in rhymes that burn;
Thy beauty, — the beauty of Baker Farm!
In the drying field,
And the knotty tree,
In hassock and bield,
And marshes at sea!

Thou art expunged from to-day,
Rigid in parks of thy own,
Where soberly shifts the play,
And the wind sighs in monotone.
Debate with no man hast thou,
With questions art never perplexed,
As tame at the first sight as now,
In thy plain, russet gabardine dressed.
I would hint at thy religion,
Hadst thou any,
Piny fastness of wild pigeon,
Squirrel's litany,
Never thumbed a gilt Prayer Book,
Here the cawing, sable rook!

Art thou orphan of a deed,
Title that a court can read,
Or dost thou stand
For the entertaining land,
That no man owns,
Pure grass and stones?

Idleness is in the preaching,



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Simpleness is all the teaching,
Churches in the steepled woods,
Galleries in green solitudes,
Fretted never by a noise,
Eloquence that each enjoys.

Here humanity may trow,
It is feasible to slough
The corollary of the village,
Lies, thefts, clothes, meats, and tillage!
Come, ye who love,
And ye who hate,
Children of the Holy Dove,
And Guy Faux of the State,
And hang conspiracies,
From the tough rafters of the trees!

Still Baker Farm!
So fair a lesson thou dost set,
Commensurately wise,
Lesson no one may forget.
Consistent sanctity,
Value that cannot be spent,
Volume that cannot be lent,
Passable to me and thee,
For Heaven thou art meant!

WALDEN SPRING.

Whisper ye leaves your lyrics in my ear,
Carol thou glittering bird thy summer song,
And flowers, and grass, and mosses on the rocks,
And the lull woods, lead me in sober aisles,
And may I seek this happy day the Cliffs,
When fluid summer melts all ores in one,
Both in the air, the water; and the ground.
And so I walked beyond the last, gray house,
And o'er the upland glanced, and down the mead,
Then turning went into the oaken copse,—
Heroic underwoods that take the air
With freedom, nor respect their parent's death.
Yet a few steps, then welled a cryptic spring,
Whose temperate nectar palls not on the taste,
Dancing in yellow circles on the sand,
And carving through the ooze a crystal bowl.
Here sometime have I drank a bumper rare,
Wetting parched lips, from a sleek, emerald leaf,
Nursed at the fountain's breast, and neatly filled
The forest-cup, filled by a woodland hand,
That from familiar things draws sudden use,
Strange to the civic eye, to Walden plain.
And resting there after my thirst was quenched,
Beneath the curtain of a civil oak,
That muses near this water and the sky,
I tried some names with which to grave this fount.
And as I dreamed of these, I marked the roof,
Then newly built above the placid spring,
Resting upon some awkward masonry.
In truth our village has become a butt
For one of these fleet railroad shafts, and o'er
Our peaceful plain, its soothing sound is — Concord,
Four times and more each day a rumbling train
Of painted cars rolls on the iron road,
Prefigured in its advent by sharp screams



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That Pandemonium satisfied should hear.
The steaming tug athirst, and lacking drink,
The railroad eye direct with fatal stroke
Smote the spring's covert, and by leaden drain
Thieved its cold crystal for the engine's breast.
Strange! that the playful current from the woods,
Should drag the freighted train, chatting with fire,
And point the tarnished rail with man and trade.

OLD SUDBURY INN.

Who set the oaks
Along the road?
Was it not nature's hand,
Old Sudbury Inn! where I have stood
And wondered at the sight,
The oaks my delight?

And the elms,
All boldly branching to the sky,
And the interminable forests,
Old Sudbury Inn! that wash thee nigh
On every side,
With a green and rustling tide:

The oaks and elms,
And the surrounding woods,
And Nobscot rude,
Old Sudbury Inn! creature of moods,
That I could find
Well suited to the custom of my mind.

Most homely seat!
Where nature eats her frugal meals,
And studies to outwit,
Old Sudbury Inn! that thy inside reveals,
Long mayst thou be,
More than a match for her and me.

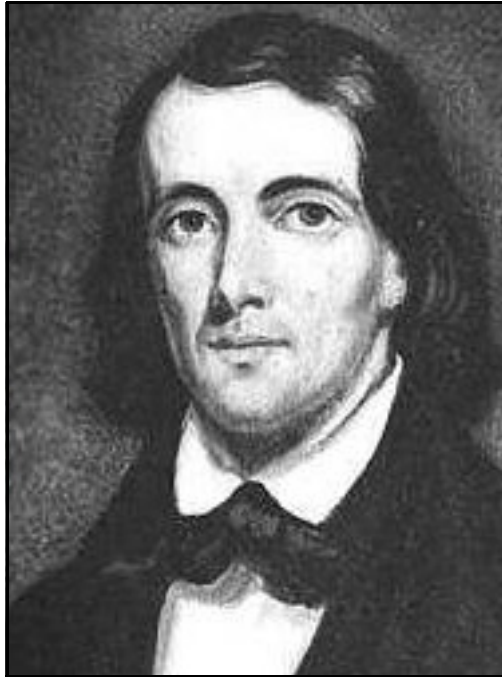


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April: During this month, in Concord, the Channings moved from their cottage farm on Punkawtasset Hill into a 1767 home on Main Street opposite the Thoreaus, with an acre lot fronting on the Sudbury River. In the years he had lived on his Concord farm's 20 acres, [Ellery Channing](#) had never raised a crop of any kind.



"What a gump!...On the whole, he is but little better than an idiot. He should have been whipt often and soundly in his boyhood; and as he escaped such wholesome discipline then, it might be well to bestow it now."

— [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), about [Ellery Channing](#)



April 13, Friday: [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) gave birth to Walter Channing in their home on Main Street opposite the Thoreaus. They were living on an income of about \$400.⁰⁰ a year, most of it from proud grandpa [Dr. Walter Channing](#) — yet wages for domestics were so reasonable that they were able to utilize an [Irish](#) woman, Margaret.

June 25, Monday: The new father [Ellery Channing](#) signed the deed for the house in which the family had been living on Main Street opposite the Thoreaus.

For the previous 5 years [Lysander Spooner](#) had subsisted on but \$200 a year (remarkably little, for a day laborer's pittance would have amounted to some \$350 per year — although such a laborer would have needed to eat hardy in order to sustain himself during his daily backbreaking stint). He explained to his rich patron [Gerrit Smith](#) why he was so reluctant to seek a "civil service" (political patronage) position at the Boston custom house: "I should consider it less dishonest to go upon the highway and make my living by force than to get it in these ways — for I should then, in addition to the robbery, practice the fraud of pretending to do it legally."



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October 9-17: As [Henry Thoreau](#) would relate in [CAPE COD](#), he and [Ellery Channing](#) left Concord on the morning of the 9th with the agenda of taking the steamer from Boston to Provincetown and walking “up” [Cape Cod](#) (walking, that is, toward the south, toward its connection with the mainland). This was his initial excursion to the Cape, probably upon wrapping up work on Draft C of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#). The storm had, however, interrupted the steamer schedules and had caused, at Cohasset, the wreck of the *St. John*, one of the “coffin ships” loaded to the gunnels with Irish refugees. Changing their plans the duo boarded the southbound railroad for Cohasset to observe the aftermath of the shipwreck before continuing on to Bridgewater, where they spent the night.³³



TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS

33. With whom did they spend the night in the little town of Bridgewater MA? Did Thoreau perchance have any Dunbar cousins still residing in this locality? Or, possibly, would the duo have stayed with Thoreau's Harvard classmate William Allen there?



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CAPE COD: We left Concord, Massachusetts, on Tuesday, October 9th, 1849. On reaching Boston, we found that the Provincetown steamer, which should have got in the day before, had not yet arrived, on account of a violent storm; and, as we noticed in the streets a handbill headed, "Death! 145 lives lost at Cohasset!" we decided to go by way of Cohasset. We found many Irish in the cars, going to identify bodies and to sympathize with the survivors, and also to attend the funeral which was to take place in the afternoon; -and when we arrived at Cohasset, it appeared that nearly all the passengers were bound for the beach, which was about a mile distant, and many other persons were flocking in from the neighboring country. There were several hundreds of them streaming off over Cohasset common in that direction -some on foot and some in wagons- and, among them, were some sportsmen in their hunting jackets, with their guns and game-bags and dogs. As we passed the grave-yard we saw a large hole, like a cellar, freshly dug there, and, just before reaching the shore, by a pleasantly winding and rocky road, we met several hay-riggings and farm wagons coming away toward the meeting-house, each loaded with three large, rough deal boxes. We did not need to ask what was in them. The owners of the wagons were made the undertakers. Many horses in carriages were fastened to the fences near the shore, and, for a mile or more, up and down, the beach was covered with people looking out for bodies and examining the fragments of the wreck. There was a small island called Brush Island, with a hut on it, lying just off the shore. This is said to be the rockiest shore in Massachusetts, from Nantasket to Scituate -hard sienitic rocks, which the waves have laid bare, but have not been able to crumble. It has been the scene of many a shipwreck.

PEOPLE OF
CAPE COD

ELLERY CHANNING

Kathryn Schulz, who writes for The New Yorker, has glanced into the cold eyes of Henry Thoreau, the "Pond Scum" author of such an ugly analysis:

On the evening of October 6, 1849, the hundred and twenty people aboard the brig St. John threw a party. The St. John was a so-called famine ship: Boston-bound from Galway, it was filled with passengers fleeing the mass starvation then devastating Ireland. They had been at sea for a month; now, with less than a day's sail remaining, they celebrated the imminent end of their journey and, they hoped, the beginning of a better life in America. Early the next morning, the ship was caught in a northeaster, driven toward shore, and dashed upon the rocks just outside Cohasset Harbor. Those on deck were swept overboard. Those below deck drowned when the hull smashed open. Within an hour, the ship had broken up entirely. All but nine crew members and roughly a dozen passengers perished.

Two days later, a thirty-two-year-old Massachusetts native, en route from Concord to Cape Cod, got word of the disaster and detoured to Cohasset to see it for himself. When he arrived,



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fragments of the wreck were scattered across the strand. Those victims who had already washed ashore lay in rough wooden boxes on a nearby hillside. The living were trying to identify the dead – a difficult task, since some of the bodies were bloated from drowning, while others had struck repeatedly against the rocks. Out of sentiment or to save labor, the bodies of children were placed alongside their mothers in the same coffin. The visitor from Concord, surveying all this, found himself unmoved. "On the whole," he wrote, "it was not so impressive a scene as I might have expected. If I had found one body cast upon the beach in some lonely place, it would have affected me more. I sympathized rather with the winds and waves, as if to toss and mangle these poor human bodies was the order of the day. If this was the law of Nature, why waste any time in awe or pity?" This impassive witness also had stern words for those who, undone by the tragedy, could no longer enjoy strolling along the beach. Surely, he admonished, "its beauty was enhanced by wrecks like this, and it acquired thus a rarer and sublimer beauty still."

Who was this cold-eyed man who saw in loss of life only aesthetic gain, who identified not with the drowned or the bereaved but with the storm? This was Henry David Thoreau, that great partisan of the pond, describing his visit to Cohasset in "Cape Cod." That book is not particularly well known today, but if Thoreau's chilly tone in it seems surprising, it is because, in a curious way, "Walden" is not well known, either. Like many canonized works, it is more revered than read, so it exists for most people only as a dim impression retained from adolescence or as the source of a few famous lines: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately." "If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them." "Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!"

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Meanwhile [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) and the Channing children [Margaret Fuller Channing](#) and [Caroline Sturgis Channing](#) were visiting for three weeks in Rockport, Massachusetts and Mrs. [Lidian Emerson](#) and the Emerson children [Ellen Emerson](#) and [Edith Emerson](#) and [Edward Emerson](#) were spending time in [Plymouth](#).



Lidian and Eddie

Thoreau walked the shore at Cohasset with the Reverend Joseph Osgood, husband of Mrs. Ellen Sewall Osgood, seeing the gashed bodies of the drowned from the *St. John*. Thoreau and Channing walked via Cohasset and Sandwich MA, returning on the Provincetown/[Boston](#) steamer, and Thoreau, at least, perceived the shore as “naked Nature, –inhumanly sincere, wasting no thought on man.”³⁴

34. If you have scuba gear, you can swim in [Henry Thoreau](#)'s and [Ellery Channing](#)'s footsteps: the track taken in 1849 by these hikers is now more than 400 feet out, beyond the breakers at the bottom of the ocean.

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WISHING to get a better view than I had yet had of the ocean, which, we are told, covers more than two-thirds of the globe, but of which a man who lives a few miles inland may never see any trace, more than of another world, I made a visit to Cape Cod in October, 1849, another the succeeding June, and another to Truro in July, 1855; the first and last time with a single companion, the second time alone. I have spent, in all, about three weeks on the Cape; walked from Eastham to Provincetown twice on the Atlantic side, and once on the Bay side also, excepting four or five miles, and crossed the Cape half a dozen times on my way; but, having come so fresh to the sea, I have got but little salted. My readers must expect only so much saltiness as the land-breeze acquires from blowing over an arm of the sea, or is tasted on the windows and on the bark of trees twenty miles inland after September gales. I have been accustomed to make excursions to the ponds within ten miles of Concord, but latterly I have extended my excursions to the sea-shore.



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THOREAU'S 1ST VISIT TO CAPE COD

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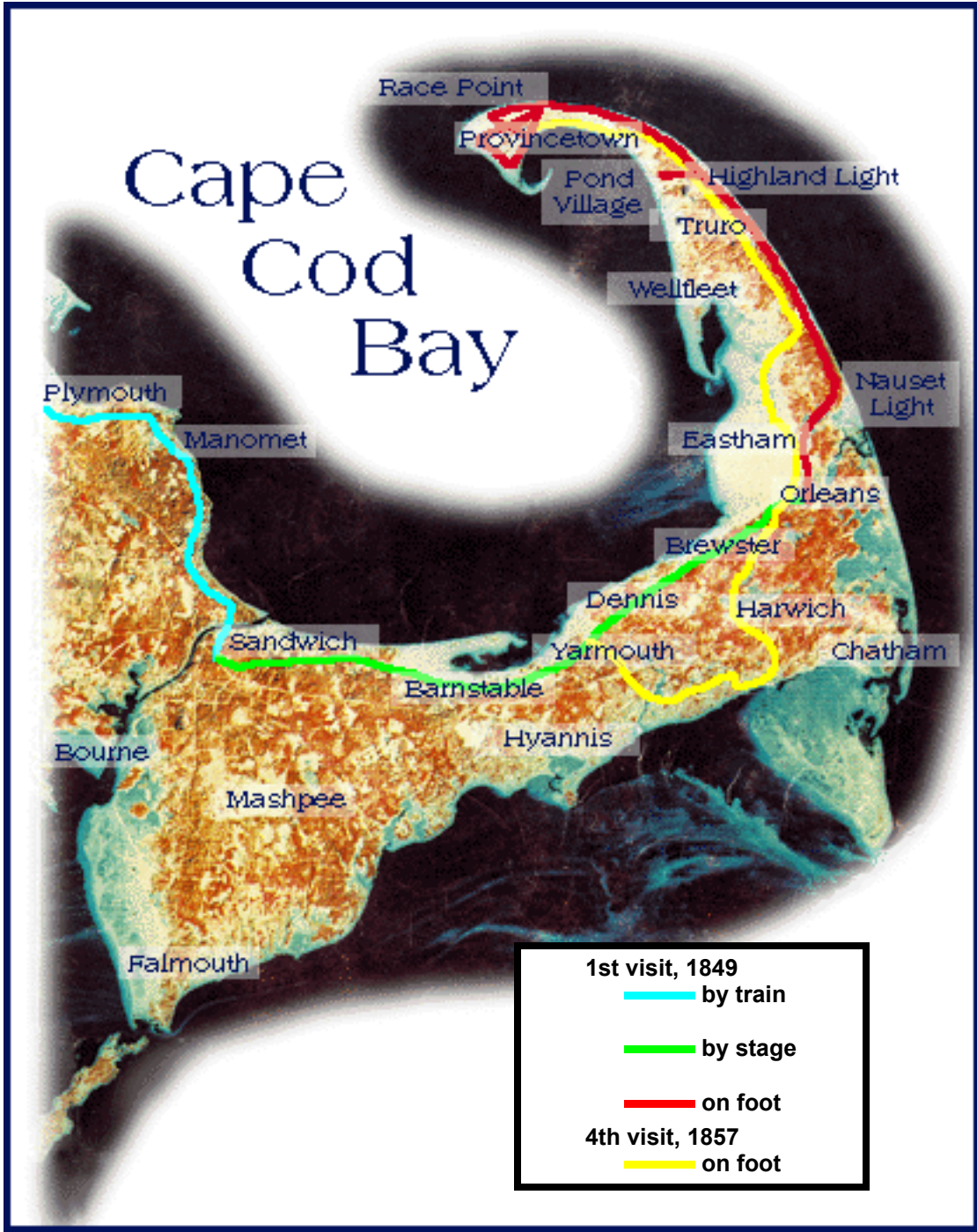
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October 11, Tuesday: It may well have been on this day that [Henry Thoreau](#) found the 1741 silver French coin in the sands of the Wellfleet ocean beach as described in [CAPE COD](#), and then proceeded impishly to exercise his walking companion [Ellery Channing](#) with delusions of [pirate](#) treasure.³⁵



TIMELINE OF SHIPWRECKS



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35. The coin Thoreau found may well have been the common “Black Dog.” During the French regime in Canada, paper currency had been in use but the lowest paper denomination had been 7 sols 6 deniers. There had remained, therefore, a need for coins of low denomination, for making change and for small transactions. The most widely used coins were those made of *billon* (low-grade silver), of which the most important was the *sou marque* illustrated below:



These coins, struck between 1738 and 1764, had circulated not only in France but also in her colonies and, prior to 1760, large shipments of them had been sent to New France (Canada). The denomination was 2 sols (24 deniers). These *sous marques* had not been very popular because their silver content was low. In circulation, they tended to turn black, and for that reason they gained the nickname “black dogs” in the French colonies of the West Indies. However, because of the continuing shortage of small change, for some time after the British conquest they had continued to circulate in Canada.



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CAPE COD: In the year 1717, a noted pirate named Bellamy was led on to the bar off Wellfleet by the captain of a *snow* which he had taken, to whom he had offered his vessel again if he would pilot him into Provincetown Harbor. Tradition says that the latter threw over a burning tar-barrel in the night, which drifted ashore, and the pirates followed it. A storm coming on, their whole fleet was wrecked, and more than a hundred dead bodies lay along the shore. Six who escaped shipwreck were executed. "At times to this day" (1793), says the historian of Wellfleet, "there are King William and Queen Mary's coppers picked up, and pieces of silver called cob-money. The violence of the seas moves the sands on the outer bar, so that at times the iron caboose of the ship [that is, Bellamy's] at low ebbs has been seen." Another tells us that, "For many years after this shipwreck, a man of a very singular and frightful aspect used every spring and autumn to be seen travelling on the Cape, who was supposed to have been one of Bellamy's crew. The presumption is that he went to some place where money had been secreted by the pirates, to get such a supply as his exigencies required. When he died, many pieces of gold were found in a girdle which he constantly wore."

As I was walking on the beach here in my last visit, looking for shells and pebbles, just after that storm which I have mentioned as moving the sand to a great depth, not knowing but I might find some cob-money, I did actually pick up a French crown piece, worth about a dollar and six cents, near high-water mark, on the still moist sand, just under the abrupt, caving base of the bank. It was of a dark slate color, and looked like a flat pebble, but still bore a very distinct and handsome head of Louis XV., and the usual legend on the reverse, *Sit Nomen Domini Benedictum* (Blessed be the Name of the Lord), a pleasing sentiment to read in the sands of the sea-shore, whatever it might be stamped on, and I also made out the date, 1741. Of course, I thought at first that it was that same old button which I have found so many times, but my knife soon showed the silver. Afterward, rambling on the bars at low tide, I cheated my companion by holding up round shells (*Scutellæ*) between my fingers, whereupon he quickly stripped and came off to me.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

It may well have been at this point that Thoreau visited the 88-year-old Wellfleet oysterman, John Young Newcomb, whom Thoreau took to be 60 or 70. To see the correct age, we need only inspect his tombstone:





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CAPE COD: Having walked about eight miles since we struck the beach, and passed the boundary between Wellfleet and Truro, a stone post in the sand, -for even this sand comes under the jurisdiction of one town or another,- we turned inland over barren hills and valleys, whither the sea, for some reason, did not follow us, and, tracing up a Hollow, discovered two or three sober-looking houses within half a mile, uncommonly near the eastern coast. Their garrets were apparently so full of chambers, that their roofs could hardly lie down straight, and we did not doubt that there was room for us there. Houses near the sea are generally low and broad. These were a story and a half high; but if you merely counted the windows in their gable-ends, you would think that there were many stories more, or, at any rate, that the half-story was the only one thought worthy of being illustrated. The great number of windows in the ends of the houses, and their irregularity in size and position, here and elsewhere on the Cape, struck us agreeably, -as if each of the various occupants who had their *cunabula* behind had punched a hole where his necessities required it, and, according to his size and stature, without regard to outside effect. There were windows for the grown folks, and windows for the children, -three or four apiece; as a certain man had a large hole cut in his barn-door for the cat, and another smaller one for the kitten. Sometimes they were so low under the eaves that I thought they must have perforated the plate beam for another apartment, and I noticed some which were triangular, to fit that part more exactly. The ends of the houses had thus as many muzzles as a revolver, and, if the inhabitants have the same habit of staring out the windows that some of our neighbors have, a traveller must stand a small chance with them.

CAT



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CAPE COD: Our host told us that the sea-clam, or hen, was not easily obtained; it was raked up, but never on the Atlantic side, only cast ashore there in small quantities in storms. The fisherman sometimes wades in water several feet deep, and thrusts a pointed stick into the sand before him. When this enters between the valves of a clam, he closes them on it, and is drawn out. It has been known to catch and hold coot and teal which were preying on it. I chanced to be on the bank of the Acushnet at New Bedford one day since this, watching some ducks, when a man informed me that, having let out his young ducks to seek their food amid the samphire (*Salicornia*) and other weeds along the river-side at low tide that morning, at length he noticed that one remained stationary, amid the weeds, something preventing it from following the others, and going to it he found its foot tightly shut in a quahog's shell. He took up both together, carried them to his home, and his wife opening the shell with a knife released the duck and cooked the quahog. The old man said that the great clams were good to eat, but that they always took out a certain part which was poisonous, before they cooked them. "People said it would kill a cat." I did not tell him that I had eaten a large one entire that afternoon, but began to think that I was tougher than a cat. He stated that pedlers came round there, and sometimes tried to sell the women folks a skimmer, but he told them that their women had got a better skimmer than *they* could make, in the shell of their clams; it was shaped just right for this purpose. -They call them "skim-alls" in some places. He also said that the sun-squawl was poisonous to handle, and when the sailors came across it, they did not meddle with it, but heaved it out of their way. I told him that I had handled it that afternoon, and had felt no ill effects as yet. But he said it made the hands itch, especially if they had previously been scratched, or if I put it into my bosom, I should find out what it was.

CAT



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CAPE COD: The light-house keeper said that when the wind blowed strong on to the shore, the waves ate fast into the bank, but when it blowed off they took no sand away; for in the former case the wind heaped up the surface of the water next to the beach, and to preserve its equilibrium a strong undertow immediately set back again into the sea which carried with it the sand and whatever else was in the way, and left the beach hard to walk on; but in the latter case the undertow set on, and carried the sand with it, so that it was particularly difficult for shipwrecked men to get to land when the wind blowed on to the shore, but easier when it blowed off. This undertow, meeting the next surface wave on the bar which itself has made, forms part of the dam over which the latter breaks, as over an upright wall. The sea thus plays with the land holding a sand-bar in its mouth awhile before it swallows it, as a cat plays with a mouse; but the fatal gripe is sure to come at last. The sea sends its rapacious east wind to rob the land, but before the former has got far with its prey, the land sends its honest west wind to recover some of its own. But, according to Lieutenant Davis, the forms, extent, and distribution of sand-bars and banks are principally determined, not by winds and waves, but by tides.

PEOPLE OF
CAPE COD

CAT

CHARLES HENRY DAVIS



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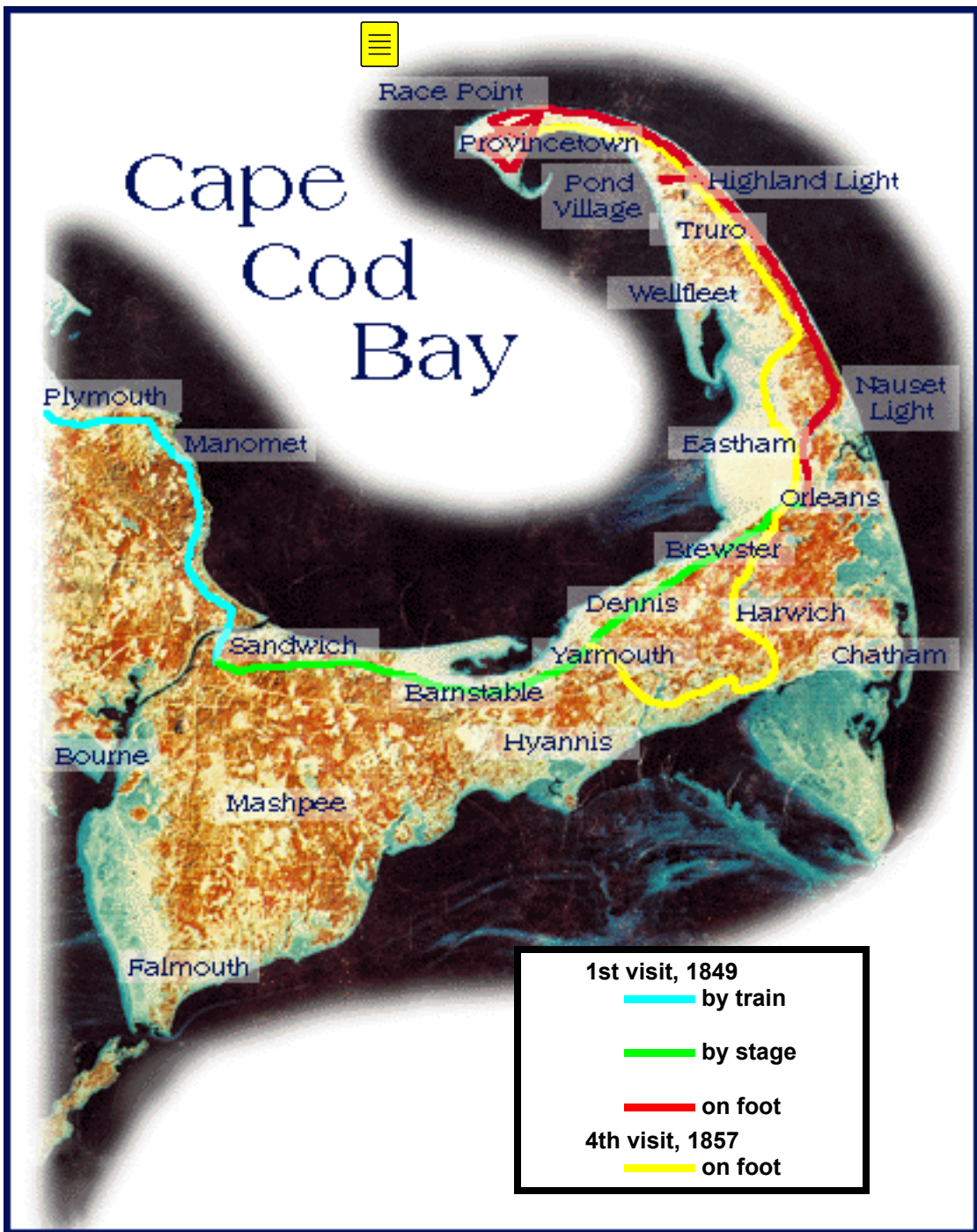
PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

THOREAU'S 1ST VISIT TO *MANAMOYIK* (CAPE COD)

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December 14, Friday: [Boston](#) Coroner Jabez Pratt declared that the remains found in the tea chest at [Harvard Medical College](#), and in the assay oven, and in the basement, were indeed those of the megamillionaire [Doctor George](#)



[Parkman](#) rather than the remains of one or another of the poor stiffs who were being stolen from their graves and cut up in the course of the continuing educational work going on at the college (one way to tell was the absence of any of the preserving chemicals normally used on dissection cadavers).



Dr. Parkman's dental prosthesis, in a cast of his jawbone

[Professor Jeffries Wyman](#), an anatomist of [Harvard Medical College](#), testified that he had found no duplicates among the bones in the furnace, indicating that these bones had come from a single human corpse.



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[Waldo Emerson](#) to his [JOURNAL](#):

Every day shows a new thing to veteran walkers. Yesterday reflections of trees in the ice; snowflakes, perfect rowels, on the ice; beautiful groups of icicles all along the eastern shore of Flint's Pond, in which, especially where encrusting the bough of a tree, you have the union of the most flowing with the most solidly fixed. Ellery all the way squandering his jewels as if they were icicles, sometimes not comprehended by me, sometimes not heard. How many days can Methusalem go abroad & see somewhat new? When will he have counted the changes of the kaleidoscope?

ELLERY CHANNING



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1850

March 16, Saturday: An issue of Chambers' Edinburgh Journal:

CHAMBERS' EDINBURGH JOURNAL

ISSUE OF MARCH 16

Waldo Emerson delivered "The Superlative in Literature, Manners, and Races."

According to page 79 of Larry J. Reynolds's influence study EUROPEAN REVOLUTIONS AND THE AMERICAN LITERARY RENAISSANCE (New Haven CT: Yale UP, 1988), there are distinct markings of sexist politics to be discerned within the novel published on this day by Ticknor and Fields, by Nathaniel Hawthorne, THE



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SCARLET LETTER; OR, THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF A DECAPITATED SURVEYOR.³⁶

the absorbing contemplation of the scarlet letter the story entitled "THE SCARLET LETTER" tale of "The Scarlet Letter" the scarlet letter and even touched it with her finger the wearer of the scarlet letter take the scarlet letter off the scarlet letter the walerid wearer of the scarlet letter finger on the scarlet letter the scarlet letter flame in on her breast the scarlet letter on her breast ornament the scarlet letter which it was her doom to wear the scarlet letter the scarlet letter the scarlet letter on Hester's bosom gazette might never once be fixed upon the scarlet letter touched the scarlet letter the scarlet letter the scarlet letter endowed with life the scarlet letter the woman of the scarlet letter the likeness of the scarlet letter the scarlet letter the wearer of the scarlet letter her child and the scarlet letter lines of the scarlet letter that decorated them aternal bosom the scarlet letter on her bosom the scarlet letter on her breast the finger on the scarlet letter look upon the scarlet letter as the token the scarlet letter The scarlet letter had not done its office The scarlet letter burned on Hester Prynne's bosom "I have left thee to the scarlet letter" I whom the scarlet letter has disciplined to truth under the torture of the scarlet letter as for the scarlet letter "Mother" said she "what does the scarlet letter mean?" investigations about the scarlet letter the scarlet letter Hema dea stepnigher and discovered the scarlet letter the scarlet letter the scarlet letter The scarlet letter was her passport the scarlet letter the scarlet letter again the scarlet letter brought "Look your last on the scarlet letter and its wearer!" the scarlet letter the scarlet letter enveloped its fated wearer "Thy mother is yonder woman with the scarlet letter" had often heard of the scarlet letter the scarlet letter in the marketplace He again extended his hand to the woman of the scarlet letter Lo the scarlet letter the scarlet letter the midday sunshine on the scarlet letter wearer of the scarlet letter The story of the scarlet letter grew into a legend recluse of the scarlet letter the absorbing



HEADCHOPPING

36. A claim of copyright has been made for THE SCARLET LETTER in 1962, for FANSHAWE and THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE in 1964, for THE HOUSE OF SEVEN GABLES in 1965, and for THE MARBLE FAUN in 1968, by Ohio State UP. (We presume that those ostensibly appropriate and global copyright claims could actually have covered not more than whatever value was added to the works by that press at that time, such as their reformatting and pagination and suchlike.)



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Near the end of *THE SCARLET LETTER*, Hawthorne in a summary tells us about Hester's eventual change of heart, about how she at last forsook radicalism and recognized that the woman who would lead the reform movements of the future and establish women's rights must be less "stained with sin," less "bowed down with shame" than she. This woman must be "lofty, pure, and beautiful, and wise, moreover, not through dusky grief, but the ethereal medium of joy." More than one reader has correctly surmised that this ending to the novel constitutes a veiled complement to Hawthorne's little Dove, [Sophia Peabody Hawthorne](#), and a veiled criticism of [Margaret Fuller](#) – radical, advocate of women's rights, and subject of gossip because of her child and questionable marriage. Hawthorne's ambivalent feelings toward Fuller indeed informed this and other parts of the novel, and although a number of women have been discussed as models for Hester, including [Anne Hutchinson](#), Ebe Hawthorne, and [Elizabeth Palmer Peabody](#), Fuller seems to have served in this capacity most provokingly. As Francis E. Kearns has pointed out, a number of parallels exist between Fuller and Hester: both had the problem of facing a Puritan society encumbered by a child of questionable legitimacy; both were concerned with social reform and the role of woman in society; both functioned as counselor and comforter to women; and both had children entitled to use the armorial seals of a non-English noble family. A more important parallel, which Kearns does not mention, is that for Hawthorne both women were linked to the figures of Liberty and Eve, that is, to the ideas of revolution and temptation, which lie at the heart of the novel.

For certain sure the benevolent Boston presence of George Stillman Hillard and the benign influence of [Waldo](#)

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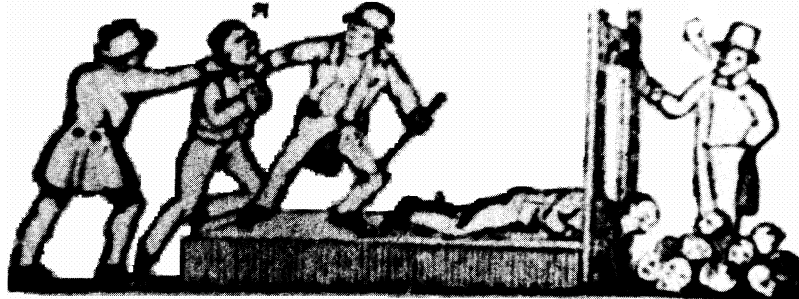
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[Emerson](#), among other notables, had been immortalized in [Hawthorne](#)'s preamble "The Custom-House":

THE SCARLET LETTER: Such were some of the people with whom I now found myself connected. I took it in good part, at the hands of Providence, that I was thrown into a position so little akin to my past habits; and set myself seriously to gather from it whatever profit was to be had. After my fellowship of toil and impracticable schemes with the dreamy brethren of Brook Farm; after living for three years within the subtle influence of an intellect like Emerson's; after those wild, free days on the Assabeth, indulging fantastic speculations, beside our fire of fallen boughs, with Ellery Channing; after talking with Thoreau about pine-trees and Indian relics in his hermitage at Walden; after growing fastidious by sympathy with the classic refinement of Hillard's culture; after becoming imbued with poetic sentiment at Longfellow's hearthstone - it was time, at length, that I should exercise other faculties of my nature, and nourish myself with food for which I had hitherto had little appetite. Even the old Inspector was desirable, as a change of diet, to a man who had known Alcott. I looked upon it as an evidence, in some measure, of a system naturally well balanced, and lacking no essential part of a thorough organization, that, with such associates to remember, I could mingle at once with men of altogether different qualities, and never murmur at the change.

[BROOK FARM](#)[WALDO EMERSON](#)[ELLERY CHANNING](#)[LONGFELLOW](#)[BRONSON ALCOTT](#)

[INSERT COMMENTARY ABOUT DECAPITATION HERE]

This "psychological bondage" book offered its appreciative audience a heroine who learns, finally, after much anguish, that as a woman her best game plan is to accept the cards society has dealt her, suffer passively, endure numbly, and wait, wait and hope for a better day, and that anything else she might try always makes her lot less bearable. To be silent and no bother, and maintain sexual purity, that constitutes female courage. Had slaves formed a reading market in that era, the author could easily have authored a companion volume about a black man who learns, finally, after much anguish, that as a slave his best game plan is to accept the cards society has dealt him, suffer passively, endure numbly, and wait, wait and hope for a better day, and that anything else he might try always makes his lot less bearable. To be silent and no bother, and polish shoes, that constitutes slave courage. Then, of course, the author could have created a grand synthesis, in a tale of a female slave who learns, finally, that her role as female and her role as slave quite reinforce one another.... To use a 19th-Century phrase, "women and Negroes." Do you get the idea I actively dislike this romance? No, I



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actively dislike the mentality of its author [Hawthorne](#). The best thing I have seen on this subject was written by Jean Fagan Yellin:



Where Hiram Powers had distanced an enchained white woman in space and called her a *Greek Slave*, Nathaniel Hawthorne distanced an enchained white woman in time and called her Hester Prynne.

Clearly, anyone who is bonded to (or in bondage to — it's much the same, isn't it?) such a person has a tough row to hoe (you note I cast this suggestion in the present tense — it's still the case). In particular [Sophia Peabody Hawthorne](#), who had witnessed slavery while living for an extended period in her youth on a sugar plantation in Cuba, had a tough attitudinal row to hoe, being married to such an author-tarian. Sophia could have hardly become an active abolitionist like her sisters Mary and [Elizabeth Palmer Peabody](#). Her solution? —Sophia went for denial, and refused to give credence to various unsettling reports such as that some slave women had to strip to the buff on the auction block (“which I am sure is an exaggeration for I have read of these auctions often and even the worst facts are never so bad as absolute nudity”).

Then she also capable of ignoring the BOOK OF JOB in her BIBLE long enough to suppose that a good and benevolent God providentially “makes up to every being the measure of happiness which he loses thro' the instrumentality of others” — so that it really is of no consequence how we treat each other. And then she could attempt to “lose myself in other subjects of thought,” embracing a sophisticated version of the Emersonian

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trick of resignation. She makes herself sound like a Minnesotan!³⁷

Such were some of the people with whom I now found myself connected. I took it in good part, at the hands of Providence, that I was thrown into a position so little akin to my past habits; and set myself seriously to gather from it whatever profit was to be had. After my fellowship of toil and impracticable schemes with the dreamy brethren of [Brook Farm](#); after living for three years within the subtle influence of an intellect like [Waldo Emerson's](#); after those wild, free days on the Assabeth, indulging fantastic speculations, beside our fire of fallen boughs, with [Ellery Channing](#); after talking with [Henry Thoreau](#) about pine-trees and Indian relics in his hermitage at Walden; after growing fastidious by sympathy with the classic refinement of George Stillman Hillard's culture; after becoming imbued with poetic sentiment at [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's](#) hearthstone - it was time, at length, that I should exercise other faculties of my nature, and nourish myself with food for which I had hitherto had little appetite. Even the old Inspector was desirable, as a change of diet, to a man who had known [Bronson Alcott](#). I looked upon it as an evidence, in some measure, of a system naturally well balanced, and lacking no essential part of a thorough organization, that, with such associates to remember, I could mingle at once with men of altogether different qualities, and never murmur at the change.

As of mid-century, with the publication of [Nathaniel Hawthorne's](#) THE SCARLET LETTER, it is clear that the

37. We may well note that although [Henry Thoreau](#) would have a copy of [Hawthorne's](#) THE SCARLET LETTER in his personal library, he would cross out the reference to that item — indicating that the volume was no longer present (we infer that either the volume was lost, or given away).



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figure of [Uncle Sam](#) had become a fixture of our American imagination:

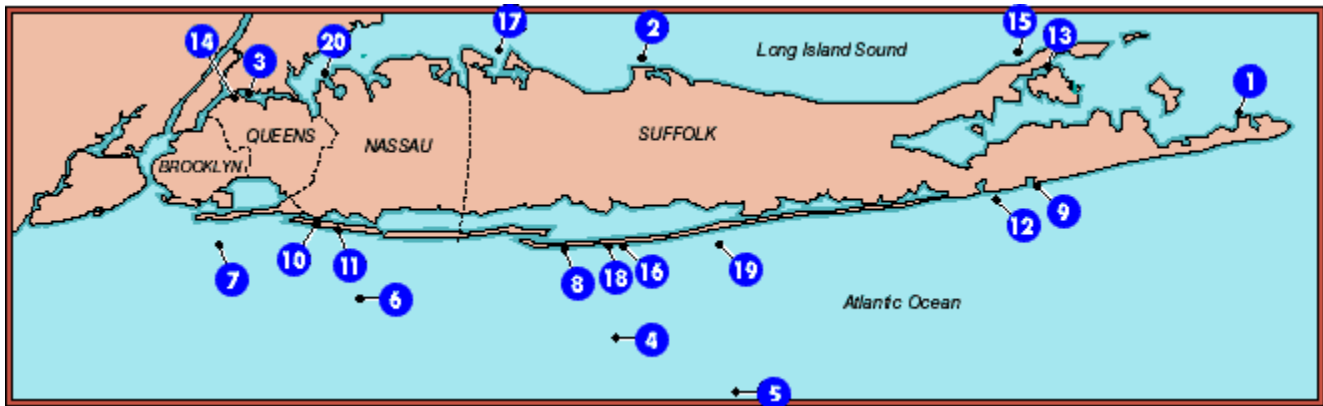
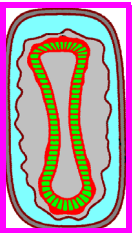
THE SCARLET LETTER: In my native town of Salem, at the head of what, half a century ago, in the days of old King Derby, was a bustling wharf - but which is now burdened with decayed wooden warehouses, and exhibits few or no symptoms of commercial life; except, perhaps, a bark or brig, half-way down its melancholy length, discharging hides; or, nearer at hand, a Nova Scotia schooner, pitching out her cargo of firewood - at the head, I say, of this dilapidated wharf, which the tide often overflows, and along which, at the base and in the rear of the row of buildings, the track of many languid years is seen in a border of unthrifty grass - here, with a view from its front windows adown this not very enlivening prospect, and thence across the harbour, stands a spacious edifice of brick. From the loftiest point of its roof, during precisely three and a half hours of each forenoon, floats or droops, in breeze or calm, the banner of the republic; but with the thirteen stripes turned vertically, instead of horizontally, and thus indicating that a civil, and not a military, post of Uncle Sam's government, is here established. Its front is ornamented with a portico of half-a-dozen wooden pillars, supporting a balcony, beneath which a flight of wide granite steps descends towards the street. Over the entrance hovers an enormous specimen of the American eagle, with outspread wings, a shield before her breast, and, if I recollect aright, a bunch of intermingled thunderbolts and barbed arrows in each claw. With the customary infirmity of temper that characterizes this unhappy fowl, she appears by the fierceness of her beak and eye, and the general truculency of her attitude, to threaten mischief to the inoffensive community; and especially to warn all citizens careful of their safety against intruding on the premises which she overshadows with her wings. Nevertheless, vixenly as she looks, many people are seeking at this very moment to shelter themselves under the wing of the federal eagle; imagining, I presume, that her bosom has all the softness and snugness of an eiderdown pillow. But she has no great tenderness even in her best of moods, and, sooner or later - oftener soon than late - is apt to fling off her nestlings with a scratch of her claw, a dab of her beak, or a rankling wound from her barbed arrows.

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July 19, Friday: At 3:30AM, holding course with close-reefed sails, the *Elizabeth* struck a Fire Island sandbar. The ship's lifeboats were soon smashed. As it grew lighter figures could be made out on the beach but these humans didn't seem to be doing anything by way of a rescue, only waiting and watching. In fact these were not rescuers but resident scavengers waiting for their storm booty. At noon the first mate, in command of the *Elizabeth* since its skipper had died of the small pox, picked himself out a likely plank and jumped overboard. His instructions to those he left behind: "Save yourselves!" There was only one life preserver, which would by tradition have gone to Margaret Fuller, but as they all waited aboard the vessel and saw that it was breaking up in the surge, she offered that life preserver to a crewman who was volunteering to take his chances going overboard to summon aid (wreck #18 below):



TIMELINE OF SHIPWRECKS

The toddler had been slung into a canvas bag around the neck of a sailor. A Tribune reporter reached the beach at about 11AM. At about noon the Fire Island Lighthouse lifeboat and rescue howitzer arrived but, despite the fact that the ship was only a few hundred yards out into the breakers, rescue attempts were made difficult by wind and waves that were building into a hurricane. The lifeboat would never be launched. At about 3PM, with perhaps a thousand people on the beach at that point watching (half of whom were looting as cases of goods washed ashore), the ship began to come apart as pieces of its marble cargo broke through the hull. Some of the people aboard made it ashore by clinging to pieces of wreckage. When a sailor attempted to get the toddler ashore, the attempt failed and the tiny body would be submerged for about twenty minutes before being located and carried still warm out of the waves (the body would be placed in a chest donated by one of the sailors). Just before leaping overboard the cook heard Fuller, in her white nightgown, say "I see nothing but death before me." When the ship broke up all who had not made it to shore were drowned (of the total of 22 aboard, a total of 10 including the baby could not be gotten across the surf to shore). Ossoli was seen to reach up from

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the water and attempt to grab a piece of rigging before disappearing beneath the waves.



The bodies of Giovanni and Margaret were not immediately recovered. When [Ellery Channing](#) reached that beach, some people who were still standing around informed him that they would have made a rescue attempt had they known someone “important” was on board.³⁸ The reporter took some letters found on the beach in a box back to [New-York](#) and dried them and turned them over to [Horace Greeley](#). [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) had not met [Giovanni Angelo](#) but commented, according to his son’s NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE AND HIS WIFE, A

38. Four editions of the *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA* held that their drownings occurred on July 16th and this error would not get corrected until 1974 — which would be hardly worth mentioning were it not such a graphic illustration of the general lack of value we place on a pushy woman’s contribution to our clownish society.

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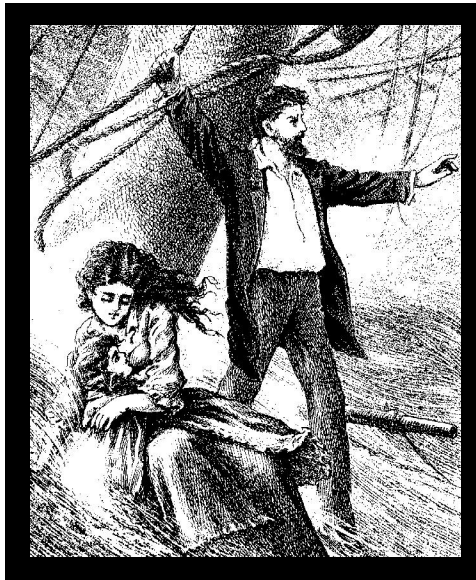
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BIOGRAPHY, that



Providence was, after all, kind in putting her and her clownish husband and their child on board that fated ship.



Yeah, and a kind Providence put those clownish [variola](#) scarifications on the fated child's face!

Behind this term "Providence" mobilized by Hawthorne we can see lurking the notion that this was an unquestionably murderous, yet unquestionably kind, act of God. His deity was merely disposing of a female who had gotten out of her place, sort of like crushing an ant that had wandered onto the author's dinnerplate. God as the sanitary police for the Old Boys Network. The schadenfreudian remarks [Nathaniel](#) made from time to time about the Ossolis may have had less to do with his generally livid gender chauvinism, and less to do with the two of them as a couple, or with the two of them as particular individuals, than with Hawthorne's special ambivalence toward the twisted sister with whom he had had those starry-night walks while his wife was inconvenienced, or his general misanthropy toward any woman who would do such an unwomanly thing



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as to write:

I wish they were forbidden to write on pain of having their faces deeply scarified with an oyster-shell.



Dear reader, do you agree with Nathaniel that fortune was **kind** to Margaret and her family? Do you, perhaps, harbor a hope that fortune will smile on you and on your family as it did not smile on her and her family? Do you suspect, as so many scholars studying this period have suspected, that Margaret perhaps harbored some sort of a death wish, and that it was this death wish which prevented her from leaping overboard into the breakers and attempting to make it to the shore that was only a few yards away? Remember, if you will, that Margaret had a spinal deformity, which very likely was some part of the cause of part of pretty boy Nathaniel's hostility toward her and which very likely was the entire cause of his hostility toward her husband –what kind of clown could it be, who could marry a **deformed** woman, and have sex with her and produce a child?– and remember, also, if you will, that Margaret herself had long before been forced to abandon any suspicion she might have had in her earlier years, of the basic fairness of life. We were born to be mutilated, she commented, and, she might have added, we were born also, to be mocked:



I have no belief in beautiful lives; we were born to be mutilated: Life is basically unjust.

Several days after the *USS Elizabeth* had disintegrated, when all that lay in the breakers were some rough blocks of Italian marble and some hull timbers half buried in the sand, a sea captain named James Wick would show up at the offices of the [New-York Herald Tribune](#) on Manhattan Island with a packing crate containing the corpses of a man and a woman. [Greeley](#) was informed that these were the bodies of the “Italian count” Ossoli and Greeley’s war correspondent [Margaret Fuller](#). He “refused to have anything to do with them,”



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according to Tribune reporter Felix Dominy.

The horses rattled the empty chariots,
longing for their noble drivers.
But they on the ground lay,
dearer to the vultures than to their wives.



So Captain Wick and his mate, to get rid of the bodies of Greeley's war correspondent and her clownish husband without getting themselves into trouble, would bury this packing crate at night on Coney Island without marking the spot.³⁹ We are reminded of something Henry Thoreau would jot down in his journal some nine months subsequent to this event, between April 19 and April 22, 1851, and something he would write into CAPE COD, and we are led to wonder whether Thoreau had in some manner come to suspect that his "friend" Greeley had something to do with the fact that it was **these** bodies in particular that had not been recovered from the wreck of the USS *Elizabeth*. For Thoreau did make an uncharacteristically bitter remark during this period, a remark about the moral character of editors in this country, a group of whom Greeley was arguably the single one who was the best known personally by Thoreau:



... probably no country was ever ruled by so mean a class of tyrants as are the editors of the periodical press in this country.

Later in this day, in Boston, an appeal brought on behalf of Professor John White Webster by the minister of the Unitarian church in Roxbury, Massachusetts, the Reverend George Putnam, D.D., failed to move the Governor's Council on Pardons. Murder being contrary to the law of God, with one dissenting vote they recommended to the Governor of the commonwealth that he murder this murderer.

July 23, Tuesday: Waldo Emerson wrote Horace Greeley, advising that he was sending Ellery Channing and Henry Thoreau to recover from the beach any of Margaret Fuller's writing that could be salvaged.⁴⁰ He advanced his delegates the sum of \$70.⁰⁰ for the expenses of their trip to Fire Island. While Ellery was away, Ellen Fuller Channing and the children went to be with her grieving mother at her brother Arthur Fuller's home, in Manchester, New Hampshire where Arthur was a Unitarian pastor.

Later on in life Fuller's employer Greeley would deliver himself of a remark which deserves to be inscribed near the grave of her toddler Nino:

[T]wo or three bouncing babies would have emancipated her from a good deal of cant and nonsense.⁴¹

However, this day was not a appropriate occasion for such bumptious presumptuous male chauvinism, either from one's employer or from anyone else. It was a day, instead, that called for straightforward reporting of detail as in this letter posted by Bayard Taylor:

Fire Island, Tuesday, July 23.
To the Editors of the Tribune: —

39. A letter from Felix Dominy's son, that is among the Fuller papers at Harvard, attests to this incident and is described in Chevigny, Bell Gale. *THE WOMAN AND THE MYTH: MARGARET FULLER'S LIFE AND WRITINGS*. Old Westbury NY: The Feminist Press, 1976.
40. *NOTA BENE*, do not be confused by these formulations: it was the **Reverend** William **Henry** Channing who accompanied Thoreau from Concord to Fire Island and it was the Concord poet William **Ellery** Channing II who came out from New-York to join them.

41. "I think he has been crazy for years."

— John Bigelow, five days before Greeley died in a mental clinic in Pleasantville, New York.





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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

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I reached the house of Mr. Smith Oakes, about one mile from the spot where the Elizabeth was wrecked, at three o'clock this morning. The boat in which I set out last night from Babylon, to cross the bay, was seven hours making the passage. On landing among the sand-hills, Mr. Oakes admitted me into his house, and gave me a place of rest for the remaining two or three hours of the night.

This morning I visited the wreck, traversed the beach for some extent on both sides, and collected all the particulars that are now likely to be obtained, relative to the closing scenes of this terrible disaster. The sand is strewn for a distance of three or four miles with fragments of planks, spars, boxes, and the merchandise with which the vessel was laden. With the exception of a piece of her broadside, which floated to the shore intact, all the timbers have been so chopped and broken by the sea, that scarcely a stick of ten feet in length can be found. In front of the wreck these fragments are piled up along high-water mark to the height of several feet, while farther in among the sand-hills are scattered casks of almonds stove in, and their contents mixed with the sand, sacks of juniper-berries, oil-flasks, &c. About half the hull remains under water, not more than fifty yards from the shore. The spars and rigging belonging to the foremast, with part of the mast itself, are still attached to the ruins, surging over them at every swell. Mr. Jonathan Smith, the agent of the underwriters, intended to have the surf-boat launched this morning, for the purpose of cutting away the rigging and ascertaining how the wreck lies; but the sea is still too high.

From what I can learn, the loss of the Elizabeth is mainly to be attributed to the inexperience of the mate, Mr. H.P. Bangs, who acted as captain after leaving Gibraltar. By his own statement, he supposed he was somewhere between Cape May and Barnegat, on Thursday evening. The vessel was consequently running northward, and struck head on. At the second thump, a hole was broken in her side, the seas poured through and over her, and she began going to pieces. This happened at ten minutes before four o'clock. The passengers were roused from their sleep by the shock, and hurried out of the cabin in their night-clothes, to take refuge on the forecastle, which was the least exposed part of the vessel. They succeeded with great difficulty; Mrs. Hasty, the widow of the late captain, fell into a hatchway, from which she was dragged by a sailor who seized her by the hair.

The swells increased continually, and the danger of the vessel giving way induced several of the sailors to commit themselves to the waves. Previous to this they divested themselves of their clothes, which they tied to pieces of plank and sent ashore. These were immediately seized upon by the beach pirates, and never afterward recovered. The carpenter cut loose some planks and spars, and upon one of these Madame Ossoli was advised to trust herself, the captain promising to go in advance, with her boy. She refused, saying that she had no wish to live without



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the child, and would not, at that hour, give the care of it to another. Mrs. Hasty then took hold of a plank, in company with the second mate, Mr. Davis, through whose assistance she landed safely, though terribly bruised by the floating timber. The captain clung to a hatch, and was washed ashore insensible, where he was resuscitated by the efforts of Mr. Oakes and several others, who were by this time collected on the beach. Most of the men were entirely destitute of clothing, and some, who were exhausted and ready to let go their hold, were saved by the islanders, who went into the surf with lines about their waists, and caught them.

The young Italian girl, Celesta Pardená, who was bound for New York, where she had already lived in the family of Henry Peters Gray, the artist, was at first greatly alarmed, and uttered the most piercing screams. By the exertions of the Ossolis she was quieted, and apparently resigned to her fate. The passengers reconciled themselves to the idea of death. At the proposal of the Marquis Ossoli some time was spent in prayer, after which all sat down calmly to await the parting of the vessel. The Marchioness Ossoli was entreated by the sailors to leave the vessel, or at least to trust her child to them, but she steadily refused.

Early in the morning some men had been sent to the lighthouse for the life-boat which is kept there. Although this is but two miles distant, the boat did not arrive till about one o'clock, by which time the gale had so increased, and the swells were so high and terrific, that it was impossible to make any use of it. A mortar was also brought for the purpose of firing a line over the vessel, to stretch a hawser between it and the shore. The mortar was stationed on the lee of a hillock, about a hundred and fifty rods from the wreck, that the powder might be kept dry. It was fired five times, but failed to carry a line more than half the necessary distance. Just before the fore-castle sunk, the remaining sailors determined to leave.

The steward, with whom the child had always been a great favorite, took it, almost by main force, and plunged with it into the sea; neither reached the shore alive. The Marquis Ossoli was soon afterwards washed away, but his wife remained in ignorance of his fate. The cook, who was the last person that reached the shore alive, said that the last words he heard her speak were: "I see nothing but death before me, - I shall never reach the shore." It was between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, and after lingering for about ten hours, exposed to the mountainous surf that swept over the vessel, with the contemplation of death constantly forced upon her mind, she was finally overwhelmed as the foremast fell. It is supposed that her body and that of her husband are still buried under the ruins of the vessel. Mr. Horace Sumner, who jumped overboard early in the morning, was never seen afterwards.

The dead bodies that were washed on shore were terribly bruised and mangled. That of the young Italian girl was enclosed in a rough box, and buried in the sand, together with those of the



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sailors. Mrs. Hasty had by this time found a place of shelter at Mr. Oakes's house, and at her request the body of the boy, Angelo Eugene Ossoli, was carried thither, and kept for a day previous to interment. The sailors, who had all formed a strong attachment to him during the voyage, wept like children when they saw him. There was some difficulty in finding a coffin when the time of burial came, whereupon they took one of their chests, knocked out the tills, laid the body carefully inside, locked and nailed down the lid. He was buried in a little nook between two of the sand-hills, some distance from the sea.

The same afternoon a trunk belonging to the Marchioness Ossoli came to shore, and was fortunately secured before the pirates had an opportunity of purloining it. Mrs. Hasty informs me that it contained several large packages of manuscripts, which she dried carefully by the fire. I have therefore a strong hope that the work on Italy will be entirely recovered. In a pile of soaked papers near the door, I found files of the *Democratie Pacifique* and *Il Nazionale* of Florence, as well as several of Mazzini's pamphlets, which I have preserved.

An attempt will probably be made to-morrow to reach the wreck with the surf-boat. Judging from its position and the known depth of the water, I should think the recovery, not only of the bodies, if they are still remaining there, but also of Powers's statue and the blocks of rough Carrara, quite practicable, if there should be a sufficiency of still weather. There are about a hundred and fifty tons of marble under the ruins. The paintings, belonging to Mr. Aspinwall, which were washed ashore in boxes, and might have been saved had any one been on the spot to care for them, are for the most part utterly destroyed. Those which were least injured by the sea-water were cut from the frames and carried off by the pirates; the frames were broken in pieces, and scattered along the beach. This morning I found several shreds of canvas, evidently more than a century old, half buried in the sand. All the silk, Leghorn braid, hats, wool, oil, almonds, and other articles contained in the vessel, were carried off as soon as they came to land. On Sunday there were nearly a thousand persons here, from all parts of the coast between Rockaway and Montauk, and more than half of them were engaged in secreting and carrying off everything that seemed to be of value.

The two bodies found yesterday were those of sailors. All have now come to land but those of the Ossolis and Horace Sumner. If not found in the wreck, they will be cast ashore to the westward of this, as the current has set in that direction since the gale.

Yours, &c.

* * * * *

THE WRECK OF THE ELIZABETH.

From a conversation with Mrs. Hasty, widow of the captain of the ill-fated Elizabeth, we gather the following particulars of her



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voyage and its melancholy termination.

We have already stated that Captain Hasty was prostrated, eight days after leaving Leghorn, by a disease which was regarded and treated as fever, but which ultimately exhibited itself as small-pox of the most malignant type. He died of it just as the vessel reached Gibraltar, and his remains were committed to the deep. After a short detention in quarantine, the Elizabeth resumed her voyage on the 8th ultimo, and was long baffled by adverse winds. Two days from Gibraltar, the terrible disease which had proved fatal to the captain attacked the child of the Ossolis, a beautiful boy of two years, and for many days his recovery was regarded as hopeless. His eyes were completely closed for five days, his head deprived of all shape, and his whole person covered with pustules; yet, through the devoted attention of his parents and their friends, he survived, and at length gradually recovered. Only a few scars and red spots remained on his face and body, and these were disappearing, to the great joy of his mother, who felt solicitous that his rare beauty should not be marred at his first meeting with those she loved, and especially her mother.

At length, after a month of slow progress, the wind shifted, and blew strongly from the southwest for several days, sweeping them rapidly on their course, until, on Thursday evening last, they knew that they were near the end of their voyage. Their trunks were brought up and repacked, in anticipation of a speedy arrival in port. Meantime, the breeze gradually swelled to a gale, which became decided about nine o'clock on that evening. But their ship was new and strong, and all retired to rest as usual. They were running west, and supposed themselves about sixty miles farther south than they actually were. By their reckoning, they would be just off the harbor of New York next morning. About half past two o'clock, Mr. Bangs, the mate in command, took soundings, and reported twenty-one fathoms. He said that depth insured their safety till daylight, and turned in again. Of course, all was thick around the vessel, and the storm howling fiercely. One hour afterward, the ship struck with great violence, and in a moment was fast aground. She was a stout brig of 531 tons, five years old, heavily laden with marble, &c., and drawing seventeen feet water. Had she been light, she might have floated over the bar into twenty feet water, and all on board could have been saved. She struck rather sidewise than bows on, canted on her side and stuck fast, the mad waves making a clear sweep over her, pouring down into the cabin through the skylight, which was destroyed. One side of the cabin was immediately and permanently under water, the other frequently drenched. The passengers, who were all up in a moment, chose the most sheltered positions, and there remained, calm, earnest, and resigned to any fate, for a long three hours. No land was yet visible; they knew not where they were, but they knew that their chance of surviving was small indeed. When the coast was first visible through the driving storm in the gray light of morning, the sand-hills were mistaken for rocks, which made the prospect



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still more dismal. The young Ossoli cried a little with discomfort and fright, but was soon hushed to sleep. Our friend Margaret had two life-preservers, but one of them proved unfit for use. All the boats had been smashed in pieces or torn away soon after the vessel struck; and it would have been madness to launch them in the dark, if it had been possible to launch them at all, with the waves charging over the wreck every moment. A sailor, soon after light, took Madame Ossoli's serviceable life-preserver and swam ashore with it, in quest of aid for those left on board, and arrived safe, but of course could not return his means of deliverance.

By 7 A.M. it became evident that the cabin must soon go to pieces, and indeed it was scarcely tenatable then. The crew were collected in the forecabin, which was stronger and less exposed, the vessel having settled by the stem, and the sailors had been repeatedly ordered to go aft and help the passengers forward, but the peril was so great that none obeyed. At length the second mate, Davis, went himself, and accompanied the Italian girl, Celesta Pardena, safely to the forecabin, though with great difficulty. Madame Ossoli went next, and had a narrow escape from being washed away, but got over. Her child was placed in a bag tied around a sailor's neck, and thus carried safely. Marquis Ossoli and the rest followed, each convoyed by the mate or one of the sailors.

All being collected in the forecabin, it was evident that their position was still most perilous, and that the ship could not much longer hold together. The women were urged to try first the experiment of taking each a plank and committing themselves to the waves. Madame Ossoli refused thus to be separated from her husband and child. She had from the first expressed a willingness to live or die with them, but not to live without them. Mrs. Hasty was the first to try the plank, and, though the struggle was for some time a doubtful one, did finally reach the shore, utterly exhausted. There was a strong current setting to the westward, so that, though the wreck lay but a quarter of a mile from the shore, she landed three fourths of a mile distant. No other woman, and no passenger, survives, though several of the crew came ashore after she did, in a similar manner. The last who came reports that the child had been washed away from the man who held it before the ship broke up, that Ossoli had in like manner been washed from the foremast, to which he was clinging; but, in the horror of the moment, Margaret never learned that those she so clung to had preceded her to the spirit land. Those who remained of the crew had just persuaded her to trust herself to a plank, in the belief that Ossoli and their child had already started for the shore, when just as she was stepping down, a great wave broke over the vessel and swept her into the boiling deep. She never rose again. The ship broke up soon after (about 10 A.M. Mrs. Hasty says, instead of the later hour previously reported); but both mates and most of the crew got on one fragment or another. It was supposed that those of them who were drowned were struck by floating spars or planks,



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and thus stunned or disabled so as to preclude all chance of their rescue.

We do not know at the time of this writing whether the manuscript of our friend's work on Italy and her late struggles has been saved. We fear it has not been. One of her trunks is known to have been saved; but, though it contained a good many papers, Mrs. Hasty believes that this was not among them. The author had thrown her whole soul into this work, had enjoyed the fullest opportunities for observation, was herself a partaker in the gallant though unsuccessful struggle which has redeemed the name of Rome from the long rust of sloth, servility, and cowardice, was the intimate friend and compatriot of the Republican leaders, and better fitted than any one else to refute the calumnies and falsehoods with which their names have been blackened by the champions of aristocratic "order" throughout the civilized world. We cannot forego the hope that her work on Italy has been saved, or will yet be recovered.

* * * * *

The following is a complete list of the persons lost by the wreck of the ship Elizabeth: —

Giovanni, Marquis Ossoli.
Margaret Fuller Ossoli.
Their child, Eugene Angelo Ossoli.
Celesta Pardena, of Rome.
Horace Sumner, of Boston.
George Sanford, seaman (Swede).
Henry Westervelt, seaman (Swede).
George Bates, steward.

* * * * *

Death of Margaret Fuller.

A great soul has passed from this mortal stage of being by the death of MARGARET FULLER, by marriage Marchioness Ossoli, who, with her husband and child, Mr. Horace Sumner of Boston,⁴² and others, was drowned in the wreck of the brig Elizabeth from Leghorn for this port, on the south shore of Long Island, near Fire Island, on Friday afternoon last. No passenger survives to tell the story of that night of horrors, whose fury appalled many of our snugly sheltered citizens reposing securely in their beds. We can adequately realize what it must have been to voyagers approaching our coast from the Old World, on vessels helplessly exposed to the rage of that wild southwestern gale,

42. Horace Sumner, one of the victims of the lamentable wreck of the Elizabeth, was the youngest son of the late Hon. Charles P. Sumner, of Boston, for many years Sheriff of Suffolk County, and the brother of George Sumner, Esq., the distinguished American writer, now resident at Paris, and of Hon. Charles Sumner of Boston, who is well known for his legal and literary eminence throughout the country. He was about twenty-four years of age, and had been abroad for nearly a year, travelling in the South of Europe for the benefit of his health. The past winter was spent by him chiefly in Florence, where he was on terms of familiar intimacy with the Marquis and Marchioness Ossoli, and was induced to take passage in the same vessel with them for his return to his native land. He was a young man of singular modesty of deportment, of an original turn of mind, and greatly endeared to his friends by the sweetness of his disposition and the purity of his character.



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and seeing in the long and anxiously expected land of their youth and their love only an aggravation of their perils, a death-blow to their hopes, an assurance of their temporal doom!

Margaret Fuller was the daughter of Hon. Timothy Fuller, a lawyer of Boston, but nearly all his life a resident of Cambridge, and a Representative of the Middlesex District in Congress from 1817 to 1825. Mr. Fuller, upon his retirement from Congress, purchased a farm at some distance from Boston, and abandoned law for agriculture, soon after which he died. His widow and six children still survive.

Margaret, if we mistake not, was the first-born, and from a very early age evinced the possession of remarkable intellectual powers. Her father regarded her with a proud admiration, and was from childhood her chief instructor, guide, companion, and friend. He committed the too common error of stimulating her intellect to an assiduity and persistency of effort which severely taxed and ultimately injured her physical powers.⁴³ At eight years of age he was accustomed to require of her the composition of a number of Latin verses per day, while her studies in philosophy, history, general science, and current literature were in after years extensive and profound. After her father's death, she applied herself to teaching as a vocation, first in Boston, then in Providence, and afterward in Boston again, where her "Conversations" were for several seasons attended by classes of women, some of them married, and including many from the best families of the "American Athens." In the autumn of 1844, she accepted an invitation to take part in the conduct of the Tribune, with especial reference to the department of Reviews and Criticism on current Literature, Art, Music, &c.; a position which she filled for nearly two years, — how eminently, our readers well know. Her reviews of Longfellow's Poems, Wesley's Memoirs, Poe's Poems, Bailey's "Festus," Douglas's Life, &c. must yet be remembered by many. She had previously found "fit audience, though few," for a series of remarkable papers on "The Great Musicians," "Lord Herbert of Cherbury," "Woman," &c., &c., in "The Dial," a quarterly of remarkable breadth and vigor, of which she was at first co-editor with Ralph Waldo Emerson, but which was afterward edited by him only, though she continued a contributor to its pages. In 1843, she accompanied some friends on a tour via Niagara, Detroit, and Mackinac to Chicago, and across the prairies of Illinois, and her resulting volume, entitled "Summer on the Lakes," is one of the best works in this department ever issued from the American press. It was too good to be widely and instantly popular. Her "Woman in the Nineteenth Century" — an extension of her essay in the Dial — was published by us early in 1845, and a moderate edition sold. The next year, a selection from her "Papers on Literature and Art" was issued by Wiley and Putnam, in two fair volumes of their "Library of American

43. I think this opinion somewhat erroneous, for reasons which I have already given in the edition recently published of WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. The reader is referred to page 352 of that work, and also to page 38, where I believe my sister personified herself under the name of Miranda, and stated clearly and justly the relation which, existed between her father and herself. — ED.



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Books." We believe the original edition was nearly or quite exhausted, but a second has not been called for, while books nowise comparable to it for strength or worth have run through half a dozen editions.⁴⁴ These "Papers" embody some of her best contributions to the Dial, the Tribune, and perhaps one or two which had not appeared in either.

In the summer of 1845, Miss Fuller accompanied the family of a devoted friend to Europe, visiting England, Scotland, France, and passing through Italy to Rome, where they spent the ensuing winter. She accompanied her friends next spring to the North of Italy, and there stopped, spending most of the summer at Florence, and returning at the approach of winter to Rome, where she was soon after married to Giovanni, Marquis Ossoli, who had made her acquaintance during her first winter in the Eternal City. They have since resided in the Roman States until the last summer, after the surrender of Rome to the French army of assassins of liberty, when they deemed it expedient to migrate to Florence, both having taken an active part in the Republican movement which resulted so disastrously, — nay, of which the ultimate result is yet to be witnessed. Thence in June they departed and set sail at Leghorn for this port, in the Philadelphia brig Elizabeth, which was doomed to encounter a succession of disasters. They had not been many days at sea when the captain was prostrated by a disease which ultimately exhibited itself as confluent small-pox of the most malignant type, and terminated his life soon after they touched at Gibraltar, after a sickness of intense agony and loathsome horror. The vessel was detained some days in quarantine by reason of this affliction, but finally set sail again on the 8th ultimo, just in season to bring her on our coast on the fearful night between Thursday and Friday last, when darkness, rain, and a terrific gale from the southwest (the most dangerous quarter possible), conspired to hurl her into the very jaws of destruction. It is said, but we know not how truly, that the mate in command since the captain's death mistook the Fire Island light for that on the Highlands of Neversink, and so fatally miscalculated his course; but it is hardly probable that any other than a first-class, fully manned ship could have worked off that coast under such a gale, blowing him directly toward the roaring breakers. She struck during the night, and before the next evening the Elizabeth was a mass of drifting sticks and planks, while her passengers and part of her crew were buried in the boiling surges. Alas that our gifted friend, and those nearest to and most loved by her, should have been among them!

We trust a new, compact, and cheap edition or selection, of Margaret Fuller's writings will soon be given to the public, prefaced by a Memoir. It were a shame to us if one so radiantly lofty in intellect, so devoted to human liberty and well-being, so ready to dare and to endure for the upraising of her sex and her race, should perish from among us, and leave no memento less

44. A second edition has since been published. — ED.



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imperfect and casual than those we now have. We trust the more immediate relatives of our departed friend will lose no time in selecting the fittest person to prepare a Memoir, with a selection from her writings, for the press.⁴⁵ America has produced no woman who in mental endowments and acquirements has surpassed Margaret Fuller, and it will be a public misfortune if her thoughts are not promptly and acceptably embodied.

* * * * *

Margaret Fuller Ossoli

By C.P. Cranch.

O still, sweet summer days! O moonlight nights! After so drear a storm how can ye shine? O smiling world of many-hued delights, How canst thou 'round our sad hearts still entwine The accustomed wreaths of pleasure? How, O Day, Wakest thou so full of beauty? Twilight deep, How diest thou so tranquilly away? And how, O Night, bring'st thou the sphere of sleep? For she is gone from us, — gone, lost for ever, — In the wild billows swallowed up and lost, — Gone, full of love, life, hope, and high endeavor, Just when we would have welcomed her the most.

Was it for this, O woman, true and pure! That life through shade and light had formed thy mind To feel, imagine, reason, and endure, — To soar for truth, to labor for mankind? Was it for this sad end thou didst bear thy part In deeds and words for struggling Italy, — Devoting thy large mind and larger heart That Rome in later days might yet be free? And, from that home driven out by tyranny, Didst turn to see thy fatherland once more, Bearing affection's dearest ties with thee; And as the vessel bore thee to our shore, And hope rose to fulfilment, — on the deck, When friends seemed almost beckoning unto thee: O God! the fearful storm, — the splitting wreck, — The drowning billows of the dreary sea!

O, many a heart was stricken dumb with grief! We who had known thee here, — had met thee there Where Rome threw golden light on every leaf Life's volume turned in that enchanted air, — O friend! how we recall the Italian days Amid the Cæsar's ruined palace halls, — The Coliseum, and the frescoed blaze Of proud St. Peter's dome, — the Sistine walls, — The lone Campagna and the village green, — The Vatican, — the music and dim light Of gorgeous temples, — statues, pictures, seen With thee: those sunny days return so bright, Now thou art gone! Thou hast a fairer world Than that bright clime. The dreams that filled thee here Now find divine completion, and, unfurled Thy spirit-wings, find out their own high sphere.

Farewell! thought-gifted, noble-hearted one! We, who have known thee, know thou art not lost; The star that set in storms still shines upon The o'ershadowing cloud, and, when we sorrow most, In the blue spaces of God's firmament Beams out with purer light than we have known. Above the tempest and the wild lament Of

45. The reader is aware that such a Memoir has since been published, and that several of her works have been republished likewise. I trust soon to publish a volume of Madame Ossoli's Miscellaneous Writings. — ED.



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those who weep the radiance that is flown.

* * * * *

The Death of Margaret Fuller Ossoli.

By Mary C. Ames.

O Italy! amid thy scenes of blood, She acted long a woman's noble part! Soothing the dying of thy sons, proud Rome! Till thou wert bowed, O city of her heart! When thou hadst fallen, joy no longer flowed In the rich sunlight of thy heaven; And from thy glorious domes and shrines of art, No quickening impulse to her life was given.

From the deep shadow of thy cypress hills, From the soft beauty of thy classic plains, The noble-hearted, with, her treasures, turned To the far land where Freedom proudly reigns. After the rocking of long years of storms, Her weary spirit looked and longed for rest; Pictures of home, of loved and kindred forms, Rose warm and life-like in her aching breast.

But the wild ocean rolled before her home; And, listening long unto its fearful moan, She thought of myriads who had found their rest Down in its caverns, silent, deep, and lone. Then rose the prayer within her heart of hearts, With the dark phantoms of a coming grief, That "Nino, Ossoli, and I may go *Together*; — that the anguish may be brief."

The bark spread out her pennons proud and free, The sunbeams frolicked with the wanton waves; Smiled through the long, long days the summer sea, And sung sweet requiems o'er her sunken graves. E'en then the shadow of the fearful King Hung deep and darkening o'er the fated bark; Suffering and death and anguish reigned, ere came Hope's weary dove back to the longing ark.

This was the morning to the night of woe; When the grim Ocean, in his fiercest wrath, Held fearful contest with the god of storms, Who lashed the waves with death upon his path. O night of agony! O awful morn, That oped on such a scene thy sullen eyes! The shattered ship, — those wrecked and broken hearts, Who only prayed, "*Together let us die.*"

Was this thy greeting longed for, Margaret, In the high, noontide of thy lofty pride? The welcome sighed for, in thine hours of grief, When pride had fled and hope in thee had died? Twelve hours' communion with the Terror-King! No wandering hope to give the heart relief! And yet thy prayer was heard, — the cold waves wrapt Those forms "together," and the woe was "brief."

Thus closed thy day in darkness and in tears; Thus waned a life, alas! too full of pain; But O thou noble woman! thy brief life, Though full of sorrows, was not lived in vain. No more a pilgrim o'er a weary waste, With light ineffable thy mind is crowned; Heaven's richest lore is thine own heritage; All height is



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gained, thy "kingdom" now is found.

* * * * *

To the Memory of Margaret Fuller.

By E. Oakes Smith.

We hailed thee, Margaret, from the sea, We hailed thee o'er the
wave, And little thought, in greeting thee, Thy home would be a
grave.

We blest thee in thy laurel crown, And in the myrtle's sheen, —
Rejoiced thy noble worth to own, Still joy, our tears between.
We hoped that many a happy year Would bless thy coming feet; And
thy bright fame grow brighter here, By Fatherland made sweet.
Gone, gone! with all thy glorious thought, — Gone with thy waking
life, — With the green chaplet Fame had wrought, — The joy of
Mother, Wife.

Oh! who shall dare thy harp to take, And pour upon the air The
clear, calm music, that should wake The heart to love and prayer!
The lip, all eloquent, is stilled And silent with its trust, —
The heart, with Woman's greatness filled, Must crumble to the
dust:

But from thy *great heart* we will take New courage for the strife;
From petty ills our bondage break, And labor with new life.
Wake up, in darkness though it be, To better truth and light;
Patient in toil, as we saw thee, In searching for the light;
And mindless of the scorn it brings, For 't is in desert land
That angels come with sheltering wings To lead us by the hand.
Courageous one! thou art not lost, Though sleeping in the wave;
Upon its chainless billows tost, For thee is fitting grave.

* * * * *

On the Death of Margaret Fuller.

By G.P.R. James.

High hopes and bright thine early path bedecked, And aspirations
beautiful though wild, — A heart too strong, a powerful will
unchecked, A dream that earth-things could be undefiled.

But soon, around thee, grew a golden chain, That bound the woman
to more human things, And taught with joy — and, it may be, with
pain — That there are limits e'en to Spirit's wings.

Husband and child, — the loving and beloved, — Won, from the
vast of thought, a mortal part, The impassioned wife and mother,
yielding, proved Mind has itself a master — in the heart.

In distant lands enhaloed by, old fame Thou found'st the only
chain thy spirit knew, But captive ledst thy captors, from the
shame Of ancient freedom, to the pride of new.

And loved hearts clung around thee on the deck, Welling with
sunny hopes 'neath sunny skies: The wide horizon round thee had
no speck, — E'en Doubt herself could see no cloud arise.

Thy loved ones clung around thee, when the sail O'er wide
Atlantic billows onward bore Thy freight of joys, and the



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expanding gale Pressed the glad bark toward thy native shore.
The loved ones clung around thee still, when all Was darkness,
tempest, terror, and dismay, – More closely clung around thee,
when the pall Of Fate was falling o'er the mortal clay.
With them to live, – with them, with them to die, Sublime of
human love intense and fine! – Was thy last prayer unto the
Deity; And it was granted thee by Love Divine.
In the same billow, – in the same dark grave, – Mother, and
child, and husband, find their rest. The dream is ended; and the
solemn wave Gives back the gifted to her country's breast.

* * * * *

On the Death of Marquis Ossoli and his Wife, Margaret Fuller. by Walter Savage Landor.

Over his millions Death has lawful power, But over thee, brave
Ossoli! none, none! After a long struggle, in a fight Worthy of
Italy to youth restored, Thou, far from home, art sunk beneath
the surge Of the Atlantic; on its shore; in reach Of help; in
trust of refuge; sunk with all Precious on earth to thee, – a
child, a wife! Proud as thou wert of her, America Is prouder,
showing to her sons how high Swells woman's courage in a virtuous
breast.

She would not leave behind her those she loved: Such solitary
safety might become Others, – not her; not her who stood beside
The pallet of the wounded, when the worst Of France and Perfidy
assailed the walls Of unsuspecting Rome. Rest, glorious soul,
Renowned for strength of genius, Margaret! Rest with the twain
too dear! My words are few, And shortly none will hear my failing
voice, But the same language with more full appeal Shall hail
thee. Many are the sons of song Whom thou hast heard upon thy
native plains, Worthy to sing of thee; the hour is come; Take
we our seats and let the dirge begin.

ARTHUR FULLER'S BOOK



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September: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed for a proposed new street near the Railroad Depot. Length 30" x Width 21". In 1844 when the railroad had been opened in Concord, he had been asked to suggest the route of a new street from the corner of Main and Sudbury Road to the Depot, and in fact he had drawn up several alternatives. The one chosen is the present Middle Street and required the moving of the [Concord Academy](#) Building from the spot where Academy Lane and Middle Street meet. This proposal is the present Middle Street from Academy Lane to Thoreau Lane. The old Concord Academy stood on the spot so it had to be moved to the south side of the new street. (The Academy building in which the Thoreau brothers had taught was made over into a double house for [Ellery Channing](#). The Concord Free Public Library has several preserved sketches for this area. One shows the land of Wetherbee on Belknap Street which became the property on which the old Davis Store from Main Street came to rest, and was occupied by William Barrett from 1859 to 1898.)



View [Henry Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/24b.htm

[Channing](#) wrote in a letter complaining about [Waldo Emerson](#): “a terrible man to deal with — one has to be armed at all points. He threshes you out very soon; is admirably skillful, able to go anywhere and do anything. Those nearest to him feel him hard and cold; no one knows even what he is doing or studying.... Nobody knows what his real philosophy is; his books do not tell it. I have known him for years intimately and have not found it out. Women do not like him: he cannot establish a personal relation with anyone, yet he can get on agreeably with everyone.”



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At some point during the month [Thoreau](#) made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” as:⁴⁶

[Paragraph 52] A commerce that whitens every sea in quest of nuts and raisins, and makes slaves of its sailors for this purpose! I saw, the other day, a vessel which had been wrecked, and many lives lost, and her cargo of rags, juniper-berries, and bitter almonds were strewn along the shore. It seemed hardly worth the while to tempt the dangers of the sea between Leghorn and New York for the sake of a cargo of juniper-berries and bitter almonds. America sending to the Old World for her bitters! Is not the sea-brine, is not shipwreck, bitter enough to make the cup of life go down here? Yet such, to a great extent, is our boasted commerce; and there are those who style themselves statesmen and philosophers who are so blind as to think that progress and civilization depend on precisely this kind of interchange and activity,—the activity of flies about a molasses-hogshead. Very well, observes one, if men were oysters. And very well, answer I, if men were mosquitoes.

In [Godey's Lady's Book](#), Henry T. Tuckerman characterized [Alexander von Humboldt](#) as “the Napoleon of science.” This title, although apparently innocuous, would soon be combined with our iniquitous lust for the conquest of nature, so that Humboldt would soon be being worshipped, and eventually would find himself condemned, as something he had simply not been: an exploiter. Professor Laura Dassow Walls points out that during Humboldt's old age while “his voice was aging and distant,” his legacy would be seized upon by positivists such as [Louis Agassiz](#) even though he “could and did protest with every means at this disposal.” His name became synonymous with empire and with the exploitation of nature, while native American

46. Thoreau was referring to his experience at Fire Island in late July 1850. The American bark *Elizabeth*, with [Margaret Fuller Ossoli](#), her husband, and their son aboard, had sailed from Italy on May 17, 1850, bound for New-York, but wrecked on the coast of Fire Island on July 19th. Thoreau was dispatched to the scene of the wreck to recover the bodies of the Ossolis and their belongings, and when he arrived he found the beach strewn with the unsalvageable portion of the cargo—heaps of rags, juniper-berries, and bitter almonds (see Kenneth Walter Cameron, “Thoreau's Notes on the Shipwreck at Fire Island,” [Emerson Society Quarterly](#) 52 [3d Quarter 1968]: 97-99; and Paula Blanchard, *MARGARET FULLER: FROM TRANSCENDENTALISM TO REVOLUTION* [NY: Delacorte Press, 1978], pages 329-37).



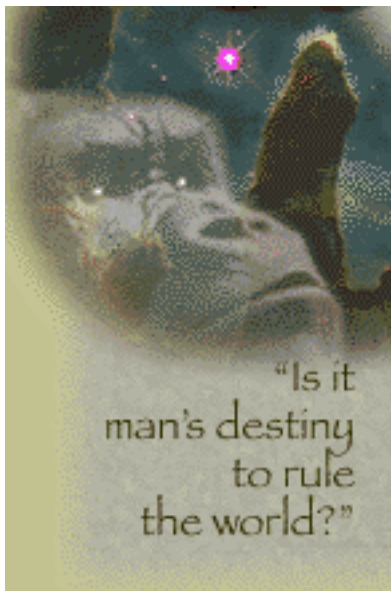
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populations were being removed and ecological communities disrupted in the name of our Manifest Destiny.

How ironic it is today that current approaches to science, which stress the role our own knowledge plays as part of the world we seek to understand, have lost sight of Humboldt's work. Today, Humboldtian concepts like plant communities, isotherms, and magnetic storms are routine, the "ecology of ideas" is an exciting new concept – and Alexander von Humboldt's once-glorious name has long since



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September 25, Wednesday-October 3, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) went with [Ellery Channing](#) and a trainload of other [tourists](#) to explore the valley of the St. Lawrence River, by rail to Burlington, Vermont, by steamer to Plattsburg, New York, by rail to Montréal, by steamer to Québec, with side trips to St. Anne de Beaupré and to the Montmorency Falls near Québec City.⁴⁷



47. The rail tour of [Canada](#) on which Thoreau and Channing had embarked for economy, two of a total of 1,346 tourists, was one that had been sponsored by the author of a well-attended panorama, William Burr. His panorama, BURR'S SEVEN MILE MIRROR, had been on exhibit in Boston since February 4th. His 48-page handbook BURR'S MOVING MIRROR OF THE LAKES, THE NIAGARA, ST. LAWRENCE AND SAGUERNAY [SAGUENAY] RIVERS EMBRACING THE ENTIRE RANGE OF BORDER SCENERY, OF THE UNITED STATES & CANADIAN SHORES, FROM LAKE ERIE TO THE ATLANTIC had been available for Thoreau's and Channing's inspection. The entire 9-day trip, because of this economy of group travel, would cost Thoreau a total of \$12.⁷⁵, inclusive of the \$1.¹² 1/2 he would spend for a map and two guidebooks. The train tickets cost \$5.⁰⁰ for the round trip to Montréal, plus \$2.⁰⁰ for the leg to Québec. Over the nine days our intrepid voyager-with-umbrella would pay for lodgings on only four of the nights. (We may note a similarity between this trip and the trip that had been made in 1816 by Lieutenant Francis Hall, a trip about which Thoreau had read.)



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

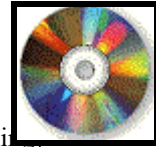
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

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"[The railroad will] only encourage the common people to move about needlessly."

— [Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington](#)



What Montréal looked like in the Year of Our Lord 1850 (on a sunny seasonal morning)



The river and falls of Saint Mary in southeastern British Columbia are now, however, completely different from the way they were when they were described by [Thoreau](#) — due to diversion of water to the Sault Ste. Marie Canal:

WALDEN: Fishermen, hunters, woodchoppers, and others, spending their lives in the fields and woods, in a peculiar sense a part of Nature themselves, are often in a more favorable mood for observing her, in the intervals of their pursuits, than philosophers or poets even, who approach her with expectation. She is not afraid to exhibit herself to them. The traveller on the prairie is naturally a hunter, on the head waters of the Missouri and Columbia a trapper, and at the Falls of St. Mary a fisherman. He who is only a traveller learns things at second-hand and by the halves, and is poor authority. We are most interested when science reports what those men already know practically or instinctively, for that alone is a true *humanity*, or account of human experience.

CANADA



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Upon his return, [Thoreau](#) would begin to read about [Canada](#). Here is one commentator's "take" on "A YANKEE IN CANADA":

When he visited the valley of the St. Lawrence River in 1850, he noticed that he was being "reminded of the government every day. It parades itself before you" (106). In regard to the omnipresent Canadian soldierly reminders of subjecthood, he quipped that "the inhabitants evidently rely on them in a great measure for music and entertainment" (28). But on Thoreau "they made a sad impression on the whole, for it was obvious that all true manhood was in the process of being drilled out of them. I have no doubt that soldiers well drilled are, as a class, peculiarly destitute of originality and independence. The officers appeared like men dressed above their condition. It is impossible to give the soldier a good education without making him a deserter. His natural foe is the government that drills him. What would any philanthropist, who felt an interest in these men's welfare, naturally do, but first of all teach them so to respect themselves, that they could not be hired for this work" (40). He noticed that the soldiers, in performance of their military gestures, were "seemingly as indifferent to fewness of spectators as the phenomena of nature are" (29). A dress parade was "an interesting sight" and he particularly remarked the soldiers' white kid gloves. In contrast, he remarked upon the gracefulness of a soldier's cat as it walked "up a clefted plank into a high loophole, designed for mus-catry, as serene as Wisdom herself, and with a gracefully waving motion of her tail, as if her ways were ways of pleasantness and all her paths were peace" (94). He thought that the key would be, if they could put not only their hands and heads together in this uniform manner, but also their "hearts and all" together, that "such a co-operation and harmony would be the very end and success for which government now exists in vain" (29-30). Failing this, "Give me a country where it is the most natural thing in the world for a government that does not understand you to let you alone" (106). "Inexpressibly beautiful appears the recognition by man of the least natural fact, and the allying his life to it" (32). "The greater, or rather the most prominent, part of this city [Québec] was constructed with the design to offer the deadest resistance to leaden and iron missiles that might be cast against it. But it is a remarkable meteorological and psychological fact, that it is rarely known to rain lead with much violence, except on places so constructed" (39). Seeing the utter valuelessness of the fort for any purpose other than for the defense of itself, he thought that fortifications must be "only the bone for which the parties fought.... How often we read that the enemy occupied a position which commanded the old, and so the fort was evacuated. Have not the school-house and the printing-press occupied a position which commands such a fort as this?" (101) Thoreau commented that all these military things were "faithfully kept dusted by officials, in accordance with the motto, 'In time of peace prepare for war': but I saw no preparations for peace: she was plainly an uninvited guest." He would be in favor of their finally reducing "their intrenchments to the circumference of their own brave hearts" (98). "What a troublesome thing a wall is! I thought it was to defend me, and not I it. Of course, if they had no wall they would not need to have any sentinels" (102). He coupled all fortifications in his mind "with the dismantled Spanish forts to be found in so many parts of the world; and if in any place they are not actually dismantled, it is because that there the intellect of the inhabitants is dismantled" (99).



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September 26, Thursday: In London, the first column of what would be the Crystal Palace was being raised.

Restrictions were set on the [French](#) press by President [Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte](#).

[Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) were just south of Plattsburg, Vermont and got their first fair view of Lake Champlain, (still, incidentally, a fair view):

CANADA
QUÉBEC





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Above all the church of Notre Dame was conspicuous, and anon the Bonsecours Market-House occupying a commanding position on the quay, in the rear of the shipping. This city makes the more favorable impression from being approached by water, and also being built of stone, a gray limestone found on the island. Here, after travelling directly inland the whole breadth of New England, we had struck upon a city's harbor, —it made on me the impression of a sea-port,— to which ships of six hundred tons can ascend, and where vessels drawing fifteen feet lie close to the wharf, — five hundred and forty miles from the Gulf; the St. Lawrence being here two miles wide. There was a great crowd assembled on the ferry-boat wharf, and on the quay, to receive the Yankees, and flags of all colors were streaming from the vessels to celebrate their arrival. When the gun was fired, the gentry hurraed again and again, and then the Canadian caleche drivers, who were most interested in the matter, and who, I perceived, were separated from the former by a fence, hurraed their welcome; first the broad-cloth, then the home-spun.

It was early in the afternoon when we stepped ashore. With a single companion I soon found my way to the church of Notre Dame. I saw that it was of great size and signified something. It is said to be the largest ecclesiastical structure in North America, and can seat ten thousand. It is two hundred fifty-five and a half feet long, and the groined ceiling is eighty feet above your head. The Catholic are the only churches which I have seen worth remembering, which are not almost wholly prophane. I do not speak only of the rich and splendid like this, but of the humblest of them as well. Coming from the hurraing mob and the rattling carriages, we pushed aside the listed door of this church and found ourselves instantly in an atmosphere which might be sacred to thought and religion if one had any. There sat one or two women who had stolen a moment from the concerns of the day as they were passing; but if there had been fifty people there, it would still have been the most solitary place imaginable. They did not look up at us, nor did one regard another. We walked softly down the broad-aisle with our hats in our hands. Presently came in a troop of Canadians, in their homespun, who had come to the city in the boat with us, and one and all kneeled down in the aisle before the high altar to their devotions, somewhat awkwardly, as cattle prepare to lie down, and there we left them. As if you were to catch some farmer's sons from Marlboro, come to Cattleshow, silently kneeling in Concord meetinghouse some Wednesday! Would there not soon be a mob peeping in at the windows? It is true, these Roman Catholics, priests and all, impress me as a people who have fallen far behind the significance of their symbols. It is as if an ox had strayed into a church and were trying to bethink himself. Nevertheless, they are capable of reverence; but we Yankees are a people in whom this sentiment has nearly died out, and in this respect we cannot bethink ourselves even as oxen. I did not mind the pictures nor the candles, whether tallow or tin. Those of the former which I looked at appeared tawdry. It matters little to me whether the pictures are by a neophyte of the Algonquin or the Italian tribe. But I was impressed by the quiet religious atmosphere of the place. It was a great cave in the midst of a city, —and what were the altars and the tinsel but the sparkling stalactites,— into which you entered in a moment, and where the still atmosphere and the sombre light disposed to serious and profitable thought. Such a cave at hand, which you can enter any day, is worth a thousand of our churches which are open only on Sundays, —hardly long enough for an airing,— and then filled with a bustling congregation. A church where the priest is the least part, where you do your own preaching, where the universe preaches to you and can be heard. I am not sure but this Catholic religion would be an admirable one if the priest were quite omitted. I think that I might go to church myself sometimes, some Monday, if I lived in a city where there was such a one to go to. In Concord, to be sure, we do not need such. Our forests are such a church, far grander and more sacred. We dare not leave *our* meetinghouses open for fear they would be prophaned. Such a cave, such a shrine, in one of our groves, for instance, how long would it be respected — for what purposes would it be entered, by such baboons as we are? I think of its value not only to religion, but to philosophy and poetry; beside a Reading Room to have a Thinking Room in every city! Perchance the time will come when every house even will have not only its sleeping rooms, and dining room, and talking room or parlor, but its Thinking Room also, and the architects will put it into their plans. Let it be furnished and ornamented with whatever conduces to serious and creative thought. I should not object to the holy water, or any other simple symbol, if it were consecrated by the imagination of the worshippers.

I heard that some Yankees bet that the candles here were not wax but tin. A European assured them that they were wax; but inquiring of the sexton he was surprised to learn that they were tin filled with oil. The church was too poor to afford wax. As for the Protestant churches, here, as elsewhere, they did not interest me, for it is only as caves that churches interest me at all, and in that respect they were inferior.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Montreal makes the impression of a larger city than you had expected to find, though you may have heard that it contains nearly sixty thousand inhabitants. In the newer parts it appeared to be growing fast like a small New York, and to be considerably Americanized. The names of the squares reminded you of Paris — the Champ de Mars, the Place d'Armes, and others, and you felt as if a French revolution might break out any moment. Glimpses of Mount Royal rising behind the town, and the names of some streets in that direction made one think of Edinburgh. That hill sets off this city wonderfully. I inquired at a principal bookstore for books published in Montreal. They said that there were none but school books, and the like, they got their books from the States. From time to time we met a priest in the streets, for they are distinguished by their dress, like the *civil* police. Like clergymen generally, with or without the gown, they made on us the impression of effeminacy. We also met some Sisters of Charity, dressed in black, with Shaker-shaped black bonnets and crosses, and cadaverous faces, who looked as if they had almost cried their eyes out, — their complexions parboiled with scalding tears; insulting the daylight by their presence, having taken an oath not to smile. By cadaverous, I mean that their faces were like the faces of those who have been dead and buried for a year, and then untombed, with the life's grief upon them, and yet, for some unaccountable reason, the process of decay arrested.

“Truth never fails her servant, Sir, nor leaves him
With the day's shame upon him.”

They waited demurely on the side-walk while a truck laden with raisins was driven in at the seminary of St. Sulpice, never once lifting their eyes from the ground.

The soldier here, as everywhere in Canada, appeared to be put forward, and by his best foot. They were in the proportion of the soldiers to the laborers in an African ant-hill. The inhabitants evidently rely on them in a great measure, for music and entertainment. You would meet with them pacing back and forth before some guard-house or passage way, guarding, regarding, and disregarding all kinds of law by turns, apparently for the sake of the discipline to themselves, and not because it was important to exclude anybody from entering that way. They reminded me of the men who are paid for piling up bricks and then throwing them down again. On every prominent ledge you could see England's hands holding the Canadas, and I judged by the redness of her knuckles that she would soon have to let go. In the rear of such a guard-house, in a large gravelled square or parade ground, called the Champ de Mars, we saw a large body of soldiers being drilled, we being as yet the only spectators. But they did not appear to notice us any more than the devotees in the church, but were seemingly as indifferent to fewness of spectators as the phenomena of nature are, whatever they might have been thinking under their helmets of the Yankees that were to come. Each man wore white kid gloves. It was one of the most interesting sights which I saw in Canada. The problem appeared to be, how to smooth down all individual protuberances or idiosyncrasies, and make a thousand men move as one man, animated by one central will, and there was some approach to success. They obeyed the signals of a commander who stood at a great distance, wand in hand, and the precision, and promptness, and harmony of their movements, could not easily have been matched. The harmony was far more remarkable than that of any quire or band, and obtained, no doubt, at a greater cost. They made on me the impression, not of many individuals, but of one vast centipede of a man, good for all sorts of pulling down; — and why not then for some kinds of building up? If men could combine thus earnestly, and patiently, and harmoniously, to some really worthy end, what might they not accomplish? They now put their hands, and partially perchance their heads, together, and the result is that they are the imperfect tools of an imperfect and tyrannical government. But if they could put their hands and heads and hearts and all together, such a cooperation and harmony would be the very end and success for which government now exists in vain — a government, as it were, not only with tools, but stock to trade with.

I was obliged to frame some sentences that sounded like French in order to deal with the market women, who, for the most part, cannot speak English. According to the guide-book the relative population of this city stands nearly thus. Two fifths are French Canadian; nearly one-fifth British Canadian; one and a half fifth English, Irish, and Scotch; somewhat less than one half fifth Germans, United States people, and others. I saw nothing like pie for sale, and no good cake to put in my bundle, such as you can easily find in our towns, but plenty of fair-looking apples, for which Montreal Island is celebrated, and also pears, cheaper and I thought better than ours, and peaches, which, though they were probably brought from the south, were as cheap as they commonly are with us. So imperative is the law of demand and supply that, as I have been told, the market of Montreal is sometimes supplied with green apples from the state of New York some weeks even before they are ripe in the latter place.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

We got our first fair view of the lake at dawn, just before reaching Plattsburg, and saw blue ranges of mountains on either hand, in New York and in Vermont, the former especially grand. A few white schooners, like gulls, were seen in the distance, for it is not waste and solitary like a lake in Tartary; but it was such a view as leaves not much to be said.... The number of French Canadian gentlemen and ladies among the passengers, and the sound of the French language, advertised us by this time, that we were being whirled toward some foreign vortex. And now we have left Rouse's Point, and entered the Sorel River, and passed the invisible barrier between the States and Canada. The shores of the Sorel, Richelieu, or St. John's River, were flat and reedy, where I had expected something more rough and mountainous for a natural boundary between two nations. Yet I saw a difference at once, in the few huts, in the pirogues on the shore, and as it were, in the shore itself. This was an interesting scenery to me, and the very reeds or rushes in the shallow water, and the tree tops in the swamps, have left a pleasing impression. We had still a distant view behind us of two or three blue mountains in Vermont and New York. About nine o'clock in the forenoon we reached St. John's, an old frontier post three hundred and six miles from Boston and twenty-four from Montreal. We now discovered that we were in a foreign country, in a station-house of another nation. This building was a barn-like structure looking as if it were the work of the villagers combined, like a log-house in a new settlement. My attention was caught by the double advertisements in French and English fastened to its posts, by the formality of the English, and the covert or open reference to their queen and the British lion. No gentlemanly conductor appeared, none whom you would know to be the conductor by his dress and demeanor; but ere long we began to see here and there a solid, red-faced, burly-looking Englishman, a little puffy perhaps, who made us ashamed of ourselves and our thin and nervous countrymen, — a grandfatherly personage at home in his great coat, who looked as if he might be a stage proprietor, certainly a railroad director, and knew, or had a right to know when the cars did start. Then there were two or three pale-faced, black-eyed, loquacious Canadian French gentlemen there, shrugging their shoulders; pitted as if they had all had the small pox. In the mean while some soldiers, red-coats, belonging to the barracks nearby, were turned out to be drilled. At every important point in our route the soldiers showed themselves ready for us; though they were evidently rather raw recruits here, they manœuvred far better than our soldiers; yet, as usual, I heard some Yankees talk as if they were no great shakes, and they had seen the Acton Blues manœuvre as well. The officers spoke sharply to them, and appeared to be doing their part thoroughly. I heard one, suddenly coming to the rear, exclaim, "Michael Donouy, take his name!" though I could not see what the latter did or omitted to do. It was whispered that Michael Donouy would have to suffer for that. I heard some of our party discussing the possibility of their driving these troops off the field with their umbrellas. I thought that the Yankee, though undisciplined, had this advantage at least, that he especially is a man who, everywhere and under all circumstances, is fully resolved to better his condition essentially, and therefore he could afford to be beaten at first; while the virtue of the Irishman, and to a great extent the Englishman, consists in merely maintaining his ground or condition. The Canadians here, a rather poor-looking race clad in grey homespun, which gave them the appearance of being covered with dust, were riding about in caleches and small one-horse carts called charettes. The Yankees assumed that all the riders were racing, or at least exhibiting the paces of their horses, and saluted them accordingly. We saw but little of the village here, for nobody could tell us when the cars would start; that was kept a profound secret, perhaps for political reasons; and therefore we were tied to our seats. The inhabitants of St. John's and vicinity are described by an English traveller as "singularly unprepossessing," and before completing his period he adds, "besides, they are generally very much disaffected to the British Crown." I suspect that that "besides" should have been a because.

At length about noon the cars began to roll toward La Prairie. The whole distance of fifteen miles was over a remarkably level country, resembling a western prairie, with the mountains about Chambly visible in the north-east. This novel, but monotonous, scenery was exciting. At La Prairie we first took notice of the tinned roofs, but, above all, of the St. Lawrence, which looked like a lake, in fact it is considerably expanded here; it was nine miles across diagonally to Montreal. Mount Royal in the rear of the city and the island of St. Helens opposite to it, were now conspicuous. We could also see the Sault St. Louis about five miles up the river, and the Sault Norman still further eastward. The former are described as the most considerable rapids in the St. Lawrence; but we could see merely a gleam of light there as from a cobweb in the sun. Soon the city of Montreal was discovered with its tin roofs shining afar. Their reflections fell on the eye like a clash of cymbals on the ear.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

CATHOLICS

I saw here the spruce wax which the Canadians chew, done up in little silvered papers, a penny a roll; also a small and shrivelled fruit which they called *cerises* mixed with many little stems somewhat like raisins, but I soon returned what I had bought, finding them rather insipid, only putting a sample in my pocket. Since my return, I find on comparison that it is the fruit of the sweet viburnum (*viburnum lentago*) which with us rarely holds on till it is ripe.

I stood on the deck of the steamer John Munn, late in the afternoon, when the second and third ferry-boats arrived from La Prairie bringing the remainder of the Yankees. I never saw so many caleches, cabs, charrettes, and similar vehicles, collected before, and doubt if New York could easily furnish more. The handsome and substantial stone quay which stretches a mile along the river side and protects the street from the ice, was thronged with the citizens who had turned out on foot and in carriages to welcome or to behold the Yankees. It was interesting to see the caleche drivers dash up and down the slopes of the quay with their active little horses. They drive much faster than in our cities. I have been told that some of them come nine miles into the city every morning and return every night, without changing their horses during the day. In the midst of the crowd of carts, I observed one deep one loaded with sheep with their legs tied together, and their bodies piled one upon another. As if the driver had forgotten that they were sheep and not yet mutton. A sight, I trust, peculiar to Canada, though I fear that it is not.

About six o'clock we started for Quebec, one hundred and eighty miles distant by the river; gliding past Longueil and Boucherville on the right, and *Pointe aux Trembles*, "so called from having been originally covered with aspens," and *Bout de l'Isle*, or the End of the Island, on the left. I repeat these names not merely for want of more substantial facts to record, but because they sounded singularly poetic to my ears. There certainly was no lie in them. They suggested that some simple and perchance heroic human life might have transpired there. There is all the poetry in the world in a name. It is a poem which the mass of men hear and read. What is poetry in the common sense but a string of such jingling names. I want nothing better than a good word. The name of a thing may easily be more than the thing itself to me. Inexpressibly beautiful appears the recognition by man of the least natural fact, and the allying his life to it. All the world reiterating this slender truth, that aspens once grew there; and the swift inference is, that men were there to see them. And so it would be with the names of our native and neighboring villages, if we had not profaned them.

The daylight now failed us and we went below, but I endeavored to console myself for being obliged to make this voyage by night by thinking that I did not lose a great deal, the shores being low and rather unattractive, and that the river itself was much the most interesting object. I heard something in the night about the boat being at William Henry, Three Rivers, and in the Richelieu Rapids, but I still where I had been when I lost sight of *Pointe aux Trembles*. To hear a man who has been waked up at midnight in the cabin of a steamboat, inquiring,—"Waiter, where are we now?"—is as if at any moment of the earth's revolution round the sun, or of the system round its centre, one were to raise himself up and inquire of one of the deck hands, — Where are we now?

September 27, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) steamed along the St. Lawrence River of [Canada](#) aboard the *John Munn*:

I went on deck at daybreak, when we were thirty or forty miles above Quebec. The banks were now higher and more interesting. There was an "uninterrupted succession of white-washed cottages" on each side of the river. This is what every traveller tells. But it is not to be taken as an evidence of the populousness of the country in general, hardly even of the river banks. They have presented a similar appearance for a hundred years. The Swedish traveller and naturalist [Kalm](#), who descended this river in 1749, says, "It could really be called a village, beginning at Montreal and ending at Quebec, which is a distance of more than one hundred and eighty miles; for the farm-houses are never above five



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arpens, and sometimes but three asunder, a few places excepted.” Even in 1684 Hontan said that the houses were not more than a gunshot apart at most. Ere long we passed *Cap Rouge*, eight miles above Quebec, the mouth of the *Chaudière* on the opposite or south side, New Liverpool Cove with its lumber rafts and some shipping; then Sillery and Wolfe’s Cove and the Heights of Abraham on the north, with now a view of Cape Diamond and the citadel in front. The approach to Quebec was very imposing. It was about six o’clock in the morning when we arrived. There is but a single street under the cliff on the south side of the cape, which was made by blasting the rock and filling up the river. Three story houses did not rise more than one fifth or one sixth the way up the nearly perpendicular rock, whose summit is three hundred and forty-five feet above the water. We saw, as we glided past, the sign on the side of the precipice, part way up, pointing to the spot where Montgomery was killed in 1775. Formerly it was the custom for those who went to Quebec for the first time, to be ducked, or else pay a fine. Not even the Governor General escaped. But we were too many to be ducked, even if the custom had not been abolished.

Here we were, in the harbor of Quebec, still three hundred and sixty miles from the mouth of the St. Lawrence, in a basin two miles across, where the greatest depth is twenty-eight fathoms, and though the water is fresh, the tide rises seventeen to twenty-four feet, a harbor “large and deep enough,” says a British traveller, “to hold the English navy.” I may as well state that in 1844 the county of Quebec contained

- about 45000 inhabitants, (the city and suburbs having about 43000.)
- about 28000 being Canadians of French origin.
- about 8000 being Canadians of British origin.
- over 7000 being natives of Ireland;
- 1500 being natives of England;
- the rest Scotch and others. 36000 belong to the Church of Rome.

Separating ourselves from the crowd we walked up a narrow street, thence ascended by some wooden steps, called the Break-neck Stairs, into another steep narrow and zigzag street, blasted through the rock, which last led through a low massive stone portal, called Prescott Gate, the principal thoroughfare, into the Upper Town. This passage was defended by cannon, with a guard-house over it, a sentinel at his post, and other soldiers at hand ready to relieve him. I rubbed my eyes to be sure that I was in the nineteenth century, and was not entering one of those portals which sometimes adorn the frontispieces of new editions of old black-letter volumes. I thought it would be a good place to read [Froissart](#)’s *Chronicles*. It was such a reminiscence of the middle ages as Scott’s novels. Men apparently dwelt there for security. Peace be unto them! As if the inhabitants of New York were to go over to Castle William to live! What a place it must be to bring up children! Being safe through the gate we naturally took the street which was steepest, and after a few turns found ourselves on the Durham Terrace, a wooden platform on the site of the old Castle of St. Louis, still one hundred and fifteen feet below the summit of the citadel, overlooking the Lower Town, the wharf where we had landed, the harbor, the Isle of Orleans, and the river and surrounding country to a great distance. It was literally a *splendid* view. We could see six or seven miles distant in the north-east an indentation in the lofty shore of the northern channel, apparently on one side of the harbor, which marked the mouth of the Montmorenci, whose celebrated fall was only a few rods in the rear.

At a shoe-shop, whither we were directed for this purpose we got some of our American money changed into English. I found that American hard money would have answered as well, excepting cents, which fell very fast before their pennies, it taking two of the former to make one of the latter, and often the penny which had cost us two cents did us the service of one cent only. Moreover, our



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robust cents were compelled to meet on even terms a crew of vile half-penny tokens and bung-town coppers, which had more brass in their composition, and so perchance made their way in the world.

Wishing to get into the citadel, we were directed to the Jesuits' Barracks, — a good part of the public buildings here are barracks, — to get a pass of the Town Major. We did not heed the sentries at the gate, nor did they us, and what under the sun they were placed there for, unless to hinder a free circulation of the air, was not apparent. There we saw soldiers eating their breakfasts in their mess room, from bare wooden tables in camp fashion. We were continually meeting with soldiers in the streets, carrying funny little tin pails of all shapes, even semicircular, as if made to pack conveniently. I supposed that they contained their dinners, so many slices of bread and butter to each, perchance. Sometimes they were carrying some kind of military chest on a sort of bier or hand barrow, with a springy, undulating, military step, all passengers giving way to them, even the charette drivers stopping for them to pass, — as if the battle were being lost from an inadequate supply of powder. There was a regiment of Highlanders, and, as I understood, of Royal Irish, in the city; and by this time there was a regiment of Yankees also. I had already observed, looking up even from the water, the head and shoulders of some General Poniatowski, with an enormous cocked hat and gun peering over the roof of a house, away up where the chimney caps commonly are with us, as it were a caricature of war and military awfulness; but I had not gone far up St. Louis street before my riddle was solved, by the apparition of a real live Highlander under a cocked hat, and with his knees out, standing and marching sentinel on the ramparts between St. Louis and St. John's Gates. (It must be a holy war that is waged there.) We stood close by without fear and looked at him. His legs were somewhat tanned, and the hair had begun to grow on them as some of our wise men predict that it will in such cases, but I did not think they were remarkable in any respect. Notwithstanding all his warlike gear, when I inquired of him the way to the Plains of Abraham, he could not answer me without betraying some bashfulness through his broad Scotch. Soon after, we passed another of these creatures standing sentry at the St. Louis Gate, who let us go by without shooting us or even demanding the countersign. We then began to go through the gate, which was so thick and tunnel-like as to remind me of those lines in Claudian's Old Man of Verona, about the getting out of the gate being the greater part of a journey; — as you might imagine yourself crawling through an architectural vignette *at the end* of a black-letter volume. We were then reminded that we had been in a fortress, from which we emerged by numerous zigzags in a ditch-like road, going a considerable distance to advance a few rods, where they could have shot us two or three times over, if their minds had been disposed as their guns were. The greatest, or rather the most prominent, part of this city was constructed with the design to offer the deadest resistance to leaden and iron missiles that might be cast against it. But it is a remarkable meteorological and psychological fact, that it is rarely known to rain lead with much violence, except on places so constructed. Keeping on about a mile we came to the Plains of Abraham; for having got through with the Saints, we come next to the Patriarchs. Here the Highland regiment was being reviewed, while the band stood on one side and played — methinks it was "*La Claire Fontaine*," the national air of the Canadian French.

This is the site where a real battle once took place, to commemorate which they have had a sham fight here almost every day since. The Highlanders manœuvred very well, and if the precision of their movements was less remarkable, they did not appear so stiffly erect as the English or Royal Irish, but had a more elastic and graceful gait, like a herd of their own red deer, or as if accustomed to stepping down the sides of mountains. But they made a sad impression on the whole, for it was obvious that all true manhood was in the process of being drilled out of them. I have no doubt that soldiers well drilled are as a class peculiarly destitute of originality and independence. The officers appeared like men dressed above their condition. It is impossible to give the soldier a good education without making him a deserter. His natural foe is the government that drills him. What would any



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philanthropist who felt an interest in these men's welfare naturally do, but first of all teach them so to respect themselves that they could not be hired for this work, whatever might be the consequences to this government or that; — not drill a few, but educate all. I observed one older man among them, grey as a wharf-rat and supple as the devil, marching lock-step with the rest, who would have to pay for that elastic gait.

We returned to the citadel along the heights, plucking such flowers as grew there. There was an abundance of succory still in blossom, broadleaved golden-rod, butter-cups, thorn-bushes, Canada thistles, and ivy, on the very summit of Cape Diamond. I also found the bladder-campion in the neighborhood. We there enjoyed an extensive view which I will describe in another place. Our pass, which stated that all the rules were “to be strictly enforced,” as if they were determined to keep up the semblance of reality to the last gasp, opened to us the Dalhousie Gate, and we were conducted over the citadel by a bare-legged Highlander in cocked hat and full regimentals. He told us that he had been here about three years, and had formerly been stationed at Gibraltar. As if his regiment, having perchance been nestled amid the rocks of Edinburgh Castle, must flit from rock to rock thenceforth over the earth's surface, like a bald eagle, or other bird of prey, from eyrie to eyrie.

As we were going out we met the Yankees coming in in a body, headed by a red-coated officer called the commandant, and escorted by many citizens both English and French Canadian; I therefore immediately fell into the procession, and went round the citadel again with more intelligent guides, carrying, as before, all my effects with me. Seeing that nobody walked with the red-coated commandant, I attached myself to him, and though I was not what is called well dressed, he did not know whether to repel me or not, for I talked like one who was not aware of any deficiency in that respect. Probably there was not one among all the Yankees who went to Canada this time, who was not more splendidly dressed than I was. It would have been a poor story if I had not enjoyed some distinction. I had on my “bad weather clothes,” like Olaf Trygvesson the Northman when he went to the Thing in England, where, by the way, he won his bride. As we stood by the thirty-two pounder on the summit of Cape Diamond, which is fired three times a day, the commandant told me that it would carry to the Isle of Orleans, four miles distant, and that no hostile vessel could come round the island. I now saw the subterranean or rather “casemated barracks” of the soldiers, which I had not noticed before, though I might have walked over them. They had very narrow windows, serving as loopholes for musketry, and small iron chimneys rising above the ground. There we saw the soldiers at home and in an undress, splitting wood, — I looked to see whether with swords or axes, — and in various ways endeavoring to realize that their nation was now at peace with this part of the world. A part of each regiment, chiefly officers, are allowed to marry. A grandfatherly would-be-witty Englishman could give a Yankee whom he was patronizing no reason for the bare knees of the Highlanders, other than oddity. The rock within the citadel is a little convex, so that shells falling on it would roll toward the circumference, where the barracks of the soldiers and officers are; it has been proposed therefore to make it slightly concave, so that they may roll into the centre, where they would be comparatively harmless, and it is estimated that to do this would cost twenty thousand pounds sterling. It may be well to remember this when I build my next house, and have the roof “all correct” for bomb-shells.

At mid-afternoon we made haste down *Sault au Matelot* Street towards the Falls of Montmorenci, about eight miles down the St. Lawrence on the north side, leaving the further examination of Quebec till our return. On our way we saw men in the streets sawing logs pit-fashion, and afterward with a common wood-saw and horse cutting the planks into squares for paving the streets. This looked very shiftless, especially in a country abounding in Water-power, and reminded me that I was no longer in Yankee land. I found on inquiry that the excuse for this was, that labor was so cheap, and I thought with some pain, — how cheap men are here! I have since learned that the English traveller Warburton,



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remarked soon after landing at Quebec, that every thing was cheap there but men. That must be the difference between going thither from New and from Old England. I had already observed the dogs harnessed to their little milk-carts, which contain a single large can, lying asleep in the gutters, regardless of the horses, while they rested from their labors, at different stages of the ascent in the Upper Town. I was surprised at the regular and extensive use made of these animals for drawing, not only milk, but groceries, wood, &c. It reminded me that the dog commonly is not put to any use. Cats catch mice; but dogs only worry the cats. [Kalm](#), a hundred years ago, saw sledges here for ladies to ride in drawn by a pair of dogs. He says, "A middle-sized dog is sufficient to draw a single person when the roads are good," and he was told by old people that horses were very scarce in their youth, and almost all the land carriage was then effected by dogs. They made me think of the Esquimaux, who, in fact, are the next people on the north. [Charlevoix](#) says that the first horses were introduced in 1665.

CAT

We crossed Dorchester Bridge over the St. Charles, –the little river in which Cartier, the discoverer of the St Lawrence, put his ships, and spent the winter of 1535,– and found ourselves on an excellent Macadamized road, called *Le Chemin de Beauport*. We had left Concord Wednesday morning, and we endeavored to realize that now, Friday morning, we were taking a walk in Canada, in the Seigniori of Beauport, a foreign country, which a few days before had seemed almost as far off as England and France. Instead of rambling to Flint's Pond or the Sudbury Meadows, we found ourselves, after being a little detained in cars and steamboats, –after spending half a night at Burlington, and half a day at Montreal,– taking a walk down the bank of the St. Lawrence to the Falls of Montmorenci and elsewhere. Well, I thought to myself, here I am in a foreign country, let me have my eyes about me and take it all in.

It already looked and felt a good deal colder than it had in New England, as we might have expected it would. I realized fully that I was four degrees nearer the pole, and shuddered at the thought; and I wondered if it were possible that the peaches might not be all gone when I returned. It was an atmosphere that made me think of the fur-trade, which is so interesting a department in Canada, for I had for all head covering a thin palm-leaf hat without lining, that cost twenty-five cents, and over my coat one of those unspeakably cheap, as well as thin, brown linen sacks of the Oak Hall pattern, which every summer appear all over New England, thick as the leaves upon the trees. It was a thoroughly Yankee costume, which some of my fellow travellers wore in the cars to save their coats a dusting. I wore mine at first because it looked better than the coat it covered, and last because two coats were warmer than one, though one was thin and dirty. I never wear my best coat on a journey; though perchance I could show a certificate to prove that I have a more costly one, at least, at home, if that were all that a gentleman required. It is not wise for a traveller to go dressed. I should no more think of it than of putting on a clean dicky and blacking my shoes to go a fishing. As if you were going out to dine, when in fact the genuine traveller is going out to work hard and fare harder, to eat a crust by the way-side whenever he can get it. Honest travelling is about as dirty work as you can do. Why, a man needs a pair of overalls for it. As for blacking my shoes in such a case, I should as soon think of blacking my face. I carry a piece of tallow to preserve the leather, and keep out the water, that's all; and many an officious shoe-black, who carried off my shoes when I was slumbering, mistaking me for a gentleman, has had occasion to repent it before he produced a gloss on them. My pack, in fact, was soon made, for I keep a short list of those articles, which, from frequent experience I have found indispensable to the foot traveller, and when I am about to start, I have only to consult that to be sure that nothing is omitted, and, what is more important, nothing superfluous inserted. Most of my fellow travellers carried carpet-bags or valises. Sometimes one had two or three ponderous yellow valises in his clutch at each hitch of the cars, as if we were going to have another rush for seats; and when there was a rush in earnest, and there were not a few, I would see my man in the crowd, with



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two or three affectionate lusty fellows along each side of his arm, between his shoulder and his valises, which last held them tight to his back, like the nut on the end of a screw. I could not help asking in my mind, — what so great cause for showing Canada to those valises, when perchance your very nieces had to stay at home for want of an escort? I should have liked to be present when the custom-house officer came aboard of him, and asked him to declare upon his honor if he had anything but wearing apparel in them. Even the elephant carries but a small trunk on his journeys. The perfection of travelling is to travel without baggage. After considerable reflection and experience, I have concluded that the best bag for the foot traveller is made with a handkerchief, or if he studies appearances, a piece of stiff brown paper, well tied up, with a fresh piece within to put outside when the first is torn. That is good for both town and country, and none will know but you are carrying home the silk for a new gown for your wife, when it may be a dirty shirt. A bundle which you can carry literally under your arm, and which will shrink and swell with its contents. I never found the carpet-bag of equal capacity which was not a bundle of itself. We styled ourselves the knights of the umbrella and the bundle, for wherever we went, whether to Notre Dame, or Mount Royal, or the Champ de Mars, to the Town Major's, or the Bishop's Palace, to the Citadel with a barelegged Highlander for our escort, or to the Plains of Abraham, to dinner or to bed, the umbrella and the bundle went with us, for we wished to be ready to digress at any moment. We made it our home nowhere in particular, but everywhere where our umbrella and bundle were. It would have been an amusing circumstance if the mayor of one of those cities had politely asked us where we were staying; we could only have answered that we were staying with his honor for the time being. I was amused when, after our return, some green ones inquired if we found it easy to get accommodated, as if we went abroad to get accommodated, when we can get that at home. There was no crowd where we put up. The best houses, in my opinion, are never crowded. But to proceed with my story.

We met with many charettes bringing wood and stone to the city. The most ordinary looking horses travelled faster than ours, or perhaps they were ordinary looking because, as I am told, the Canadians do not use the curry-comb. Moreover, it is said that on the approach of winter their horses acquire an increased quantity of hair to protect them from the cold. If this is true, some of our horses would make you think winter was approaching even in mid summer. We soon began to see women and girls at work in the fields, digging potatoes alone, or bundling up the grain which the men cut. They appeared in rude health with a great deal of color in their cheeks, and if their occupation had made them coarse, it impressed me as better in its effects than making shirts at four-pence apiece, or doing nothing at all, unless it be chewing slate-pencils, with still smaller results. They were much more agreeable objects with their great broad-brimmed hats and flowing dresses, than the men and boys. We afterwards saw them doing various other kinds of work; indeed I thought that we saw more women at work out of doors than men.

On our return we observed in this town a girl with Indian boots nearly two feet high taking the harness off a dog. The purity and transparency of the atmosphere were wonderful. When we had been walking an hour we were surprised on turning round to see how near the city with its glittering tin roofs still looked. A village ten miles off did not appear to be more than three or four. I was convinced that you could see objects distinctly there much farther than here. It is true, the villages are of a dazzling white, but the dazzle is to be referred perhaps to the transparency of the atmosphere as much as to the white-wash.

We were now fairly in the village of Beauport, though there was still but one road. The houses stood close upon this, without any front-yards, and at any angle with it, as if they had dropped down, being set with more reference to the road which the sun travels. It being about sundown and the falls not far off, we began to look round for a lodging, for we preferred to put up at a private house, that we might



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see more of the inhabitants. We inquired first at the most promising looking houses, if indeed any were promising. When we knocked they shouted some French word for Come in, perhaps *Entrez*, and we asked for a lodging in English; but we found, unexpectedly, that they spoke French only. Then we went along and tried another house, being generally saluted by a rush of two or three little curs which readily distinguished a foreigner, and which we were prepared now to hear bark in French. Our first question would be, *Parlez vous Anglais?* but the invariable answer was, *Non Monsieur*; and we soon found that the inhabitants were exclusively French Canadian, and nobody spoke English at all any more than in France; that in fact we were in a foreign country, where the inhabitants uttered not one familiar sound to us. Then we tried by turns to talk French with them, in which we succeeded sometimes pretty well, but for the most part pretty ill. *Pouvezvous nous donner un lit cette nuit?* we would ask, and then they would answer with French volubility, so that we could catch only a word here and there. We could understand the women and children generally better than the men, and they us; and thus after a while we would learn that they had no more beds than they used. So we were compelled to inquire *Y a-t-il une maison publique ici?* — (*auberge* we should have said perhaps, for they seemed never to have heard of the other,) and they answered at length that there was no tavern, unless we could get lodging at the mill, *le moulin*, which we had passed; or they would direct us to a grocery, and almost every house had a small grocery at one end of it. We called on the public notary, or village lawyer, but he had no more beds nor English than the rest. At one house there was so good a misunderstanding at once established, through the politeness of all parties, that we were encouraged to walk in and sit down and ask for a glass of water; and having drunk their water, we thought it was as good as to have tasted their salt. When our host and his wife spoke of their poor accommodations, meaning for themselves, we assured them that they were good enough, for we thought that they were only apologizing for the pooriness of the accommodations they were about to offer us, and we did not discover our mistake till they took us up a ladder into a loft and showed to our eyes what they had been laboring in vain to communicate to our brains through our ears, that they had but that one apartment with its few beds for the whole family. We made our *a-dieus* forthwith, and with gravity, perceiving the literal signification of that word. We were finally taken in at a sort of public-house, whose master worked for Patterson, the proprietor of the extensive saw-mills driven by a portion of the Montmorenci stolen from the fall, whose roar we now heard. We here talked or murdered French all the evening with the master of the house and his family, and probably had a more amusing time than if we had completely understood one another. At length they showed us to a bed in their best chamber, very high to get into, with a low wooden rail to it. It had no cotton sheets, but coarse home-made dark-colored linen ones. Afterward we had to do with sheets still coarser than these, and nearly the color of our blankets. There was a large open buffet crowded with crockery in one corner of the room, as if to display their wealth to travellers, and pictures of Scripture scenes, French, Italian, and Spanish, hung around. Our hostess came back directly to inquire if we would have brandy for breakfast.



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October 4, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) returned from [Canada](#):

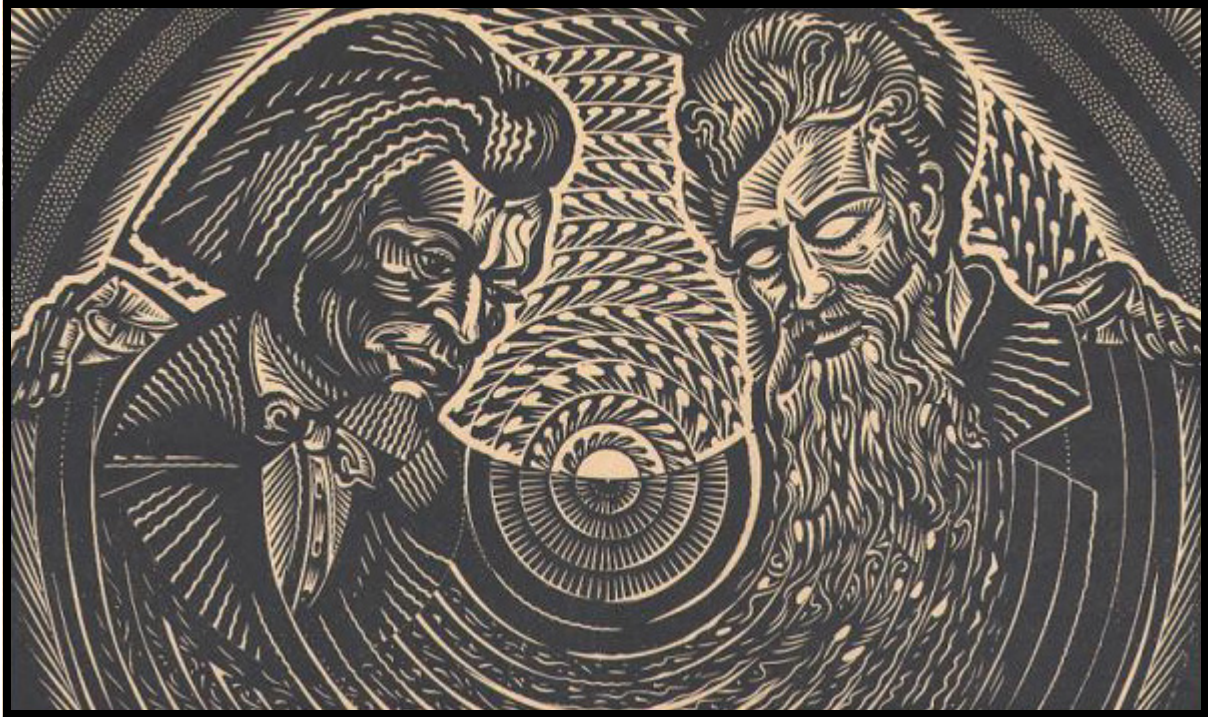
We left Montreal Wednesday, the 2d of October [this can only be an inaccurate transcription from notes, for our pair of intrepid travelers had left Montréal **for Québec** on Wednesday the 2d, and they were leaving Montréal **for home** on **Friday the 4th**, and there is simply no way to reconstrue their reported travels and adventures into 8 days rather than 10], late in the afternoon. In the La Prairie cars the Yankees made themselves merry, imitating the cries of the charette-drivers to perfection, greatly to the amusement of some French-Canadian travellers, and they kept it up all the way to Boston. I saw one person on board the boat at St. John's, and one or two more elsewhere in Canada, wearing homespun gray great-coats, or capotes, with conical and comical hoods, which fell back between their shoulders like small bags, ready to be turned up over the head when occasion required, though a hat usurped that place now. They looked as if they would be convenient and proper enough as long as the coats were new and tidy, but would soon come to have a beggarly and unsightly look, akin to rags and dust-holes. We reached Burlington early in the morning, where the Yankees tried to pass off their Canada coppers, but the news-boys knew better. Returning through the Green Mountains, I was reminded that I had not seen in Canada such brilliant autumnal tints as I had previously seen in Vermont. Perhaps there was not yet so great and sudden a contrast with the summer heats in the former country as in these mountain valleys. As we were passing through Ashburnham, by a new white house which stood at some distance in a field, one passenger exclaimed, so that all in the car could hear him, "There, there's not so good a house as that in all Canada!" I did not much wonder at his remark, for there is a neatness, as well as evident prosperity, a certain elastic easiness of circumstances, so to speak, when not rich, about a New England house, as if the proprietor could at least afford to make repairs in the spring, which the Canadian houses do not suggest. Though of stone, they are not better constructed than a stone barn would be with us; the only building, except the château, and while every village here contains at least several gentlemen or "squires," *there* there is but one to a signiory.

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It was [Frederick Douglass](#)'s speech at [Faneuil Hall](#) on this evening that prompted the formation of the Boston



Vigilance Committee, which eventually would spawn the [Secret "Six"](#) conspiracy in support of the activities of Captain [John Brown](#),⁴⁸ with the Boston attorney [Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) providing it with legal counsel.



[Frederick Douglass](#) declared bravely, in accordance with the Southern code of honor which equated **willingness to abandon life with deservingness of freedom**,⁴⁹ that "I should welcome the intelligence

48. (Of course, this was Captain Brown's conspiracy, since he was a white man and therefore a leader, and not [Frederick Douglass](#)'s conspiracy, since he was a black man and therefore a follower — despite the fact that while said conspiracy was being hatched [John Brown](#) was residing in the spare bedroom of Douglass's home in Rochester NY! :-)

49. Cf the slavemaster Patrick Henry's often-quoted "patriotic" declaration before the Virginia House of Burgesses, "I know not what course others may take, but as for me, Give Me Liberty Or Give Me Death."



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tomorrow, should it come, that slaves had risen in the South, and that the sable arms which had been engaged in beautifying and adorning the South, were engaged in spreading death and devastation.”

(Of course, although the idea of the raid on [Harpers Ferry](#) happened to be hatched while Brown was residing in Douglass’s spare bedroom, the idea of the raid was obviously all the white man’s idea and obviously none of the colored man’s idea, since we all know that colored people are not either originative or possessed of leadership capabilities. ;-)



A Vigilance Committee was also forming on this day in Syracuse, New York. It was made up of:

- P.H. Agan
- George Barnes
- Abnr. Bates
- Lyman Clary
- C.W. Levenworth
- J.W. Loguen
- H. Putnam
- R.R. Raymond
- C.B. Sedgwick
- V.W. Smith
- John Thomas
- C.A. Wheaton
- John Wilkinson



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

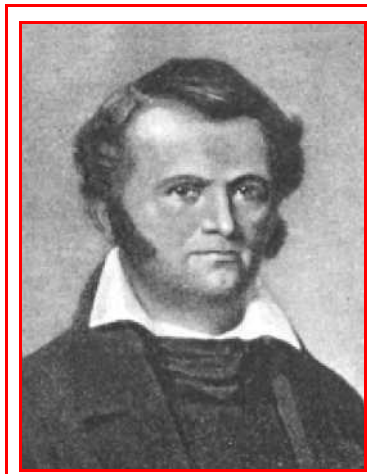
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Under the pressure of the Fugitive Slave Law, the “nonresistant” [Henry C. Wright](#) eventually came –surprise, surprise– to legitimate violence. No more Mr. Nice Guy:



Every man, who believes resistance to tyrants to be obedience to God, is bound by his **own principles** (not by mine) to arm himself with a pistol or a dirk, a bowie-knife, a rifle, or any deadly weapon, and inflict death with his own hand, on each and ever man who shall attempt to execute the recent law of Congress, or any other law, made with a view to re-capture and return to bondage fugitive slaves.



James Bowie



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

October 7, Monday: [Jenny Lind](#) sang in Howard's Hall in downtown [Providence, Rhode Island](#). The most expensive of the 2,000 seats went to one William Ross, at a price of \$650. Jenny autographed his ticket stub. There were another hundred people permitted to stand inside the building. The doors of the hall were purposely left open, and seats on nearby window ledges were being hawked at 25 cents each.

The published author [Henry Thoreau](#) was written to by a George Bailey in Portland, who had read [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) and was wondering about that [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) which had been mentioned in the advertisement at the end.

Portland, Me., Oct. 7th., 1850.

Dear Sir:

A few days since, by a lucky accident I met with a copy of a work of yours – "A week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers." – I read it with much interest, – and if I tell you plainly that I am delighted with the book, it is because I cannot help telling you so; – therefore you should pardon whatever is amiss in the expression. – I should like to ask you many questions touching your allusions to persons; such, for instance, as What were the names of the "aged shepherd" and "youthful pastor", p. 21? – What that of the "Concord poet" quoted on p. 49? – of the Justice of the Peace and Deacon, p. 68? what the name of "one who was born on its head waters," quoted on p. 90? – and many more of a similar nature; but I fear that such an act on the part of a stranger, would be but little short of impertinence, though it might be kindly considered by you; so I must not use that method of making myself "wise above what is written."

Next to confessing to you my admiration of your book, my object in writing you, is to make an enquiry for "Walden; or Life in the Woods," – announced at the close of the "Week", as shortly to be published. I have enquired for it in Boston, but no one can tell me anything about it. Will you please inform me if it has been published, and, if so, where it may be found? – Truly & Respectfully Yours,

Geo. A. Bailey

H.D. Thoreau, Esq., Concord, Mass.



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Do we know that Thoreau responded to this letter? This confusion over "*Walden; or Life in the Woods*" would have of course been in reference to the incorrect "will soon be published" advertisement the publisher placed at the end of the book. The answers to the other inquiries would have been:

Here then an *aged shepherd* dwelt, The Reverend [Ezra Ripley](#)
Who to his flock his substance dealt,
And ruled them with a vigorous crook,
By precept of the sacred Book;
But he the pierless bridge passed o'er,
And solitary left the shore.

Anon a *youthful pastor* came, [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#)
Whose crook was not unknown to fame,
His lambs he viewed with gentle glance,
Spread o'er the country's wide expanse,
And fed with "Mosses from the Manse."
Here was our Hawthorne in the dale,
And here the shepherd told his tale.

* * *

"So fair we seem, so cold we are,
So fast we hasten to decay,
Yet through our night glows many a star,
That still shall claim its sunny day." "The River," "*Concord poet*" [Ellery Channing](#)

* * *

"*Justice of the Peace and Deacon*"

* * *

"*born on its head-waters*" Nathaniel Peabody Rogers
Editor of the Concord NH [Herald of Freedom](#)

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THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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1851

[Dr. Walter Channing](#)'s NEW AND OLD.



Since a copy of this would be discovered in [Henry Thoreau](#)'s personal library, and since it is difficult to imagine Henry himself ever investing hard-earned coin in such a piece of drek, we need to suppose that this volume likely had been presented to him by the author's son, the "Concord PO8" [William Ellery Channing 2d](#). As an example indicating why I am terming this volume drek, I have included below one poem from the volume selected entirely at random. (I would challenge you to produce from the volume an effort less unworthy than this one — they all have the imprint of the same cookie-cutter. The reason why the son in Concord would prove himself to be such a lousy poet is that "the chip doesn't fall far from the stump.")

NEW AND OLD

[To Jenny Lind.](#)

I never saw thee, never heard thee speak,
As I have not the best of earlier days;
Nor may I till the latest morning break,
If it be mine to meet its dawning rays.

Yet still I know thee, as I do the best,
Whose holy step has sanctified the earth :
Thank Heaven, by thee and them the world is blest,
And joy and love through both have daily birth.

Thy power is all thy own, — the wealth of heart ;
Thy own creation, boundless as its source:
Thou owest little to the rule of art,
Thy music native as the birds' discourse.

Diffusive is thy gift, thy soul's own birth;
It reaches me through unknown thousands blest;
'Tis music circling wide the listening earth,
Wooing the broken heart to happy rest.

I listen to these voices of the soul,
The echoed melodies from thee which sprung;
I think to others thou wouldst give the whole,



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As nature freely gives, — thy wealth of song.

I reverence those who in thy wondrous voice
Have found for worship and for love a theme;
With such with cheerful heart I here rejoice,
And join with them in honor of thy name.

And yet doth come another strain to me,
Which from thyself in living measure springs :
It is thy soul's and life's deep harmony,
Which o'er thy word its mighty magic flings.

How reverend and how holy human art,
When sanctified by that which is of heaven,
Of the divine which dwells within the heart !
The product sure of inspiration given.

Here art thou from thy home, how far away!
Yet not forgetting it, and loving mine ;
As if it were a common debt to pay, —
Two distant nations in one blessing join.

'Twas fabled, in the reverend days of old,
That music could the stones to measure move:
A nobler story by our history's told,
Now music moves whole continents to love.

The thought has come from thy blest mission here,
If men would of their all a part forego,
Like thee with loving heart dry up the tear,
What large deduction then from human woe !

I love to linger with the thoughts which rise
Out of thy grateful visit to our home ;
I bid thee welcome to its varied skies,
And blessing ask on all thy years to come.

July 11, Friday night: [Henry Thoreau](#), walking at night with [Ellery Channing](#), became concerned that Ellery seemed incapable of grasping the fact that Nature has a darker side:



July 11, Friday: At 7¹/₄ PM with W.E.C. go forth to see the moon the glimpses of the moon— We think she is not quite full— we can detect a little flatness on the eastern side.⁵⁰ Shall we wear thick coats? The day has been warm enough, but how cool will the night be? It is not sultry as the last night. As a general rule, it is best to wear your thickest coat even in a July night. Which way shall we walk? North west —that we may see the moon returning— But on that side the river prevents our walking in the fields —and on other accounts that direction is not so attractive. We go toward Bear Garden Hill.⁵¹ The sun is setting. The meadow sweet has bloomed. These dry hills & pastures are the places to walk by moon light— The moon is silvery still —not yet inaugurated. The tree tops are seen against the amber west— Methinks I see the outlines of one spruce among them —distinguishable afar. My thoughts expand & flourish most on this barren hill where in the twilight I see

50. Actually, this was the night of the full moon. At 7PM there was no flatness whatever on the eastern side:



51. In recent years Bear Garden Hill has been proposed for a condo complex, to accompany the office development that had been proposed for Brister's Hill (but which has since been defeated).



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the moss spreading in rings & prevailing over the short thin grass carpeting the earth –adding a few inches of green to its circle annually while it dies within.

As we round the sandy promontory we try the sand & rocks with our hands –the sand is cool on the surface but warmer a few inches beneath –though the contrast is not so great as it was in May. The larger rocks are perceptibly warm. I pluck the blossom of the milk-weed in the twilight & find how sweet it smells. The white blossoms of the Jersey tea dot the hill side –with the yarrow everywhere. Some woods are black as clouds –if we knew not they were green by day, they would appear blacker still. When we sit we hear the mosquitoes hum. The woodland paths are not the same by night as by day –if they are a little grown up the eye cannot find them –but must give the reins to the feet as the traveller to his horse –so we went through the aspens at the base of the cliffs –their round leaves reflecting the lingering twilight on the one side the waxing moon light on the other –always the path was unexpectedly open.

Now we are getting into moon light. We see it reflected from particular stumps in the depths of the darkest woods, and from the stems of trees, as if it selected what to shine on.– a silvery light. It is a light of course which we have had all day but which we have not appreciated– And proves how remarkable a lesser light can be when a greater has departed. Here simply & naturally the moon presides– 'Tis true she was eclipsed by the sun –but now she acquires an almost equal respect & worship by reflecting & representing him –with some new quality perchance added to his light –showing how original the disciple may be –who still in mid-day is seen though pale & cloud-like beside his master. Such is a worthy disciple– In his masters presence he still is seen & preserves a distinct existence –& in his absence he reflects & represents him –not without adding some new quality to his light –not servile & never rival– As the master withdraws himself the disciple who was a pale cloud before begins to emit a silvery light –acquiring at last a tinge of golden as the darkness deepens, but not enough to scorch the seeds which have been planted or to dry up the fertilising dews which are falling.

BAKER FARM

Passing now near Well meadow head toward Bakers orchard– The sweet fern & Indigo weed fill the path up to ones middle wetting us with dews so high The leaves are shining & flowing– We wade through the luxuriant vegetation seeing no bottom– Looking back toward the cliffs some dead trees in the horizon high on the rocks make a wild New Hampshire prospect. There is the faintest possible mist over the pond holes, where the frogs are eructating –like the falling of huge drops –the bursting of mephitic air bubbles rising from the bottom –a sort of blubbering Such conversation as I *have* heard between men.– a belching conversation expressing a sympathy of stomachs & abdomens. The peculiar appearance of the Indigo weed, its misty massiveness is striking. In Baker's Orchard the thick grass looks like a sea of mowing in this weird moonlight –a bottomless sea of grass– our feet must be imaginative –must know the earth in imagination only as well as our heads. We sit on the fence, & where it is broken & interrupted the fallen & slanting rails are lost in the grass (really thin & wiry) as in water. We ever see our tracks a long way behind, where we have brushed off the dew. The clouds are peculiarly wispy wispy tonight some what like fine flames –not massed and dark nor downy –not thick but slight thin wisps of mist–

BAKER FARM

I hear the sound of Heywood's brook falling into Fair Haven Pond –inexpressibly refreshing to my senses –it seems to flow through my very bones.– I hear it with insatiable thirst– It allays some sandy heat in me– It affects my circulations –methinks my arteries have sympathy with it What is it I hear but the pure water falls within me in the circulation of my blood –the streams that fall into my heart?– what mists do I ever see but such as hang over –& rise from my blood– The sound of this gurgling water –running thus by night as by day –falls on all my dashes –fills all my buckets –overflows my float boards –turns all the machinery of my nature makes me a flume –a sluice way to the springs of nature– Thus I am washed thus I drink –& quench my thirst. Where the streams fall into the lake if they are only a few inches more elevated all walkers may hear–

BAKER FARM

On the high path through Bakers wood I see or rather feel the Tephrosia– Now we come out into the open pasture. And under those woods of elm & button wood where still no light is seen –repose a family of human beings By night there is less to distinguish this locality from the woods & meadows we have threaded.

We might go very near to Farm houses covered with ornamental trees & standing on a high road, thinking that were in the most retired woods & fields still. Having yielded to sleep man is a less obtrusive inhabitant of nature. Now having reached the dry pastures again –we are surrounded by a flood of moon light– The dim cart path over the wood curves gracefully through the Pitch-pines, ever to some more fairy-like spot. The rails in the fences shine like silver– We know not whether we are sitting on the ruins of a wall –or the materials which are to compose a new one. I see half-a mile off a phosphorescent arc on the hill side where Bartletts cliff reflects the moon light. Going by the shanty I smell the excrements of its inhabitants which I had never smelt before. And now at half past 10 o'clock I hear the cockrills crow in Hubbard's barns.– and morning is already anticipated. It is the feathered wakeful thought in us that anticipates the following day. This sound is wonderfully exhilarating at all times. These birds are worth far more to me for their crowing & cackling –than for their drumsticks & eggs. How singular the connexion of the hen with man, that she leaves her eggs in his



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barns always –she is a domestic fowl though still a little shyish of him– I cannot looking at the whole as an experiment still and wondering that in each case it succeeds. There is no doubt at last but hens may be kept – they will put there eggs in your barn –by a tacit agreement– They will not wander far from your yard.

JAMES BAKER


July 12, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed near Charles Gordon’s property.

He went out walking again as on the previous night, this time alone rather than with the uncomprehending [Ellery Channing](#), and found himself bidding “farewell to those who will talk of nature unnaturally.” Note that Thoreau had admitted to himself, after his excursion into the wilds of Maine, that “man could no longer accuse institutions and society, but must front the true source of evil.”



July 12, Saturday: 8 PM Now at least the moon is full –and I walk alone –which is best by night, if not by day always. Your companion must sympathize with the present mood. The conversation must be located where the walkers are & vary exactly with the scene & events & the contour of the ground. Farewell to those who will talk of nature unnaturally –whose presence are an interruption. I know but one with whom I can walk. I might as well be sitting in a bar room with them as walk and talk with most– We are never side by side in our thoughts –& we cannot bear each other’s silence– Indeed we cannot be silent– We are forever breaking silence, that is all, and mending nothing. How can they keep together who are going different ways! I start a sparrow  from her 3 eggs in the grass where she had settled for the night. The earliest corn is beginning to show its tassels now & I scent it as I walk –its peculiar dry scent. (This afternoon I gathered ripe blackberries & felt as if the autumn had commenced) Now perchance many sounds & sights only remind me that they once said something to me, and are so by association interesting. I go forth to be reminded of a previous state of existence, if perchance any memento of it is to be met with hereabouts. I have no doubt that nature

DIFFERENT DRUMMER

preserves her integrity. Nature is in as rude health as when Homer sang. We may at least by our sympathies be well. I see a skunk on bare garden hill stealing noiselessly away from me, while the moon shines over the pitch pines which send long shadows down the hill– Now looking back I see it shining on the S side of farm houses & barns with a weird light –for I pass here half an hour later than last night. I smell the huckleberry bushes. I hear a human voice some laborer singing after his days toil –which I do not often hear –loud it must be for it is far away –methinks I should know it for a white man’s voice –some strains have the melody of an instrument. Now I hear the sound of a bugle in the “Corner” reminding me of Poetic Wars, a few flourishes & the bugler has gone to rest. At the foot of the Cliff hill I hear the sound of the clock striking nine as distinctly as within a quarter of a mile usually though there is no wind. The moonlight is more perfect than last night –hardly a cloud in the sky –only a few fleecy ones –there is more serenity & more light– I hear that sort of throttled or chuckling note as of a bird flying high –now from this side then from that. Methinks when I turn my head I see Wachusett from the side of the hill. I smell the butter & eggs as I walk. I am startled by the rapid transit of some wild animal across my path a rabbit or a fox –or you hardly know if it be not a bird. Looking down from the cliffs –the leaves of the tree tops shine more than ever by day –hear & there a lightning bug shows his greenish light over the tops of the trees–⁵² As I return through the orchard a foolish robin [American Robin  *Turdus migratorius*] bursts away from his perch unnaturally –with the habits of man. The air is remarkably still and unobjectionable on the hill top –& the whole world below is covered as with a gossamer blanket of moonlight– It is just about as yellow as a blanket. It is a great dimly burnished shield with darker blotches on its surface. You have lost some light, it is true, but you have got this simple & magnificent stillness, brooding like genius.

September 4, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) went to Boon’s Pond in Stow, Massachusetts.



September 4: 8 A.M. A clear & Pleasant day after the rain. Start for Boons Pond in Stow with C. Every sight & sound was the more interesting for the clear atmosphere. When you are starting away –leaving your

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more familiar fields for a little adventure like a walk –you look at every object with a travellers or at least with historical eyes –you pause on the first bridge.– where an ordinary walk hardly commences, & begin to observe & moralize like a traveller– It is worthe the while to see your native Village thus sometimes –as if you were a traveller passing through it –commenting on your neighbors as strangers.

We stood thus on woods bridge the first bridge in the capacity of Pilgrims & strangers to its familiarity, giving it one more chance with us – though our townsmen who passed may not have perceived it.

There was a pretty good sized pickerel poised over the sandy bottom close to the shore–& motionless as a shadow– It is wonderful how they resist the slight current of our river. & remain thus stationary for hours. He no doubt saw us plainly on the bridge. In the sunny water –his whole form distinct & his shadow– motionless as the steel trap which does not spring till the fox’s foot has touched it.

John Hosmer’s dog sprang up, ran out, & growled at us – and in his eye I seemed to see the eye of his master. I have no doubt but that as is the master such in course of time tend to become his herds & flocks as well as dogs– One man’s oxen will be clever & solid –another’s mischievous –another’s mangy –in each case like their respective owners. No doubt man impresses his own character on the beasts which he tames & employs – they are not only humanized –but they acquire his particular human nature. How much oxen are like farmers generally, and cows like farmers’ wives! and young steers & heifers like farmers boys & girls! The farmer acts on the ox & the ox reacts on the farmer– They do not meet half way it is true –but they do meet at a distance from the centre of each– proportionate to each ones intellectual power. The farmer is oxlike in his thought in his walk– in his strength, in his trustworthiness – in his taste.

Hosmers man was cutting his millet – & his buckwheat already lay in red piles in the field.

The first picture we noticed was where the road turned among the pitch pines & showed the Hadley house with the high wooded hill behind with dew & sun on it –the gracefully winding road path –& a more distant horizon on the right of the house

Just beyond on the left it was pleasant walking where the road was shaded by a high hill – as it can be only in the morning. Even in the morning that additional coolness & early dawn like feeling of a more sacred and earlier season are agreeable.

The lane in front of Tarbel’s house which is but little worne & appears to lead no where though it has so wide & all ingulfing an opening –suggested– that such things might be contrived for effect in laying out grounds– (Only those things are sure to have the greatest & best effect, which like this were not contrived for the sake of effect). An opened path which would suggest walking & adventuring on it –t he going to some place strange & far away. It would make you think of or imagine distant places & spaces greater than the estate.

52. William M. White’s version is:

*The moonlight is more perfect than last night;
Hardly a cloud in the sky,—
Only a few fleecy ones.
There is more serenity and more light.*

*I hear that sort of throttled or chuckling note
As of a bird flying high,
Now from this side,
Then from that.*

*Methinks when I turn my head I see Wachusett from the side of the hill.
I smell the butter-and-eggs as I walk.*

*I am startled by the rapid transit of some wild animal
Across my path, a rabbit or a fox,—
Or you hardly know if it be not a bird.*

*Looking down from the cliffs,
The leaves of the tree-tops shine more than ever by day.
Here and there a lightning-bug shows his greenish light
Over the tops of the trees.*

[DOG](#)



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

It was pleasant looking back just beyond – to see a heavy shadow (made by some high birches) reaching quite across the road. Light & shadow are sufficient contrast & furnish sufficient excitement when we are well.

Now we were passing the vale of Brown & Tarbel – a sunshiney mead pastured by cattle – & sparkling with dew – the sound of crows [**American Crow**, **Corvus brachyrhynchos**] and swallows heard in the air – and leafy columned elms seen here & there, shining with dew. The morning freshness & unworldliness of that domain! The vale of Tempe and of Arcady is not farther off – than are the conscious lives of men from their opportunities – Our life is as far from answering to its scenery as we are distant from Tempe & arcadia. That is to say they are far away because we are far from living natural lives. How absurd it would be to insist on the vale of Tempe in particular – when we have such vales as we have.

In the Marlborough road in the woods I saw a purple streak like a stain on the red pine leaves & sand under my feet – which I was surprised to find was made by a dense mass of purple fleas – somewhat like snow fleas – a faint purple stain as if some purple dye had been spilt.

What is that slender pink flower that I find in the Marlborough road – smaller than a snap Dragon –?

The slender stems of grass which hang over the ruts & horse path in this little frequented road are so laden with dew that I am compelled to hold a bush before me to shake it off.

The jays [**Blue Jay**, **Cyanocitta cristata**] scream on the right & left – & are seen flying further off as we go by. We drink in the meadow at 2nd Division Brook – then sit awhile to watch its yellowish pebbles & the cress? in it & other weeds. The ripples cover its surface like a network & are faithfully reflected on the bottom. In some places the sun reflected from ripples on a flat stone looks like a golden comb – The whole brook seems as busy as a loom – it is a woof & warp of ripples – fairy fingers are throwing the shuttle at every step – & the long waving brook is the fine product. The water is wonderfully clear.

To have a hut here & a foot path to the brook. For roads I think that a poet cannot tolerate more than a foot-path through the fields – That is wide enough & for purposes of winged poesy suffices. It is not for the muse to speak of cart-paths. I would fain travel by a foot-path round the world. I do not ask the railroads of commerce – not even the cartpaths of the farmer. Pray what other path would you have than a foot-path? – what else should wear a path? This is the track of man alone – what more suggestive to the pensive walker? One walks in a wheel track with less emotion – he is at a greater distance from man – but this footpath – was perchance worn by the bare feet of human beings & he cannot but think with interest of them. The grapes though their leaves are withering and falling are yet too sour to eat.

In the summer we lay up a stock of experiences for the winter. as the squirrel of nuts. Something for conversation in winter evenings. I love to think then of the more distant walks I took in summer.

At the Powder mills – the carbonic acid gass in the road from the building where they were making charcoal made us cough for 20 or 30 rods

Saw some grey squirrels whirling their cylinder by the roadside. How fitted that cylinder to this animals – A squirrel is easily taught to turn his cylinder – might be a saying frequently applicable. And as they turned one leaped over or dodged under another most gracefully & unexpectedly with interweaving motions – It was the circus & menagerie combined – So human they were – exhibiting themselves.

In the marlboro Road, I forgot to say we brushed the Polygonum articulatum with its spikes of reddish white flowers a slender & tender plant which loves the middle of dry & sandy not much travelled roads – To find that the very atoms bloom – that there are flowers we rudely brush against which only the microscope reveals!!

It is wise to write on many subjects to try many themes that so you may find the right & inspiring one. Be greedy of occasions to express your thought. Improve the opportunity to draw analogies. There are innumerable avenues to a perception of the truth. Improve the suggestion of each object however humble – however slight & transient the provocation – what else is there to be improved? Who knows what opportunities he may neglect. It is not in vain that the mind turns aside this way or that. Follow its leading – apply it whither it inclines to go. Probe the universe in a myriad points. Be avaricious of these impulses. You must try a thousand themes before you find the right one – as nature makes a thousand acorns to get one oak. He is a wise man & experienced who has taken many views – To whom stones & plants & animals and a myriad objects have each suggested something – contributed something.

And now methinks this wider wood-path is not bad – for it admits of society more conveniently – 2 can walk side by side in it in the ruts aye and one more in the horse track – The Indian walked in single file more solitary – not side by side chatting as he went. The woodman's cart & sled make just the path two walkers want through the wood. by 2nd Div. Brook

Beyond the Powder Mills we watched some fat oxen – elephantine – behemoths – one Rufus Hosmer eyed with the long lash & projecting eye-ball

Now past the Paper mills – by the westernmost road east of the river – the first new ground w've reached.

Not only the Prunella turns **lake** but the hypericum virginicum in the hollows by the road side – a handsome

CHARCOAL



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

blush. A part of the autumnal tints. ripe leaves Leaves acquire red blood. Red colors touch our blood, & excite us as well as cows & geese.

And now we leave the road & go through the woods & swamps toward Boon's pond – crossing two or three roads & by Potter's House in Stow. still on East of river. The fruit of the *Pyrola rotundifolia* in The damp woods. Larch trees in stow about the houses. Beyond Potters we struck in to the extensive wooded plain where the ponds are found in Stow – sudbury & Marlboro. Part of it called Boon's Plain– Boon said to have lived on or under Baileys Hill at west of pond– Killed by Indians between Boon & Whites Pond as he was driving his oxcart– The oxen ran off to Marlboro Garrison house. His remains have been searched for. A sandy plain a large level tract. The pond shores handsome enough – but water shallow & muddy looking. Well wooded shores. The maples begin to show red about it– Much fished– Saw a load of sunflowers in a farmers Such is the destiny of this large coarse flower the farmers gather it like pumpkins

Returned by RR.–down the Assabet. A potatoe field yellow with wild radish– But no good place to bathe for 3 miles– Knights new dam has so raised the river. A permanent freshet as it were– he fluviate trees standing dead for fish hawk [Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus*] perches & the water stagnant for weeds to grow in–

You have only to dam up a running stream –to give it the aspect of a dead stream –& to some degree restore its primitive wild appearance. Tracts made inaccessible to man & at the same time more fertile. Some speculator comes & dams up the stream flow & low the water stands over all meadows making impassible morasses & dead trees for fish hawks a wild stagnant fenny country – the last gasp of wildness before it yields to the civilization of the factory. To cheer the eyes of the factory people & educate them. It makes a little wilderness above the factories.

The woodbine now begins to hang red about the maples & other trees.

As I look back up the stream from the near the bridge (I suppose on the road from Potters' house to stow) I on the RR. I saw the ripples sparkling in the sun – reminding me of the sparkling icy fleets which I saw last winter – and I saw how one corresponded to the other – ice waves to water ones – the erect ice flakes were the waves stereotyped. It was the same sight – the reflection of the sun sparkling from a myriad slanting surfaces at a distance – a rippled water surface or a crystalized frozen one.

Here crossed the river & climbed the high hills on the west side. The walnut trees conformed in their branches to the slope of the hill – being just as high from the ground on the upper side as on the lower.

On all sides now I see & smell the withering leaves of brush that has been cut to clear the land– I see some blackened tracts which have been burnt over– It is remarkable, for it is rare to see the surface of the earth black. And in the horizon I can see the smokes of several fires. The farmers improve this season which is the dryest – their haying being done & their harvest not begun to do these jobs –burn brush –build walls –dig ditches cut turf. This is what I find them doing all over the country now – also topping corn & digging potatoes.

Saw quite a flock for the first time of Gold finches [American Goldfinch, *Carduelis tristis*].

On the high round hills in the east & S E of Stow– Perchance they are called the Assabet Hills – rising directly from the river – they are the highest I know rising thus. The rounded hills of Stow. A hill & valley country. Very different from Concord.

It had been a warm day, especially warm to the head. I do not perspire as in the early summer – but am sensible of the ripening heat – more as if by contact. Suddenly the wind changed to east & the atmosphere grew more & more hazy & thick on that side obstructing the view while it was yet clear in the west. I thought it was the result of the cooler air from over the sea – meeting & condensing the vapor in the warm air of the land– That was the haze or thin dry fog – which some call smoke.

It gradually moved westward & affected the prospect on that side somewhat. It was a very thin fog invading all the east. I felt the cool air from the ocean & it was very refreshing I opened my bosom & my mouth to inhale it. very delicious & invigorating.

We sat on the top of those hills looking down on the new brick ice house.

Where there are several hills near together you can not determine at once which is the highest. whether the one you are on or the next. So when great men are assembled– each yields an uncertain respect to the other –as if it were not certain whose crown rose highest.

Under the nut trees on these hills the grass is short & green as if grazed close by cattle who had stood there for shade – making a distinct circular yard. Yet as there is no dung – & the form corresponds so closely to the tree– I doubt it that can be the cause.

On hill side N of river above Powder Mills the *Pycnanthemum Incanum* Mountain Mint (Calamint) & the *Lespedeza violacea*.

Saw what I thought a small red dog in the road – which cantered along over the bridge this side the Powder mills – & then turned into the woods. This decided me –this turning into the woods –that it was a fox. The dog of the woods The dog that is more at home in the woods than in the roads & fields. I do not often see a dog turning



DOG

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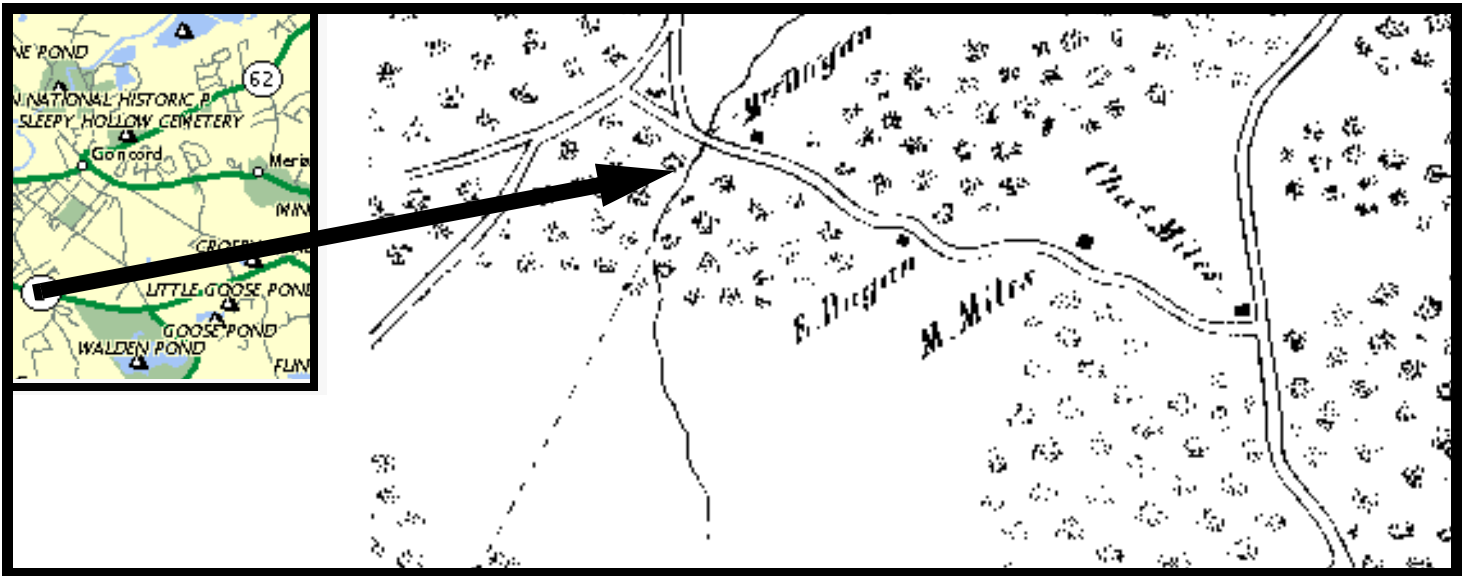
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

into the woods.

Some large white oak acorns this side the last named bridge. A few oaks stand in the pastures still great ornaments. I do not see any young ones springing up to supply their places. Will there be any a hundred years hence. These are the remnants of the primitive wood methinks. We are a young people & have not learned by experience the consequence of cutting off the forest. One day they will be planted methinks. & nature reinstated to some extent.

I love to see the yellow knots & their lengthened stain on the dry unpainted Pitch-pine boards on barns & other buildings The Dugan house for instance— The indestructible yellow fat —it fats my eyes to see it —worthy for art to imitate.— telling of branches in the forest once.

[JENNY DUGAN](#)[GEORGE DUGAN](#)

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Mid-September: [Ellen Kilshaw Fuller Channing](#) was invited to visit the home of her brother William Henry Fuller in Cincinnati, all expenses paid, traveling by the [canal](#) and river route in the company of her brother Eugene Fuller and viewing the [Niagara Falls](#) along the way.



While she and the children were out of the house, [Ellery Channing](#) would be going on daily walks with [Henry Thoreau](#). One night Thoreau would drop by and exhaust or exasperate his host by continuing to chat away until after 10PM.

September 11, Thursday: The following attempt at humor had recently appeared in the [Northampton Courier](#): “Dr. Bran – his dignity and consistency. The people of Northampton were amused one day last week by seeing this philosopher of sawdust pudding trundled on a wheelbarrow from his house to the barber’s house, he being infirm and unable to walk the distance.... The doctor stands a chance to recover and will be able before long to do without the wheelbarrow.... his best physician is the keeper of the hotel hard by his dwelling with whom he luxuriates on beef and mutton.” The local newspaper had, it seemed, been mistaken about the seriousness of Graham’s illness, as on this day he died. Having eaten healthily and abstained from merely recreational sex for all his life, Graham had given up the ghost at the advanced age of 57. (We trust that his life had at least **seemed** longer.) The Amherst newspaper would carry an obituary: “He has left behind him several works on physiology, hygiene, theology, etc., ably and powerfully possessed great clearness of perception and vigor of intellect.” The Graham residence in Northampton would be made into a restaurant called Sylvester’s, on



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Pleasant Street, which you may now visit.

At this point [Henry Thoreau](#) was well into his “Night and Moonlight” preparations, for we can find an altered paragraph from the journal for this date in the sheaf of unfinished notes labeled “The Moon.” Possibly he made the emendations as he copied this into the sheaf which would after his death be accessed either by [Ellery Channing](#) or [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) in the generation of the “Night and Moonlight” article in [The Atlantic Monthly](#) for November 1863. The additions from the journal version are indicated here in our standard markup coding, but note that Thoreau’s punctuation has also here obviously been “touched up,” at one point or another, by one editor or another:

After I have spent the greater part of a night abroad in the moonlight, I am obliged to sleep enough more the next night[^] *or perhaps the next day,* to make up for it—*Endymionis somnum dormire* (to sleep an Endymion sleep), as the ancients expressed it. And there is something gained still by thus turning the day into night. Endymion is said to have obtained of Jupiter the privilege ~~of sleeping~~ ^{*to be always young and sleep*} as much as he would. Let no man be afraid of sleep, if his weariness comes of obeying his ~~Genius~~ ^{*genius. It depends on how a man has spent his day, whether he has any right to be in his bed even by night. So spend some hours that you may have a right to sleep in the sunshine.*} He who has spent the night with the gods sleeps ~~more innocently~~ ^{*as innocently as*} than the sluggard who has spent the day with the satyrss sleeps by night. ~~He who has travelled to fairy land in the night sleeps by day more innocently than~~ he who is fatigued by the ~~merely trivial~~ ^{*ordinary*} labors of the day sleeps by night. ^{*Cato says, 'The dogs must be shut up by day that they may be more sharp (acriores), more fierce and vigilant by night.' So I might say of a moon- and star-gazer.*} That kind of life which sleeping we dream that we live awake, in our walks by night we waking, ~~dream that we~~ live; while our daily life appears as a dream.



September 11, Thursday: Every artizan learns positively something by his trade. Each craft is familiar with a few simple well-known well established facts—not requiring any genius to discover but mere use & familiarity. You may go by the man at his work in the street every day of your life.— & though he is there before you carrying into practice certain essential information—you shall never be the wiser. Each trade is in fact a craft a cunning a covering an ability—& its methods are the result of a long experience. There sits a stone-mason splitting Westford granite for fenceposts— Egypt has perchance taught New England something in this matter— His hammer—his chisels, his wedges—his shames? or half rounds—his iron spoon, I suspect that these tools are hoary with age as with granite dust. He learns as easily where the best granite comes from as he learns how to erect that screen to keep off the sun. He knows that he can drill faster into a large stone than a small one because there is less jar & yielding. He deals in stone as the carpenter in lumber— In many of his operations only the materials are different. His work is slow & expensive. Nature is here hard to be overcome. He wears up one or two drills in splitting a single stone. He must sharpen his tools oftener than the carpenter He fights with granite. He knows the temper of the rocks—he grows stoney himself—his tread is ponderous & steady like the fall of a rock. And yet by patience & art he splits a stone as surely as the carpenter or woodcutter a log. So much time & perseverance will accomplish. One would say that mankind had much less moral than physical energy—that every day you see men following the trade of splitting rocks, who yet shrink from undertaking apparently less arduous moral labors—the solving of moral problems. See how surely he proceeds. He does not hesitate to drill a dozen holes each one the labor of a day or two for a savage—he carefully takes out the dust with his iron spoon—he inserts his wedges one in each hole & protects the sides of the holes & gives resistance to his wedges by thin pieces of half round iron (or shames)—he marks the red line which he has drawn with his chisel—carefully cutting it straight—& then how carefully he drives each wedge in succession—fearful lest he should not have a good split. The habit of looking at men in the gross makes their lives have less of human interest for us. But though there are crowds of laborers before us—yet each one leads his little epic life each day. There is the stone mason who



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methought was simply a stony man that hammerd stone from breakfast to dinner-& dinner to supper & then went to his slumbers. But he I find is even a man like myself-for he feels the heat of the sun & has raised some boards on a frame to protect him. And now at midforenoon I see his wife & child have come & brought him drink & meat for his lunch & to assuage the stoniness of his labor-& sit to chat with him. There are many rocks lying there for him to split from end to end and he will surely do it-this only at the command of luxury since stone posts are preferred to wood-but how many moral blocks are lying there in every man's yard which he surely will not split nor earnestly endeavor to split.

There lie the blocks which will surely get split but here lie the blocks which will surely not get split-Do we say it is too hard for human faculties?- But does not the mason dull a basket-full of steel chisels in a day-& yet by sharpening them again & tempering them aright succeed? Moral effort-! difficulty to be overcome!!! Why men work in stone & sharpen their drills when they go home to dinner!⁵³

Why should Canada wild and unsettled as it is impress one as an older country than the states-except that her institutions are old. All things seem to contend there with a certain rust of antiquity-such as forms on old armor & iron guns. The rust of conventions and formalities. If the rust was not on the tinned roofs it was on the inhabitants.

2 P M to Hubbards meadow grove. The skunk cabbage's checkered fruit (spadix) one 3 inches long, all parts of the flower but the anthers left and enlarged.

Berdens cemua or Nodding Burr-Mary Gold like a small sunflower (with rays) in Heywood brook i.e. Beggar tick

Bidens Connata? without rays in Hubbards meadow- Blue-eyed grass still- Drooping neottia very common- I see some yellow butterflies and others occasionally & singly only The Smilax berries are mostly turned dark I started a great bittern from the weeds at the swimming place.

It is very hot & dry weather. We have had no rain for a week & yet the pitcher plants have water in them.- Are they ever quite dry? Are they not replenished by the dews always-& being shaded by the grass saved from evaporation? What wells for the birds!

The White-red-purple berried bush in Hubbards meadow whose berries were fairest a fortnight ago-appears to be the Viburnum nudum or withe-rod

Our cornel (the common) with berries blue one side whitish the other appears to be either the C. sericea or C. Stolonifera of Gray i.e. the silky or the red-osier C. (*osier rouge*) though its leaves are neither silky nor downy nor rough. This and the last 4 or 5 nights have been perhaps the most sultry in the year thus far-



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October: [Louis A. Surette](#) became Master of the Corinthian Lodge of the Masons of [Concord](#), Massachusetts (under 53. [Thoreau](#) would later copy this into his early lecture “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” as:

[Paragraph 27] Each trade is a craft or cunning, and its methods are the result of a long experience. One is continually surprised to find how much his neighbors know that he does not. You may go by a man at his work in the street every day of your life, and though he is carrying into practice there certain essential information before your eyes—you may never be the wiser for it. Yet if you do attend to him, you will probably conceive an undue respect for his skill. Every artizan learns positively something by his trade—is familiar with a few well established facts, the knowledge of which implies no genius, but mere use and familiarity, and unless it is applied to his life—is trivial. There sits a stone-mason,¹ for instance, splitting granite for fence-posts before my window. Egypt perchance has taught New England something in this matter. His hammer, his chisels, his wedges, his shims² or half-rounds—his iron spoon—are hoary with age as with granite dust. He learns as surely where the best granite comes from, as how to erect that screen to keep off the sun. He knows that he can drill faster into a large stone than into a small one because there is less yielding to it. He deals with stone as the carpenter with lumber. In many of their operations only the materials are different. His work is slow and expensive, for Nature is here hard to be overcome. He must sharpen his tools far oftener than the carpenter. He fights with granite; knows the temper of the rocks; and grows stony himself; his tread is ponderous and steady like the fall of a rock, like the march of a grenadier.

[Paragraph 28] See how surely and resolutely he proceeds. He does not hesitate to drill a dozen holes, each one the labor of a day or two for a savage; patiently taking out the dust with his iron spoon, he inserts his wedges, one in each hole, and protects the sides of the holes, and gives resistance to the wedges with his shims;³ he marks with his chisel the chalk line which he has drawn between the holes, slowly cutting it straight;—and then how carefully he drives each wedge in succession, fearful lest he should not have a good split! He dulls a basket-ful of steel chisels in a day, and yet by sharpening and tempering them again he at last splits a stone as surely as the carpenter or woodcutter a log.

[Paragraph 29] And now I perceive that his wife and child have come and brought him his luncheon, and he stops and chats with them. So he has other things to interest him than stone-posts. But they have brought him also something strong to drink. Poor fellow! Did Egypt teach him that also? I fear it will undo him as surely as he undoes granite.

[Paragraph 30] There are many rocks lying there for him to split, and he will surely do it; and this only at the command of luxury—since stone posts are preferred to wood. But like you and me he has less moral than physical energy. How many moral blocks are lying in his yard, which he surely will not split, nor earnestly endeavor to split! Do we say it is too hard for human faculties? Why, men work in stone and sharpen their drills when they go home to dinner.

1. The stone-mason has not been identified.

2. The manuscript copy-text reads ‘shames (shams?—shims?)’. The PRACTICAL DICTIONARY OF MECHANICS (Philadelphia, 1874-77) defines “shim” under the heading “Stone-working” as “One of the plates in a jumper-hole to fill out a portion of the thickness not occupied by the wedges or feathers.” There is no listing for either “shame” or “sham.”

3. The manuscript copy-text reads ‘shams (?)’.



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his Mastership, until October 1858, membership would be increasing from 14 to 48).



[Henry Thoreau](#) commented that he and [Waldo Emerson](#) did not believe in the same God. Taking into account the disagreement Henry had had while walking at night with [Ellery Channing](#) in July, a disagreement which arose when Ellery seemed incapable of grasping the fact that Nature has a darker side, by this he presumably meant that Emerson likewise did not seem capable of grasping that Nature, even human nature, has a darker side. The source of the evil we see around us, Thoreau had grasped, was not entirely separate from in this human nature: “Life is a warfare, a struggle, and the diseases of the body answer to the troubles and defeats of

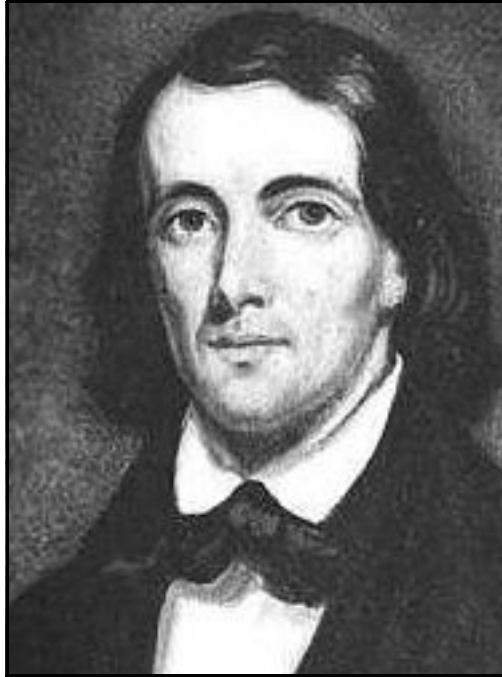
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the spirit. Man begins by quarrelling with the animal in him, and the result is immediate disease.”



“What a gump!...On the whole, he is but little better than an idiot. He should have been whipt often and soundly in his boyhood; and as he escaped such wholesome discipline then, it might be well to bestow it now.”


– [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), about [Ellery Channing](#)



October 15, Wednesday: Near London, the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations closed its doors after, in the course of 6 months, having received more than 6,000,000 visitors.



ELLERY CHANNING

October 15, Wednesday: 8¹/₂ AM up the river in a boat to Pelham’s Pond with W.E.C. (But first a neighbor sent in a girl to inquire if I knew where worm-seed grew otherwise called “Jerusalem oak”– (so said the recipe which she brought cut out of a newspaper) for her mistress’ hen had the “gapes”– But I answered that this was a southern plant & knew not where it was to be had. Referred her to the poultry book.– Also the next proprietor commenced stoning & settling down the stone for a new well–an operation which I wished to witness–purely beautiful–simple & necessary. The stones laid on a wheel–and continually added to above as it is settled down by digging under the wheel.– Also Godwin with a partridge [**Ruffed Grouse**  *Bonasa umbellus*] & a stout mess of large pickerel–applied to me to dispose of a mud turtle which he had found moving the mud in a ditch. Some men will be in the way to see such movements.) The muskrat houses appear now for the most part to be finished– Some it is true are still rising– They line the river all the way. Some are as big as small hay cocks– The river is still quite low–though a foot or more higher than when I was last on it– There is quite a wind & the sky is full of flitting clouds–so that sky & water are quite unlike that warm bright transparent day when I last sailed on the river–when the surface was of such oily smoothness– You could not now study the river bottom for the black waves & the streaks of foam. When the sun shines brightest today–its pyramidal shaped sheen (when for a short time we are looking up stream–for we row) is dazzling & blinding– It is pleasant to hear the sound of the waves & feel the surging of the boat–



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an inspiring sound as if you were bound on adventures. It is delightful to be tossed about in such a harmless storm.— & see the waves look so angry & black. We see objects on shore, trees &c, much better from the boat—from a low point of View—it brings them against the sky—into a novel point of view at least— The other wise low on the meadows as well as the hills is conspicuous. I perceive that the bullrushes are nibbled along the shore as if they had been cut by a scythe—yet in such positions as no mower could of reached—even outside the flags. Probably the muskrat was the mower. In this cool sunlight Fair Haven Hill shows to advantage. Every rock & shrub—and protuberance has justice done it—the sun shining at angle on the hill & giving each a shadow. The hills have a hard & distinct outline & I see into their very texture. On Fair Haven I see the sun-lit light green grass in the hollows where snow makes water sometimes—and on the russet slopes. Cut three white pine boughs opposite Fair Haven and set them up in the bow of our boat for a sail— It was pleasant hear the water begin to ripple under the prow telling of our easy progress. We thus without a tack made the S side of Fair haven—then threw our sails over board—and the moment after mistook them for green bushes or weeds which had sprung from the bottom unusually far from shore.— Then to hear the wind sigh in your sail—that is to be a sailor & hear a land sound. The grayish whitish mikania all fuzzy—covers the endless button bushes which are now bare of leaves. Observed the verification of the scripture saying “as the dog returns to his vomit?”? Our black pup sole passenger in the stern, perhaps made sea-sick—vomited then cleaned the boat again most faithfully—and with a bright eye—licking his chops & looking round for more. We comment on the boats of different patterns—dories? punts—bread troughs—flat irons &c &c which we pass—the prevailing our genuine dead-river boats—not to be matched by Boston carpenters— One farmer blacksmith whome we know whose boat we pass in Sudbury—has got a horse-shoe nailed about the sculling hole;—keeps off the witches too?—. The water carriages of various patterns & in various conditions—some for pleasure against the gentlemans seat?—some for ducking—small & portable—some for honest fishing broad & leaky but not cranky—some with spearing fixtures—some stout & squareendsish for hay boats— One canal boat or mudscow in the weeds not worth getting down the stream. like some vast pike that could swallow all the rest.— proper craft for our river— In some places in the meadows opposite Bound Rock the river seemed to have come to an end it was so narrow suddenly. After getting in sight of Sherman’s bridge—counted 19 birches on the right hand shore in one whirl. Now commenced the remarkable meandering of the river—so that we seemed for some to be now running up—then running down parallel with a long low hill—tacking over the meadow in spite of ourselves. Landed at Sherman’s bridge. An apple tree made scrubby by being browsed by cows.— Through what early hardships it may attain to bear a sweet fruit—no wonder it is provoked to grow thorns at last to defend itself from such foes. The pup nibbles clams, or plays with a bone no matter how dry— Thus the dog can be taken on a river Voyage—but the cat cannot. she is too set in her ways. Now again for the great meadows. What meandering—the Serpentine our river should be called—what makes the river love to delay here? Here come to study the law of meandering. We see the vast meadow studded with haycocks—we suspect that we have got to visit them all—it proves even so—now we run down one hay-cock—now another.— The distance gained is frequently not more than a third the distance gone. Between Sherman’s Br. & Causeway Br is about $1\frac{3}{4}$ mi in a straight line but we judged that we went more than 3 miles. Here the “pipes” (at first) line the shore—& muskrat houses still. A duck (a loon?) sails within gun-shot—unwilling to fly— Also a stake driver ardea minor rises with prominent breast or throat bone—as if badly loaded his ship—now no button bushes line the stream—the changeable? stream no rocks exist—the shores are lined with first in the water still green polygonums then wide fields of dead pontideria then great bulrushes—then various reeds sedges or tall grasses—also dead Thalictum? or is it cicuta? Just this side the Causeway bridges a field like a tall corn-field of tall rustling reeds? 10 feet high with broadish leaves & large now seedy tufts—standing amid the button bushes & great bulrushes. I remember to have seen none elsewhere in this vicinity unless at Fresh Pond & are they not straighter? Also just beyond the bridges very tall flags from 6 to 8 feet high leaves like the cat-tail but no tail what are they? We pass under 2 bridges above the causeway bridge. After passing under the first one of **these two** at the mouth of Larnum Brook—which is fed from Blandfords Pond—comes from Marlboro—thro Mill-vil.—& has a branch Hop Brook from S of Nobscot—we see Nobscot very handsome in a purplish atmosphere in the west over a **very** deep meadow which makes far up— A good way to skate to Nobscot or within a mile or two.— To see a distant hill from the surface of water over a low & very broad meadow—much better than to see it from another hill. This perhaps the most novel & so memorable prospect we got— Walked across half a mile to Pelham’s Pond. whose waves were dashing quite grandly. A house near with two grand elms in front— I have seen other elms in Wayland. This pond a good point to skate to in Winter—when it is easily accessible—now we should have to draw our boat.— On the return as in going we expended nearly as much time & labor in counteracting the boat’s tendency to whirl round—it is so miserably built. Now & then aye—aye—almost an everlasting **now**—it will take the bits in its mouth and go round in spite of us though we row on one side only—for the wind fills the after part of the boat which is nearly out of water—& we therefore get along best & fastest when the wind is strong & dead ahead—that’s the

DOG

DOG


CAT



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kind of wind we advertise to race with (or in) To row a boat thus all the day with an hour's intermission—making fishes of ourselves as it were—putting on these long fins—realizing the finny life—surely oars & paddles are but the fins which a man may use. The very pads stand perpendicular (on their edges) before this wind which appears to have worked more to the north—showing their red under sides. The muskrats have exposed the clam shells to us in heaps all along the shore—else most not know that a clam existed. If it were not for muskrats how little would the fisherman see or know of fresh water clam shells or clams! In the Great meadows again the loon? rises—and again alights—& a heron? too flies sluggishly away with vast wings—& small ducks which seem to have no tails—but their wings set quite aft— The crows [**American Crow**  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*] ashore are making an ado perchance about some carrion. We taste some swamp-white oak acorns at the south end of Bound rock meadow— The sun sets when we are off Israel Rices— A few golden coppery clouds—intensely glowing like fishes in some molten metal of the sky—& then the small scattered clouds grow blue-black above—or one half—& reddish or pink the other half—& after a short twilight the night sets in. The reflections of the stars in the water are dim & elongated like the zodiacal light straight down into the depths, but no mist rises tonight— We think it is pleasantest to be on the water at this hour. We row across Fair Haven in the thickening twilight & far below it steadily & without speaking.— As the night draws on her veil the shores retreat—we only keep in the middle of this low stream of light—we know not whether we float in the air or in the lower regions. We seem to recede from the trees on shore—or the island very slowly—& yet a few reaches make all our voyage— Nature has divided it agreeably into reaches— It is pleasant not to get home till after dark—to steer by the lights of the villagers— The lamps in the houses twinkle now like stars—they shine doubly bright. Rowed about 24 miles going & coming In a straight line it would be 15¹/₂

November 7, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) visited Nonesuch Pond in [Natick](#), and inspected the glacial erratics there.⁵⁴



ELLERY CHANNING

Nov. 7: 8 A.M. — To Long Pond with W.E.C. {⁴/₅ page missing} ... tree to have near a house summer & winter Is it the same with Potter's?

From there we looked over the lower lands westward to the Jenkins House & Wachuset—the latter today a very faint blue—almost lost in the atmosphere— Entering Wayland— The sluggish country town— C. remarked that we might take the town if we had a couple of oyster knives. We marvelled as usual at the queer looking building which C. thought must be an engine house but which a boy told us was occupied as a shoe makers shop but was built for a library. C. was much amused here by a bigger school boy whom we saw on the common — one of those who stretch themselves on the back seats & can chew up a whole newspaper into a spitball to plaster the wall with when the master's back was turned — made considerable fun of him and thought this the event of Wayland. Soon got into a Country new to us in Wayland opposite to Pelham or Hurd's Pond, going across lots. Cedar hills & valleys near the river. A well placed farm house with great old chestnuts near it. The greatest collection of large chestnuts which I remember to have seen. It is a tree full and well outlined at top —being bushy with short twigs at top— a firm outline. Some long moraine-like hills covered with cedars. with the hill country of Wayland on our left. The white oaks still thick with leaves turned pinkish? From a pretty high hill on the left of the road —after passing a very large field which was being plowed—a glorious view of the meadows & Nobscot — now red or purplish with its shrub oaks in this air — & Wachuset here seen in perfection & Dudley P. first seen on the south. Dudley pond is revealed due South now at noon 12 by its sparkling water—on both sides its promontory—the sparkles are even like fireflies in a meadow— This is not far above the opening to Pelham Pond. Which also we fairly see The white pines now look uncommonly soft. Their foliage indeed is not so thick as it was — but the old leaves being fallen & none left which are a year old.— it is perchance more bright & fair. Dudley P. beyond the promontory appears to be revealed by such a mirage as the coin in a basin. The sun sparkles seen through the leafless woods on both sides this promontory.— over its neck are very large & innumerable when one goes out up flashes another like a meadow full of fireflies dancing sparkles— When

54. These erratics would be displayed in one of [Herbert Wendell Gleason](#)'s hand-colored glass lantern slides (#2.169 in Special Collections at the Concord Free Public Library). I suppose it is possible that they are no longer in existence now that Massachusetts has been so thoroughly subjugated to civilization and progress. Note also, that the almanac does indicate November 7th to have been the night of the full moon.



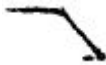
THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

we reach the Pond we find much beach wood just last winter cut down & still standing on its shores. Where young beaches have been cut off 4 feet from the ground to cord the wood against I see that they have put out sprouts this summer in a dense bunch at its top — and also all those stumps which are clothed with short sprouts still covered with curled & crisped leaves are beaches. These large sparkles are magic lanterns by day light It is the game of go away Jack come again Gill — played by the Genius of the lake with the sun on his nail instead of a piece of paper — to amuse Nature's children with. Should it not be called Sparkle pond? Button wood trees are frequent about its shores — its handsome hilly shores.— This side cedars also on its pleasant hilly shores — and opposite dark dense hemlocks. Thus in the form of its shores & above all in the trees which prevail about it is peculiar or at least unlike the concord ponds—& is exceedingly handsome— It has perhaps greater variety than any pond I know. Let it be called Peninsula Pond. never the less. The willow herb is there abundant with its arching stem & its calices or dried flowers still attached. No tree has so fair a bole & so handsome an instep as the beach. The lower leaves which are an orange? red hang on (dry) While the rest of the tree is bare.

Chased by an ox whom we escaped over a fence while he gored the trees in stead of us. the first time I was ever chased by his kind. It is a clear water without weeds— There is a handsomely sloping grassy shore on the west. Close by we found Long Pond In Wayland Framingham & Natick —a great body of water— with singularly sandy shelving caving undermined banks.— and there we ate our luncheon— The May-flower leaves we saw there & the *Viola pedata* in blossom. We went down it a mile or two on the East side thro the woods on its high bank & then dined looking far down to what seemed the Boston outlet (opposite to its natural outlet) where a solitary building stood on the shore. It is a wild & a stretching loch —where yachts might sail— Cochituate. It was not only larger but wilder & more novel than I had expected. In some respects unlike New England. I could hardly have told in what part of the world I was if I had been carried there blindfolded. Yet some features — at least the composition of the soil was familiar. The glorious sandy banks far & near caving and sliding — far sandy slopes



the forts of the land — where you see the naked flesh of New England her garment being blown aside like that of the priests of the Levites? when they ascend to the altar. Seen through this november sky these sands are dear to me —worth all the gold of California— suggesting Pactolus— While the Saxonville factory bell sounds o'er the woods. That sound perchance it is that whets my vision. The shore suggests the seashore — and 2 objects at a distance near the shore look like seals on a sand bar.— Dear to me to lie in —this sand— which will preserve the bones of a race for thousands of years to come. And this is my home — my native soil, and I am a New Englander. Of thee o earth are my bone & sinew made — to thee o sun am I brother.⁵⁵ It must be the largest lake in Middlesex. To this dust my body will gladly return as to its origin. Here have I my habitat. I am of thee.— Returned by the S side of Dudley P. which looked fairer than ever — though smaller.— now so still — the afternoon somewhat advanced Nobsco in the west —in a purplish light— & the scolloped peninsula before us — when we held our heads down this was thrown far off— This shore was crowded with a hemlock — which else where I do not remember to have seen so numerous. Outside the wood there are little rounded clumps of smaller ones about.

This P must have been dear to the Indians.

At Nonesuch P. in Natic — we saw a boulder some 32 feet square by 16 high — with a large rock leaning against it — under which we walked — forming a triangular frame through which we beheld the picture of the pond. How many white men & Indians have passed under it



Boulder Pond! Thence across lots by the Weston elm to the bounds of Lincoln at the RR. Saw a delicate fringed purple flower — *Gentiana Crinita* between those Weston hills in a meadow & after on higher land.

C kept up an incessant strain of wit banter about my legs — which were so springy & unwearable — declared I had got my double legs on — that they were not cork but steel — that I should let myself to Van Amburg — should have sent them to the World's fare &c &c wanted to know if I could not carry my father Anchises The sun sets while we are perched on a high rock in the North of Weston. It soon grows finger cold— at Walden are three reflections of the bright full (or nearly) moon. one moon—& 2 sheens further off.

ELLERY CHANNING



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55. William M. White's version of [Thoreau](#)'s journal entry is:

*The shore suggests the seashore,
And two objects at a distance near the shore
Look like seals on a sand-bar.*

*Dear to me to lie in, this sand;
Fit to preserve the bones of a race
For thousands of years to come.*

*And this is my home,
My native soil;
And I am a New-Englander.*

*Of thee, O earth, are my bone and sinew made;
To thee, O sun, am I brother.*



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

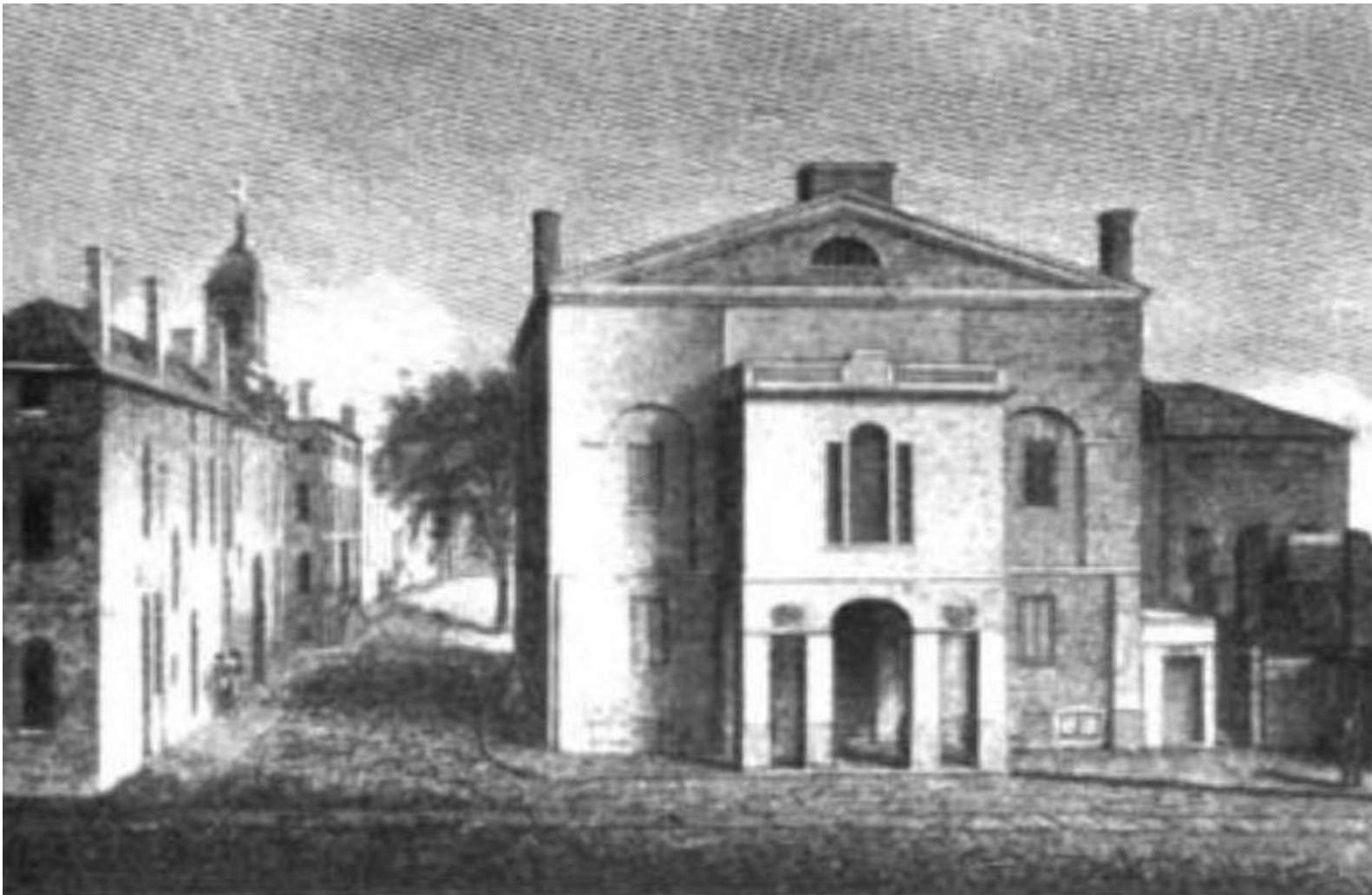
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Winter: Lecture Season of '51/52 at the [Odeon Hall](#) in Boston:

13th Season of [The Lowell Institute](#)

Reverend Orville Dewey, D.D. <i>Natural Religion. "Problem of Human Destiny"</i>	12 lectures
Professor Cornelius Conway Felton, LL.D. <i>Greek Poetry</i>	12 lectures
B.A. Gould, Jr., Ph.D. <i>The Progress of Astronomy in the last Half-century</i>	12 lectures
Reverend Professor Francis Bowen, A.M. <i>Origin and Development of the English and Am. Constitutions</i>	12 lectures



At the [Concord Lyceum](#), the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) delivered "[Mohammed](#)."



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1852

January 21, Wednesday: [Ellery Channing](#) began a series of three Wednesday evening lectures in Boston by delivering “The Spirit of the Age.”



“What a gump!...On the whole, he is but little better than an idiot. He should have been whipt often and soundly in his boyhood; and as he escaped such wholesome discipline then, it might be well to bestow it now.”

– [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), about [Ellery Channing](#)



[Henry Thoreau](#) heard the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#), at the Concord lyceum, on [Mohammed](#) — and as we can see, didn’t much appreciate the manner of presentation.



... Heard Higginson lecture tonight on Mohammed— Why did I not like it better? Can I deny that it was good? Perhaps I am bound to account to **myself** at least for any lurking dislike for what others admire & I am not **prepared** to find fault with. Well I did not like it then, because it did not make me like – it – it did not carry me away captive. He is not simple enough. For the most part the manner overbore choked off & stifled – put out of sight & hearing the matter. I was inclined to forget that he was speaking – conveying ideas – thought there had been an intermission Never endeavor consciously to supply the tone which you think proper for certain sentences. It is as if a man whose mind was at ease should supply the tones & gestures for a man in distress who found only the words As when one makes a speech & another behind him makes gestures.– Then he reminded me of Emerson – & I could not afford to be reminded of Christ himself. Yet who can deny that it was good? But it was that intelligence – that way of viewing things (combined with much peculiar **talent**) which is the common property of this generation– A man does best when he is most himself. I never realized so distinctly as this moment that I am peacefully parting company with the best friend I ever had, by each pursuing his proper path. I perceive that it is possible that we may have a better **understanding** now than when we were more at one. Not expecting such essential agreement as before. Simply our paths diverge–



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

January 25, Sunday: At the Holy Trinity Church in Brighton in England, the [Reverend Frederick William Robertson](#), who had over the years grown disillusioned with the fruits of [evangelicalism](#), preached on “The Law of Christian Conscience” and suggested to his congregation that they might as well be forgiving toward those of sincere [Quaker](#) tradition, deluded as such persons might be: “The words, and garb, and customs of that sect of Christians called Quakers may be formal enough; founded, no doubt, as in the former case, upon a mistaken interpretation of a passage in the Bible. But they are at least harmless; and have long been associated with the simplicity, and benevolence, and Christian humbleness of this body of Christians — the followers of one who, three hundred years ago, set out upon the glorious enterprise of making all men friends. Now would it be Christian, or would it not rather be something more than unchristian — would it not be gross rudeness and coarse unfeelingness to treat such words, and habits, and customs, with anything but respect and reverence?”



January 25, Sunday: The snow has been for some time more than a foot deep on a level, and some roads drifted quite full. and the cold for some weeks has been intense—as low as 20 & 21° in the early morning—A Canadian winter. Some say that we have not had so long a spell of cold weather since '31, when they say it was not seen to thaw for 6 weeks. But last night & today the weather has moderated. It is glorious to be abroad this afternoon. The snow melts on the surface. The warmth of the sun reminds me of summer— The dog runs before us on the R R cause way & appears to enjoy it as much as ourselves. C. remarks truly that most people do not distinguish between a pup & a dog—& treat both alike though the former may not yet have a tooth in his head.

When Sophia told R Rice that Dr B said that Foster was an infidel—and was injuring the young men & “Did he?” He observed. “Well he is a great man. He swims in pretty deep water, but it is 'nt very extensive.” When she added Mr Frost says that Garrison had to apologize for printing Foster's sermon—He said—“Did he? Well they may set as many back fires as they please, they won't be of any use”.

She said the selectmen were going to ask 7 dolls instead of 5 for the Hall. But he said that he would build them a hall if they would engage to give him 5 dolls steadily—. To be sure it would not be quite so handsome as the present, but it should have the same kind of seats.

The Clay in the Deep Cut is melting & streaming down—glistening in the sun. It is I that melts. While the harp sounds on high— And the snow drifts on the west side look like clouds.

We turned down the brook at Heywood's meadow. It was worth the while to see how the water even in the marsh where the brook is almost stagnant sparkled in this atmosphere—for though warm it is remarkably clear. Water which in summer would look dark & perhaps turbid now sparkles like the lakes in November. This water is the more attractive since all around is deep snow. The brook here is full of cat tails Typha latifolia Reed Mace—I found on pulling open or breaking in my hand, as one would break bread the still nearly perfect spikes of this fine reed—that the flowers were red or crimson at their base where united to the stem. When I rubbed off thus what was at first but a thimble full of these dry flowerets, they suddenly took in air & flushed up like powder expanding like feathers & foam filling & overflowing my hand, to which they imparted a sensation of warmth quite remarkable. I was astonished to see how a small quantity was expanded and inflated on being released & given to the air—and I could not be tired with repeating the experiment I think a single one would more than fill a half peck measure if they lay as light as at first in the air. It is something magical to one who tries it for the first time like a puff of powder it flashes up You do not know at first where they all come from. It is the conjurer'ss trick in nature, equal to taking feathers enough to fill a bed out of a hat. When you had done—but still will scrape the almost bare stem—still they overflow your hand as before. See it again & try the combustibility of the pollen.

As the flowerets are opening & liberating themselves showing their red extremities, it has the effect of a **changeable** color

Ah then the brook beyond—its rippling waters & its sunny sands.— They made me forget that it was winter—where springs oozed out of the soft bank over the dead leaves & the green sphagnum they had melted the snow or the snow had melted as it fell perchance—and the rabbits had sprinkled the mud about on the snow. The sun reflected from the sandy gravelly bottom, sometimes a bright sunny streak no bigger than your finger reflected from a ripple as from a prism—and the sunlight reflected from a hundred points of the surface of the rippling brook—enabled me to realize summer. But the dog partly spoiled the transparency of the water by running in the brook. A pup that had never seen a summer brook.

I am struck & attracted by the parallelism of the twigs of the hornbeam, **fine** parallelism

Having gone $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile beyond the bridge—where C. calls this his Spanish Brook I looked back from the top

ELLERY CHANNING

DOG

SOPHIA THOREAU

AEOLIAN HARP

ELLERY CHANNING



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

of the hill on the S. into this deep dell. Where the white pines stood thick rising one above another reflecting the sunlight—so soft and warm by contrast with the snow—as never in summer—for the idea of warmth prevailed over the cold which the snow suggested—though I saw through & between them to a distant snow clad hill— & also to oaks red with their dry leaves. And maple limbs were mingled with the pines. I was on the verge of seeing something but I did not. If I had been alone & had had more leisure I might have seen something to report.

Now we are on Fair Haven, still but a snow plain. Far down the river the shadows on Conantum are bluish— somewhat like the holes in the snow perchance.

The sun is half an hour high perhaps. Standing near the outlet of the pond I look up & down the river with delight—it is so warm & the air is notwithstanding so clear. When I invert my head & look at the woods $\frac{1}{2}$ mile down the stream they suddenly sink lower in the horizon and are removed full two miles off— Yet the air is so clear that I seem to see every stem & twig with beautiful distinctness— The fine tops of the trees are so relieved against the sky—that I never cease to admire the minute subdivisions. It is the same when I look up the stream. A bare hickory under Lees Cliff seen against the sky becomes an interesting even beautiful object to behold. I think where have I been staying all these days— I will surely come here again.

When I first paddled a boat on Walden it was completely surrounded by thick & lofty pine woods, and in some of its coves grape vines had run over the trees & formed bowers under which a boat could pass. The hills which form its shores are so steep & the woods on them were then so high, that as you looked down the pond from west to east—it looked like an amphitheater—for some kind of forest spectacle. I have spent many an hour floating over its surface as the zephyr willed lying on my back across the seats of my boat, in a summer forenoon— & looking into the sky above dreaming awake—until I was aroused by my boat touching the sand and I arose to see what shore my fates had impelled me to— When idleness was the most attractive & productive industry. Many a forenoon have I stolen away thus—preferring thus to spend the most valued part of the day. For I was rich—if not in money, in sunny hours and summer-days & spent them lavishly. Nor do I regret that I did not spend more of them behind a counter or in the workshop or the teacher's desk, in which last two places I have spent so many of them.

About 2 o'clock Pm these days after a fair forenoon there is wont there is wont to blow up from the N W. a squally cloud spanning the heavens—but before it reaches the S E horizon— it has lifted above the N.W. & so it leaves the sky clear there for sunset — while it has sunk low & dark in the SE.

The men on the freight train who go over the whole length of the road bow to me as to an old acquaintance they pass me so often—and I think they take me for an “employee”— & am I not?

The flowing clay on the E side is still richer today. I know of nothing so purgative of winter fumes & indigestions. And then there is heard the harp high over head—a new Orpheus modulating moulding the earth— & making the sands to follow its strains. Who is not young again. What more wonderful than that a simple string or wire stretched between two posts on which the breezes play — can so excite the race of man with its vibrations — producing sounds kindred with the song of bards — & the most admirable works of art.

Thaw with his gentle persuasion is more powerful than Thor. with his hammer. The one melts the other but breaks in pieces. In these fresh designs there is more than the freedom of Grecian art — more than acanthus leaves

It flows even over the snow.

The vibrations of that string will surely remind a man of all that is most glorious in his experience. Will more than realize to him the stories of the Delphic oracle. Will take him captive —make him mad.— The distant is brought near to him through hearing. He abides in the body still — his soul is not quite ravished away, but news from other spheres than he lives in reaches him. It is evident that his life does not pass on that level.

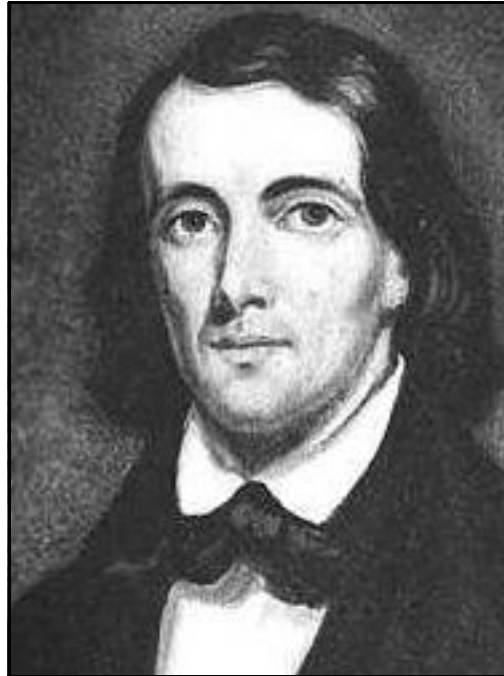


THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

January 29, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) heard [Ellery Channing](#), who in [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) was quoted 6 times, in [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) would be quoted 4 times, and who in [CAPE COD](#) and in “A YANKEE IN CANADA” was being referred to as “my companion,” deliver a lecture on “Society” at the Concord Lyceum.



January 29, Thursday: We must be very active if we would be clean & live our own life, and not a languishing and scurvy one. The trees which are stationary are covered with parasites—especially those which have grown slowly. The air is filled with the fine sporules of countless mosses algae lichens fungi which settle & plant themselves on all quiet surfaces. Under the nails & between the joints of the fingers of the idle flourish crops of mildew algae—& fungi and other vegetable sloths—though they may be invisible— The lichens where life still exists the fungi where decomposition has begun to take place. And the sluggard is soon covered with sphagnum. Algae take root in the corners of his eyes & lichens cover the bulbs of his fingers & his head—&c &c the lowest forms of vegetable life. This is the definition of dirt. We fall a prey to Others of natures tenants who take possession of the unoccupied house. With the utmost inward activity we have to wash & comb ourselves beside, to get rid of the adhering seeds. Cleanliness is by activity not to give any quiet shelf for the seeds of parasitic plants to take root on.

If he cuts pine, the woodchoppers hands are covered with pitch.

The names of plants are for the most part traced to Celtic & Arabian roots.

The forcible writer does not go far for his themes—his ideas are not far-fetched—he derives inspiration from his chagrins & his satisfactions— His theme being ever an instant one his own gravity assists him—gives impetus to what he says— He minds his business. He does not speculate while others drudge for him.

I am often reminded that if I had bestowed on me the wealth of Croesus, my aims must still be the same & my means essentially the same

It still melts. I observed this afternoon that the ground where they are digging for some scales near the depot— was frozen about 9 inches where the snow has lain most—and 16 inches where the road was.

I begin to see the tops of the grasses & stubble in the fields—which deceives me as if it were the ground itself. That point where the sun goes down is the cynosure that attracts all eyes at sundown & half an hour before What do all other points of the horizon concern us— Our eyes follow the path of that great luminary. We watch for his rising & we observe his setting. He is a companion & fellow traveller we all have. We pity him who has his cheerless dwelling elsewhere—even in the N W or S W off the high road of nature.



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The snow is nearly gone from the R.R. causeway. Few are the days when the Telegraph harp rises into a pure clear melody Though the wind may blow strong or soft in this or that direction—nought will you hear but a low hum or murmur—or even a buzzing sound—but at length when some undistinguishable zephyr blows—when the conditions not easy to be detected arrive it suddenly & unexpectedly rises into melody as if a god had touched it—& fortunate is the walker who chances to be within hearing. So is it with the lyres of bards—and for the most part it is only a feeble & ineffectual hum that comes from them. Which leads you to expect the melody you do not hear—when the gale is modified—when the favorable conditions occur, and the indescribable coincidence takes place—then there is music. Of a thousand buzzing strings only one yields music. It is like the hum of the shaft or other machinery of a steamboat which at length might become music in a divine hand. I feel greatly enriched by this telegraph.

I have come to see the clay & sand in the Cut— A reddish tinge in the earth—stains— An Indian hue is singularly agreeable even exciting to the eye— Here the whole bank is sliding. Even the color of the subsoil excites me as if I were already getting near to life & vegetation. This clay is foecoval in its color also. It runs off at bottom into mere shoals shallows vasa vagues sandbars—like the mammoth leaves—makes strands.

Perhaps those mother o' pearl clouds I described some time ago might be called rainbow flocks

The snow on the slope of the Cliffs is dotted with black specks—the seeds of the mullein which the wind has shaken out. When I strike the dry stalks the seeds fall in a shower & color the snow black like charcoal dust or powder.

The green mosses on the rocks are evidently nourished & kept bright by the snows lying on them—a part of the year.

Day before yesterday I saw the hunters out with a dozen dogs—but only 2 pussies one white & one little gray one did I see—for so many men & dogs who seem to set all the village a-stir, as if the fox's trail led through it.

Heard C lecture tonight. It was a bushel of nuts. Perhaps the most original lecture I ever heard. Ever so unexpected—not to be foretold—& so sententious that you could not look at him & take his thought at the same time— You had to give your undivided attention to the thoughts. For you were not assisted by set phrases or modes of speech intervening— There was no sloping up or down to or from his points. It was all genius—no talent. It required mor close attention—more abstraction from surrounding circumstances than any lecture I have heard. For well as I know C he more than any man disappoints my expectation— When I see him in the desk—hear him I cannot realize that I ever saw him before. He will be strange unexpected—to his best acquaintance. I cannot associate the lecturer with the companion of my walks. It was from so original and peculiar a point of view—yet just to himself in the main that I doubt if 3 in the audience apprehended a tithe that he said. It was so hard to hear—that doubtless few made the exertion— A thick succession of mt passes and no intermediate slopes & plains. Other lectures even the best in which so much space is given to the elaborate development of a few ideas seemed somewhat meager in comparison.

Yet it would be how much more glorious if talent were added to genius— If there a just arrangement and development of the thoughts—& each step were not a leap—but be run a pace to take a yet higher leap—!

Most of the spectators sat in front of the performer, but here was one who by accident sat all the while on one side, and his report was peculiar and startling.

AEOLIAN HARP

CAT

DOG

ELLERY CHANNING



January 30, Friday: I feel as if I were gradually parting company with certain friends, just as I perceive familiar objects successively disappear when I am leaving my native town in the cars

It is an encouraging piece of news, when I read in the weekly Tribune—appended to an article on The Liquor Groceries which had appeared in the Daily—close as the moral to the fable or its operation to the medicine—that the worst of those establishments had refused to receive the Tribune being offended by its disclosures.— Showing that the arrow has already reached its mark—before we distant readers have heard its whiz.

One must not complain that his friend is cold, for heat is generated between them.

I doubt if Emerson could trundle a wheel barrow through the streets—because it would be out of character. One needs to have a comprehensive character.

Channing's lecture was full of wise acute and witty observations—yet most of the audience did not know but it was mere incoherent & reckless verbiage & nonsense. I lose my respect for people who do not know what is good and true. I know full well that readers and hearers with the fewest exceptions, ask me for my 2nd best.

Lindley (apparently) in Loudon asks—when you have referred a plant to its class & order in the Linnaean system



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

“What more has been acquired than the bare knowledge that the plant in question possesses a certain number of stamens & styles? No possible notion can be formed of the relation it bears to other plants of the same nature, of the qualities it probably possesses, or of the structure of those parts not under examination, the fruit for example; and, finally, if it were wished to convey an idea of the plant to a stranger, no means would be in the possession of the Linnaean botanist of doing so, except by stating that the plant belonged to Pentandria Monogynia, for example, which is stating nothing. But what would be the condition of the student of the natural affinities of plants in a similar case? It is true he would be obliged to consult more characters than the two unimportant ones of Linnaeus—it would be necessary to ascertain if his subject was Vascular or Cellular; if Vascular, whether it was Monocotyledonous or Dicotyledonous; if Dicotyledonous, whether the leaves were opposite or alternate, stipulate or exstipulate, whether the flowers were monopetalous, polypetalous, or apetalous, the nature and station of the stamens, the condition of the ovary, & so on. But when he **has** ascertained thus much, only let it be remembered, for a moment, how much he has gained indirectly as well as directly. Perhaps he has discovered that his plant belongs to Rubiaceae; he will then have learned that all vegetables with opposite entire stipulate leaves, and a monopetalous superior corolla, are also Rubiaceous; if a fragment of the leaves and stem only of such a plant were afterwards submitted to him for examination, he would recognise its affinities, and remember that it was Rubiaceous, and being aware of that fact, he would be able safely to infer that its calyx and corolla would be of a particular nature, that if the roots afforded any color for dyeing, it would be red; that the medicinal properties of the bark, if any, would be tonic, astringent, and febrifugal, and that its seeds would be of the same nature as those of coffee, and finally, its geographical position would be tolerably certain to him”.

No good [Introduction to the Study of the Nat System](#) but such a work expected from [Lindley](#) in '29

But after all where is the flower lore—for the first book & not the last should contain the poetry of flowers—The natural system may tell us the value of a plant in medicine or the arts or for food—but neither it nor the Linnaean to any great extent tell us its chief value & significance to man—which in any measure accounts for its beauty.— its flower like properties— There will be pages about some fair flower’s qualities as food or medicine—but perhaps not a sentence about its significance to the eye—as if the cowslip were better for greens than for yellows. Not about what children & all flower lovers gather flowers for—are they emissaries sent forth by the arts to purvey & explore for them? Not how good they are to wear on the bosom—or to smell—how much they are to the eye & the sentiments—not how much to the palate and the sensations—flowers as flowers. Not addressed to the cook or the physician or the dyer merely—but to the lovers of flowers young and old. The most poetical of books— It should have the beauty & the fragrance of flowers.— some of their color— A keep-sake What a keep-sake a manual of botany! In which is uttered breathed man’s love of flowers. It is dry as a hortus siccus.— Flowers are pressed into the botanist’s service

Do nothing merely out of good resolutions. Discipline yourself only to yield to love— Suffer yourself to be attracted. It is in vain to write on chosen themes. We must wait till they have kindled a flame in our minds. There must be the copulating & generating force of love behind every effort destined to be successful. The cold resolve gives birth to—begets nothing. The theme that seeks me, not I it. The poet’s relation to his theme is the relation of lovers. It is no more to be courted. Obey—report.

Though they are cutting off the woods at Walden it is not all loss. It makes some new & unexpected prospects. We read books about logging in the maine woods as if it were wholly strange to these parts But I here witness almost exactly the same thing— Scenes that might be witnessed in Maine or N. Hampshire—the loggers-team—his oxen on the ice chewing the cud—the long pine tree stripped of its branches chained upon his sled resting on a stout cross bar or log—and trailing behind— The smoke of his fire curling up blue amid the trees—the sound of the axe and of the teamster’s voices. A pretty forest scene—seeing oxen—so patient—& stationary good for pictures standing on the ice—a piece of still life. Oh it is refreshing to see—to think of these things after hearing of the discussions & politics of the day. The smoke I saw was quite blue. As I stood on the partially cleared bank at the E end of the Pond I looked over the side of the hill into a deep dell still wooded, and I saw not more than 30 rods off a chopper at his work— I was half a dozen rods distant from the standing wood—and I saw him through a vista between two trees (it was now mainly an oak wood the pine having been cut) and he appeared to me apparently half a mile distant yet charmingly distinct as in a picture of which the two trees were the frame. He was seen against the snow on the hill side beyond— I could distinguish each part of his dress perfectly and, the axe with distinct outline as he raised it above his head the black iron against the snow—and could hear every stroke distinctly— Yet I should have deemed it ridiculous to have called to him he appeared so distant. He appeared with the same distinctness as objects seen through a pin hole in a card. This was the effect rather than by comparison of him—his size with the nearer trees between which I saw him—& which made the canopied roof of the grove far above his head. It was perhaps one of those coincidences and effects which have made men painters. I could not behold him as an actual man—he was more ideal than in any picture I have seen. He refused



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

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to be seen as actual. Far in the hollow yet some what enlightend aisles of this wooded dell. Some scenes will thus present themselves as picture. Those scenes which are picture-subjects for the pencil-are distinctly marked-they do not require the aid of the genius to idealize them. They must be seen as ideal.

Nature allows of no universal secrets- The more carefully a secret is kept on one side of the globe-the larger the type it is printed in on the other- Nothing is too pointed too personal too immodest for her to blazon- The relations of sex transferred to flowers become the study of ladies in the drawing-room. While men wear fig leaves she grows the Phallus impudicus & P. caninus & other phallus-like fungi.

The rhymes which I used to see on the walls of privies scribbled by boys I have lately seen-word for word the same-in spite white wash & brick walls & admonitions they survive They are no doubt older than Orpheus, and have come down from an antiquity as remote as Mythology-or Fable.

So too no doubt corporations have ever struggled in vain to obtain cleanliness in those provinces. Filth & impurity are as old as cleanliness & purity.

To correspond to man completely-nature is even perhaps unchaste herself. Or perchance man's impurity begets a monster somewhere to proclaim his sin.

The poetry of the Jakes-it flows as perennially as the gutter.

I am afraid to travel much or to famous places-lest it might completely dissipate the mind- Then I am sure that what we observe at home, if we observe anything, is of more importance than what we observe abroad. The far fetched is of the least value. What we observe in travelling are to some extent the accidents of the body-but we observe when sitting at home are in the same proportion phenomena of the mind itself. A wakeful night will yield as much thought as a long journey- If I try thoughts by their quality-not their quantity-I may find that a restless night will yield more than the longest journey.

I live in an age when men have agreed to say God instead of Jove.

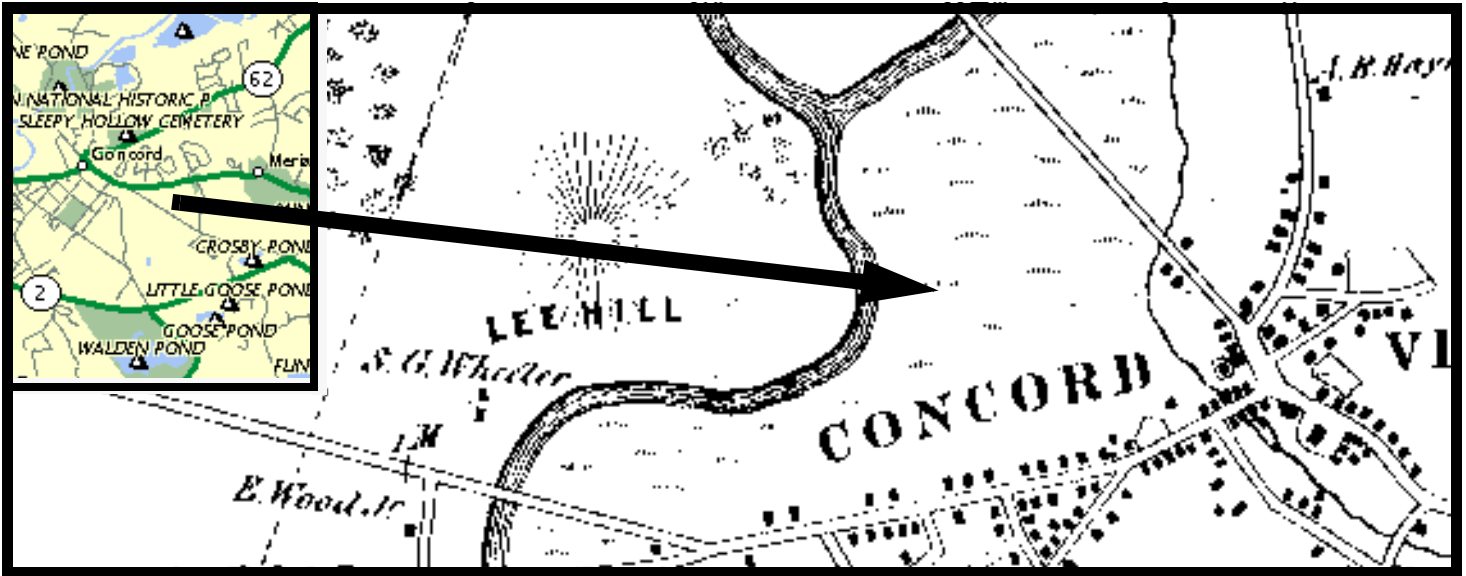
It is remarkable that there is no man so coarse & insensible but he can be prophane-can pronounce the word "God" with emphasis in the woods when anything happens to disturb-as a spoiled child loves to see what liberties he can presume to take. I am only astonished that Bent should think it any daring-that he should believe in God so much. Then look round to see if the auditors appreciated his boldness.

THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

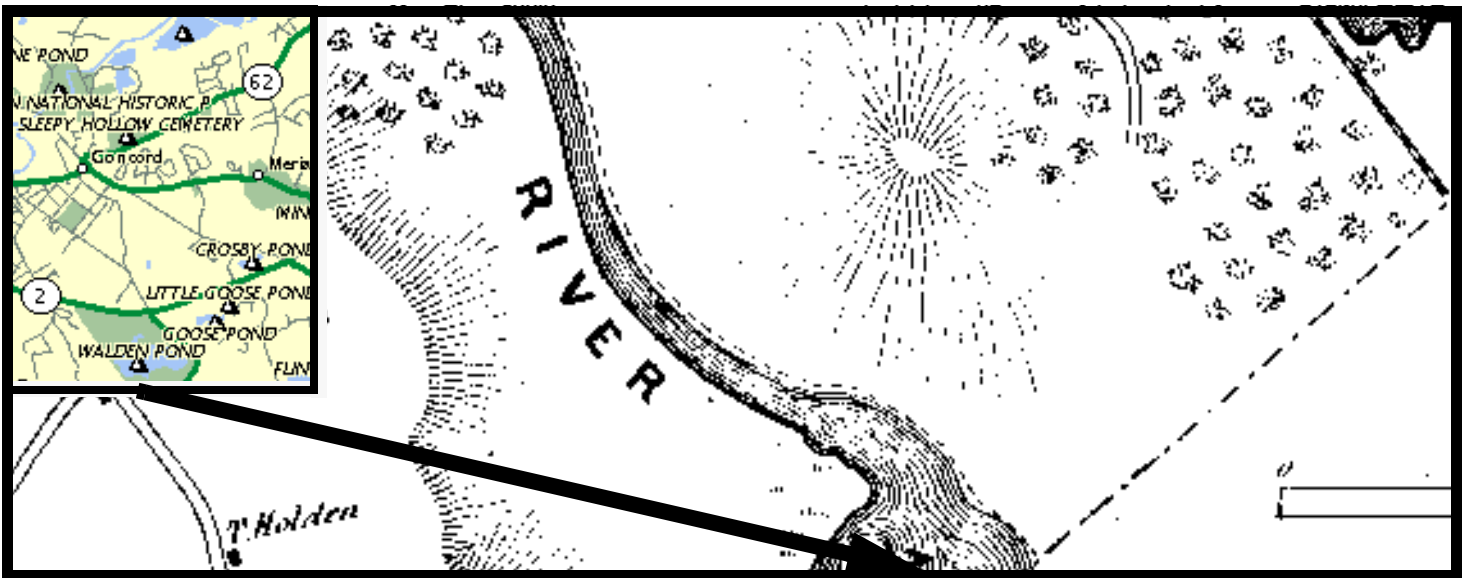
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

April 2, Friday: At 6AM [Henry Thoreau](#) walked north along the river bank to Merrick’s Pasture.



At 9AM he and [Ellery Channing](#) rowed a leaky boat south along the Sudbury River to Sudbury Meadows upstream from Lee’s Corner Bridge, stopping every half hour or so to tip the boat over and pour out the accumulating leakage.



They returned at 5:30PM, and that evening Thoreau wrote to the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) to tell him that he could schedule him to lecture on “Realities” in Boston whenever it was most convenient.



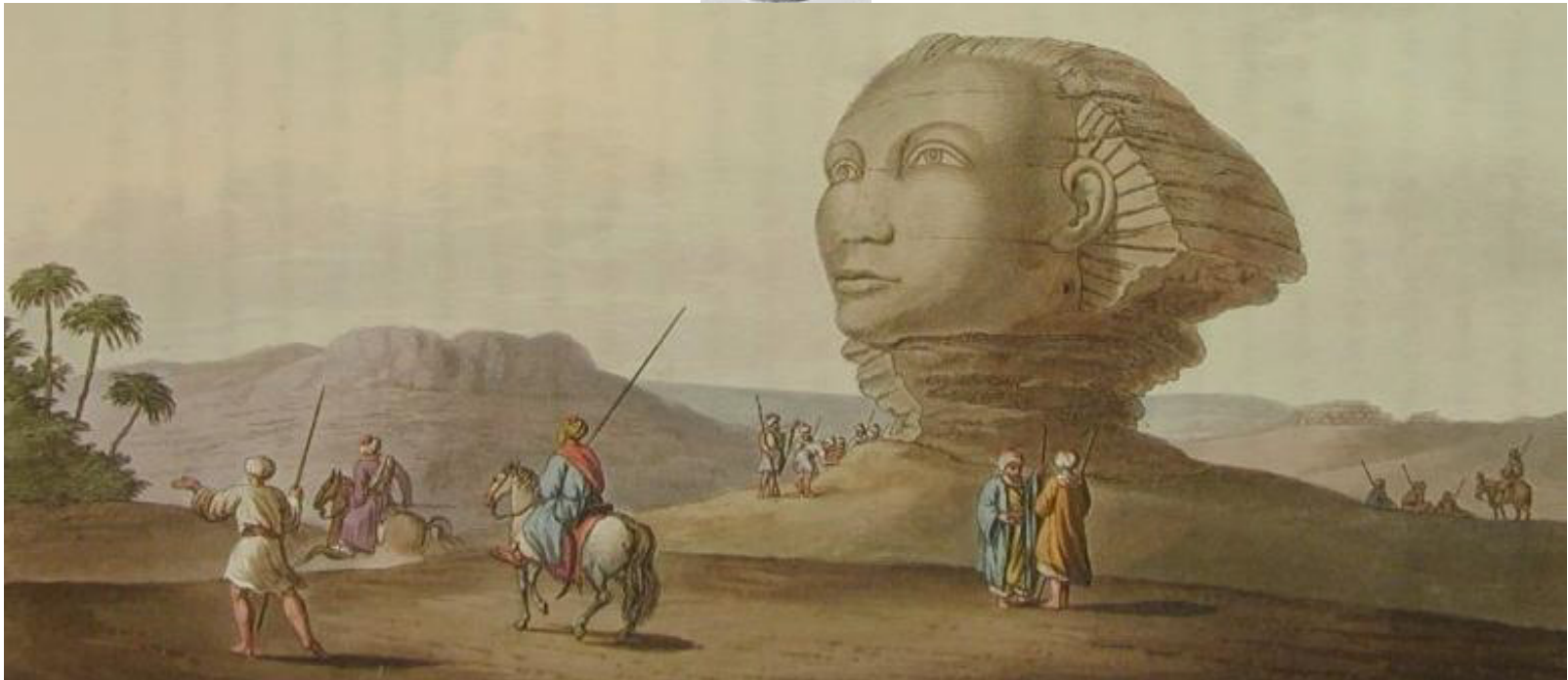


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(This would turn out to be on Tuesday, April 6th, and would turn out to be during a severe snowstorm.)





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“It appears to me that to one standing on the heights of philosophy mankind & the works of man will have sunk out of sight altogether. Man is altogether too much insisted on. The poet says the proper study of mankind is man— I say study to forget all that—take wider views of the universe— That is the egotism of the race. What is this our childish gossiping social literature — mainly in the hands of the publishers? When the poet says the world is too much with us —he means of course that man is too much with us— In the promulgated views of man —in institutions —in the common sense there is narrowness & delusion. It is our weakness that so exaggerates the virtues of philanthropy & charity & makes it the highest human attribute— The world will sooner or later tire of philanthropy —and all religions based on it mainly. They cannot long sustain my spirit.



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—Thoreau’s JOURNAL, April 2, 1852



April 2, Friday: 6 Am. To the river side & Merrick’s Pasture. The sun is up. The water on the meadows is perfectly smooth & placid reflecting the hills & clouds & trees. The air is full of the notes of birds — song sparrows [*Melospiza* **melodia**] — red-wings [*Red-winged Blackbird* **Agelaius phoeniceus**] — robins (singing a strain) blue birds [*Eastern Bluebird* **Sialia sialis**]-& I hear also a lark [*Eastern Meadowlark* **Sturnella magna**]- As if all the earth had burst forth into song. The influence of this April morning has reached them for they live out of doors. all the night, and there is no danger that they will oversleep themselves such a morning. A few weeks ago before the birds had come their came to my mind in the night the twittering sound of birds in the early dawn of a spring morning — a semi prophecy of it — and last night I attended mentally as if I heard the spray-like dreaming sound of the mid summer frog — & realized how glorious & full of revelations it was. Expectation may amount to prophecy. The clouds are **white** watery not such as we had in



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the winter— I see in this fresh morning the shells left by the muskrats along the shore — & their galleries leading into the meadow—& the bright red cranberries washed up along the shore — in the old water-mark. Suddenly there is a blur on the placid surface of the waters — a rippling mistiness produced as it were by a slight morning breeze.— And I should be sorry to show it to the stranger now— So is it with our minds.

As a fair day is promised—& the waters are falling decide to go to the Sudbury meadows with C. 9 AM. Started some woodcocks in a wet place in A Wheeler's stubble field— Saw 6 spotted tortoises (*emys guttata*) which had crawled to the shore by the side of the Hubbard bridge causeway. Too late now for the morning influence & inspiration.— The birds sing not so earnestly & joyously — there is a blurring ripple on the surface of the lake.— How few valuable observations can we make in youth— What if there were united the susceptibility of youth with the discrimination of age. Once I was part and parcel of nature — now I am observant of her.

What ails the Pewee's tail [Eastern Phoebe] *Sayornis phoebe*?— It is loosely hung.— pulsating with life. What mean these wag tail birds? Cats & dogs too express some of their life through their tails. The bridges are a station at this season— They are the most advantageous positions. There I would take up my stand morning & evening looking over the water.

The Charles Miles run full & rumbling— The water is the color of ale — here dark red ale over the yellow sand — there yellowish frothy ale where it tumbles down— Its foam composed of large white bubbles makes a kind of arch over the rill snow white & contrasting with the general color of the stream — while the latter ever runs under it carrying the lower bubbles with it & new ones ever supply their places— at least 18 inches high this stationary arch. I do not remember elsewhere such highly colored water. It drains a swamp near by & is dry the greater part of the year. Coarse bubbles continually bursting — a striped snake by the spring — & a black one. The grass there is delightfully green — while there is no fresh green anywhere else to be seen— It is the most refreshing of all colors— It is what all the meadows will soon be. The color of no flower is so grateful to the eye. Why is the dog black & the grass green? If all the banks were suddenly painted green & spotted with yellow white red — blue purple &c we should more fully realize the miracle of the summer's coloring— Now the snow is off it is pleasant to visit the sandy bean fields covered with last years blue curls & sorrel & the flakes of arrowhead stone— I love these sandy fields which melt the snows & yield but small crops to the farmer.— Saw a striped squirrel in the wall near Lees.— Brigham the wheel-wright building a boat. At the prospect of all this water men build boats if ever. Are those large scarred roots at the bottoms of the brooks now 3 inches in diameter the roots of the pickerel weed.— what vigor what vitality The yellow spots of the tortoise (*emys guttata*) on his dark shell seen bright through clear water remind me of flowers the houstonias &c when there are no colors on the land— Israel Rices dog stood stock still so long that I took him at a distance for the end of a bench. He looked much like a fox—& his fur was as soft. Rice was very ready to go with us to his boat which we borrowed — as soon as he had driven his cow in to the barn where her calf was — but she preferred to stay out in the yard this pleasant morning— He was very obliging — persisted without regard to our suggestions that we could help ourselves in going with us to his boat — showed us after a larger boat & made no remark on the miserableness of it. Thanks & compliments fell off him like water off a rock. If the king of the French should send him a medal he would have to look in many dictionaries to know what the sending of a medal meant and then he would appreciate the abstract fact merely—& it would fail of its intended effect. Steered across for the oaks opposite the mouth of the Pantry— For a long distance as we paddle up the river we hear the 2 stanzaed lay of the Pewee on the shore— Those are the two obvious facts to eye & ear the river & the pewee. After coming in sight of Sherman's bridge we moored our boat by sitting on a maple twig on the east side to take a leisurely view of the meadow. The eastern shore here is a fair specimen of New Eng. fields & hills sandy & barren but agreeable to my eye— Covered with withered grass on their rounded slopes & crowned with low reddish bushes shrub oaks. There is a picturesque group of 8 oaks near the shore—& through a thin fringe of wood I see some boys driving home an ox-cart load of hay.— I have noticed black oaks within a day or two still covered with oak balls. In upsetting the boat which has been newly tarred I have got some tar on my hands — which imparts to them on the whole an agreeable fragrance. This exercise of the arms and chest after a long winters stagnation — during which only the legs have labored— this pumping off the Lincoln shire fens the Haarlem lakes of wintry fumes & damps and foul blood is perhaps the greatest value of these paddling excursions. I see far in the south the upright black piers of the bridge just rising above the water— They are more conspicuous than the sleepers & rails.— The occasional patches of snow on the hill-sides are unusually bright by contrast.— they are land-marks to steer by— It seems to be a part of the economy of nature to make dogs make water against upright objects that so her plants may get watered & manurred. It is a part of her husbandry.

It appears to me that to one standing on the heights of philosophy mankind & the works of man will have sunk out of sight altogether. Man is altogether too much insisted on. The poet says the proper study of mankind is man— I say study to forget all that — take wider views of the universe— That is the egotism of the race. What is this our childish gossiping social literature — mainly in the hands of the publishers? When the poet says the

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This hill with its adjuncts is now almost an island – surrounded by broad lakes. The South lakes reflect the most light at present – but the sober surface of the northern is yet more interesting to me.– How novel and original must be each new mans view of the universe – for though the world is so old – & so many books have been written – each object appears wholly undescribed to our experience – each field of thought wholly unexplored – The whole world is an America – a **New World**. The fathers lived in a dark age – & throw no light on any of our subjects. The sun climbs to the zenith daily high over all literature & science – astronomy even concerns us worldlings only – but the sun of poetry & of each new child born into the planet has never been astronomized, nor brought nearer by a telescope. So it will be to the end of time. The end of the world is not yet. Science is young by the ruins of Luxor – unearthing the sphinx – or Ninevah – or between the pyramids. The parts of the meadows nearly surrounded by water form interesting peninsulas & promontories.– Return to our boat– We have to go ashore & upset it every half hour. it leaks so fast – for the leak increases as it sinks in the water in geometrical progression. I see among the phenomena of spring – here and there a dead sucker floating on the surface – perhaps dropped by a fish hawk [Osprey **Pandion haliaetus**] or a gull –f or the gulls are circling this way over head to reconnoitre us.– On making the eastward curve in the river we find a strong wind against us – pushing slowly across the meadow in front of the Pantry – the waves beat against the bows and sprinkle the water half the length of the boat. The froth is in long white streaks before the wind – as usual striping the surface.

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We land in a steady rain & walked inland by R Rice's barn regardless of the storm toward White Pond. Overtaken by an Irishman in search of work. Discovered some new oaks & pine groves and more New Eng. fields. At last the drops fall wider apart-& we pause in a sandy field near the Great Road of the corner where it was agreeably retired & sandy - drinking up the rain- The rain was soothing - so still & sober - gently beating against & amusing our thoughts - swelling the brooks- The robin now peeps with scared note in the heavy overcast air - among the apple trees- The hour is favorable to thought- Such a day I like a sandy road- Snows that melt & leave bear the corn & grain fields - with Indian relics shining on them & prepare the ground for the farmer- Saw a cow or ox in a hollow in the woods - which had been skinned & look red & striped like those Italian anatomical preparations. Went through a reddish andromeda swamp - where still a little icy stiffness in the crust under the woods keeps us from slumping- The rain now turns to snow with large flakes - so soft many cohere in the air as they fall. They make us white as millers & wet us through Yet it is clear gain. I hear a solitary hyla for the first time- At Hubbards bridge count 8 ducks going over. Had seen one with outstretched neck over the Great meadows in Sudbury. Looking up the flakes are black against the sky. & now the ground begins to whiten. get home at 5¹/₂ Pm.
At the bend of the river above the river - I noticed many ferns on the bank where there was much snow - very green.





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—Thoreau's JOURNAL, April 2, 1852





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN


[Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “What a lovely walk! Sky clear, sun rising, all the tints bright, all the outlines sharp, save for the soft and misty infinite of the lake. A pinch of white frost, powdered the fields, lending a metallic relief to the hedges of green box, and to the whole landscape, still without leaves, an air of health and vigor, of youth and freshness. “Bathe, O disciple, thy thirsty soul in the dew of the dawn!” says Faust, to us, and he is right. The morning air breathes a new and laughing energy into veins and marrow. If every day is a repetition of life, every dawn gives signs as it were a new contract with existence. At dawn everything is fresh, light, simple, as it is for children. At dawn spiritual truth, like the atmosphere, is more transparent, and our organs, like the young leaves, drink in the light more eagerly, breathe in more ether, and less of things earthly. If night and the starry sky speak to the meditative soul of God, of eternity and the infinite, the dawn is the time for projects, for resolutions, for the birth of action. While the silence and the “sad serenity of the azure vault,” incline the soul to self-recollection, the vigor and gayety of nature spread into the heart and make it eager for life and living. Spring is upon us. Primroses and violets have already hailed her coming. Rash blooms are showing on the peach trees; the swollen buds of the pear trees and the lilacs point to the blossoming that is to be; the honeysuckles are already green.”

April 10, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) borrowed Stedman Buttrick’s boat, a gunner’s boat smelling of muskrats and provided with slats (“slates”) for pulling the boat ashore (“for bushing the boat”). They rowed down the Concord River and went ashore and rambled below Carlisle Bridge.

Thoreau for the first time (Dr. Bradley P. Dean has noticed) deployed in his journal a weather term that had been originated by [Luke Howard](#): “I observed it [the aspect of the sky] in the south composed of short clouds horizontal & parallel to one another, each straight & dark below with a slight **cumulus** resting on it, a little marsh-wise.”



April 10, Saturday: 8 Am– Down river to $\frac{1}{2}$ miles below Carlisle Bridge the river being high–yet not high for the spring. Saw & heard the white bellied swallows this morning for the first time.

Took boat at Stedman Buttrick’s–a gunner’s boat smelling of muskrats.– & provided with slats for bushing the boat. Having got into the Great Meadows–after grounding once or twice on low spits of grass ground–we begin to see ducks which we have scared flying low over the water–always with a striking parallelism in the direction of their flight. They fly like regulars. They are like rolling pins with wings. A few gulls sailing like hawks seen against the woods– – crows [**American Crow**  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*] – white bellied swallows even here already. Which I suppose proves that their insect food is in the air. The water on our left *ie.* the N W is now dark; on our right has a silvery brightness on the summits of the waves–scarcely yellowish–waves here do not break– Ducks most commonly seen flying by 2s or three’s.

From Ball’s? Hill the Great meadow looks more light–perhaps it is the medium between the dark & light above mentioned. Mem. Try this experiment again. *ie.* look not toward nor from the sun but athwart this line. Seen from this hill in this direction–there are here and there dark-shadows spreading rapidly over the surface here & there where the wind strikes the water. The water toward the sun seen from this height–shows not the broad silvery light but a myriad fine sparkles. The sky is full of light this morning–with different shades of blue–lighter below darker above separated perhaps by a thin strip of white vapor.– Thicker in the east.

The first painted tortoise–*Emys picta*–at the bottom on the meadow.


Look now toward Carlisle Bridge. See ahead the waves running higher in the middle of the meadow where they get the full sweep of the wind–& they break into white caps––but we yet in the lea of the land feel only the long smooth swells–as the day after a storm. It is pleasant now that we are in the wind–to feel the chopping sound when the boat seems to fall on the successive waves which it meets at right angles or in the eye of the wind. Why are some maples now in blossom so much redder than others. I have seen then the maples & the alders in blossom but not yet the maple keys. From Carlisle Bridge we saw many ducks $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile or more northward.– black objects on the water–& heard them laugh something like a loon– Might have got near enough to shoot them–a fine sight to see them rise at last about 50 of them apparently black-ducks– While they float on the



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water they appear to preserve constantly their relative distance. Their note not exactly like that of a goose [Canada Goose  *Branta canadensis*], yet resembling some domestic fowls cry—you know not what one. like a new species of goose. See very red cranberry vines now budded. The now brownish red shrub growing everywhere in & about bogs (originally green) with fine-dotted leaf is probably the dwarf andromeda.

When we go ashore & ramble inland below Carlisle Bridge—find here & there the freshly cut woodpiles which the choppers have not yet carted off—the ground strewn with chips— A field lately cleared (last fall perhaps) with charred stumps & grain now greening the sandy & uneven soil reminds me agreeably of a new country. Found a large bed of *Arbutus Uva ursi* with fruit in Carlisle $\frac{1}{2}$ mile below bridge— Some of the berries were turned black—as well as the buried stems & leaves next the ground at bottom of the thick beds—an inky black. This vine red in the sunniest places—never saw its fruit in this neighborhood before.— As we ate our luncheon on the peninsula off Carlisle shore saw a large ring round the sun. The aspect of the sky varies every hour about noon I observed it in the south composed of of short clouds horizontal & parallel to one another, each straight & dark below with a slight cumulus resting on it,



a little marsh-wise. Again in the North I see a light but rather watery looking flock of clouds—at mid afternoon slight wisps & thin veils of whitish clouds also.

This meadow is about 2 miles long at one view from Carlisle Bridge Southward appearing to wash the base of Pine Hill? can it be the hill near C. Smith's? and it is about as much larger Northward & from $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile wide we sailed this whole distance with 2 or 3 pitch pine boughs for a sail.— though we made lea-way the whole width of the meadow.— If the Bridge & its causeway were gone there would not be so long a reach to my knowledge on this river. There is a large swamp on the east above the Bridge maples & birches in front—with pines in the rear—making a low wild shore—the shore opening farther south to one or two solitary farm-houses.— on the west low hills covered with woods but no house— The young trees & bushes now making apparent islands on the meadows are there nearly in this proportion I should think i.e. in deep water—Young maples—willows—button bushes—red osier where less water alder—sweet gale & dwarf? andromeda—&c. We lay in the lea of an island a little north of the Bridge—where the surface is quite smooth—and the woods shelter us completely while we hear the roar of the wind behind them with an agreeable sense of protection & see the white caps of the waves on either side. Where there is a ripple—merely in our calm port we see the sunny reflections of the waves on the bottom. & the cranberries &c It is warm here in the sun and the dog is drying his wet coat after so many voyages. & is drowsily nodding

April 11, Easter Sunday: Lieutenant [William Lewis Herndon](#) arrived at the port of Pará, Brazil, on the Atlantic seaboard south of the mouths of the Amazon River.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to Second Division Brook at the West corner of the town.



[Professor Robert M. Thorson](#) points up the remarkable fact that in his journal entry for this day [Thoreau](#) “revealed his genius for river-channel hydraulics, something readers of [WALDEN](#) would never suspect. In that passage, he described the three-dimensional helicoidal flow responsible for shaping the meandering channel of Nut Meadow Brook, putting him ahead of the state geologist [[Edward Hitchcock](#)] in his understanding”: “The sight of Nut Meadow Brook in Brown’s land – reminds me that the attractiveness of a brook depends much on the character of its bottom. I love just now to see one flowing through soft sand like this where it wears a deep but irregular channel – now wider & shallower with distinct ripple marks – now shelving off suddenly to indistinct depths. meandering as much up & down as from side to side.— deepest where narrowest – & ever gullying under this bank or that – its bottom lifted up to one side or the other – the current inclining to one side.”



Finally, in the boldest stroke of his inductive genius during the Walden years, Thoreau linked the side-to-side meandering with up-and-down meandering to recognize an even more fundamental type of three-dimensional meandering known as



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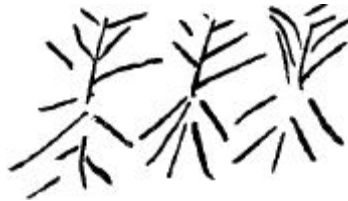
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helicoidal flow. This is a corkscrew motion in which the forward-propagating sine curve of momentum rotates around the line of gravitational flow. In this conception, line, wave, and circle become a single entity. This unification took place in Thoreau's mind on the bank of Nut Meadow Brook on a lovely spring day in 1852 [April 11, 1852 journal entry below] when he noticed the streamlines of flow "meandering as much up and down as from side to side, deepest where narrowest, and ever gullying under this bank or that, its bottom lifted up to one side or the other, the current inclining to one side." At this point, the only thing Thoreau lacked was the explanation for the helical pattern he was seeing. Still searching a year later, he asks [refer to March 10, 1853 journal entry] "What is the theory of these sudden pitches, or steep shelving places, in the sandy bottom of the brook?" Thoreau's unwillingness to let go of an observation he does not fully understand brands him as a curiosity-driven scientist, hardly the trope-seeing transcendentalist he had left behind him a few years earlier.

Professor Thorson also notes an interesting "fractal" mathematics in Thoreau's illustration of the reflections of maple sapling twigs on the water surface below them:



He goes on, in his Figure 12 on his page 101, to compare and contrast this fractal math of twigs and their reflections with the fractal math seen in Thoreau's illustrations of (in date sequence) the leaf hoarfrost on January 6, 1853:



the serrated edge of wind-disturbed water on May 14, 1853:



and the embedded crenulations on the top surface of the molars of Mr. Pratt's muskrat on July 24, 1853:





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Thoreau would have made a fine glaciologist, given his quantitative abilities and his obsession with the physical properties of ice and snow. During the cold winter of WALDEN's completion, he could often be found walking on the frozen Sudbury River where he observed, described, and classified winter phenomenon [refer to journal entry for December 2, 1853]. On New Year's day of 1854 he was enthralled by snowdrifts. His JOURNAL account of that experience reveals his insights into the continuum mechanics of fluids at steady state, and with the balance of forces involved: "The drifts mark the standstill or equilibrium between the currents of air ... The snow is like a mould, showing the form of the eddying currents of air which have been impressed on it, while the drift and all the rest is that which fell between the currents or where they counterbalanced each other." [refer to journal entry for January 1, 1854] By February he had become intrigued by the crystallography of slab ice, using the mathematical word "tessellation" to characterize the regular spatial packing of large ice crystals on the surface of the Sudbury River, which may have resembled hexagonal floor tiles [refer to journal entry for February 12, 1854]. In early March, a cold snap caused the frozen ground near his house to contract to the threshold of rupture [refer to journal entry for March 4, 1854]. He sketched the resulting fractures with detail and accuracy, and with a pattern identical to those mapped by geologists studying fault zones in the Earth's crust. Specifically his sketch includes the fractal scaling of *enechelon* failures.



April 11, Sunday: 2 1/2 Pm to 2nd Div. Brook.

The ground is now for the most part bare – though I went through drifts 3 feet deep in some places. I hear that Simmonds had planted his potatoes!! before the snow a week ago. As I go over the RR. Bridge I hear the Pewee singing *Pewee Pewee – Pe-e-wet Pe-e-we-e*. The last time rising on the last syllable some times repeating it thus many times *Pe-we-e*. The maple beyond the RR Bridge is not yet in blossom. though that at the Red Bridge is. The sight of Nut Meadow Brook in Brown's land – reminds me that the attractiveness of a brook depends much on the character of its bottom. I love just now to see one flowing through soft sand like this where it wears a deep but irregular channel – now wider & shallower with distinct ripple marks – now shelving off suddenly to indistinct depths. meandering as much up & down as from side to side.– deepest where narrowest – & ever gullying under this bank or that – its bottom lifted up to one side or the other – the current inclining to one side. I stop to look at the circular shadows of the dimples over the yellow sand – & the dark brown clams on their edges in the sand at the bottom. I hear the sound of the piano below as I write this and feel as if the winter in me were at length beginning to thaw – for my spring has been even more backward than nature's. For a month past life has been a thing incredible to me. None but the kind gods can make me sane– If only they will let their south winds blow on me. I ask to be melted. You can only ask of the metals that they be tender to the fire that **melts** them. To nought else can they be tender. The sweet flags are now starting up under water 2 inches high – & minnows dart. A pure brook is a very beautiful object to study minutely – it will bear the closest inspection – even to the fine air bubbles like minute globules of quicksilver that lie on its bottom. The minute particles or spangles of golden mica in these sands when the sun shines on them reminds one of the golden sands we read of.– Everything is washed clean & bright & the water is the best glass through which to see it–

I asked [W.E.C.](#) yesterday if he had acquired fame. He answered that giving his name at some place the bystanders said– 'Yes sir, We have heard of you– We know you here sir– Your name is mentioned in Mr. ___'s book.' That's all the fame I have had to be made known by another man.

Great flocks of slate colored snow-birds still about – & uttering their jingling note in the sun. In the brook behind Jenny Dugans I was pleased to find the *Alnus incana* (?) in bloom in the water its long sterile aments – yellowish brown hanging in panacles or clusters at the ends of the drooping branchlets – while all the twigs else are bare

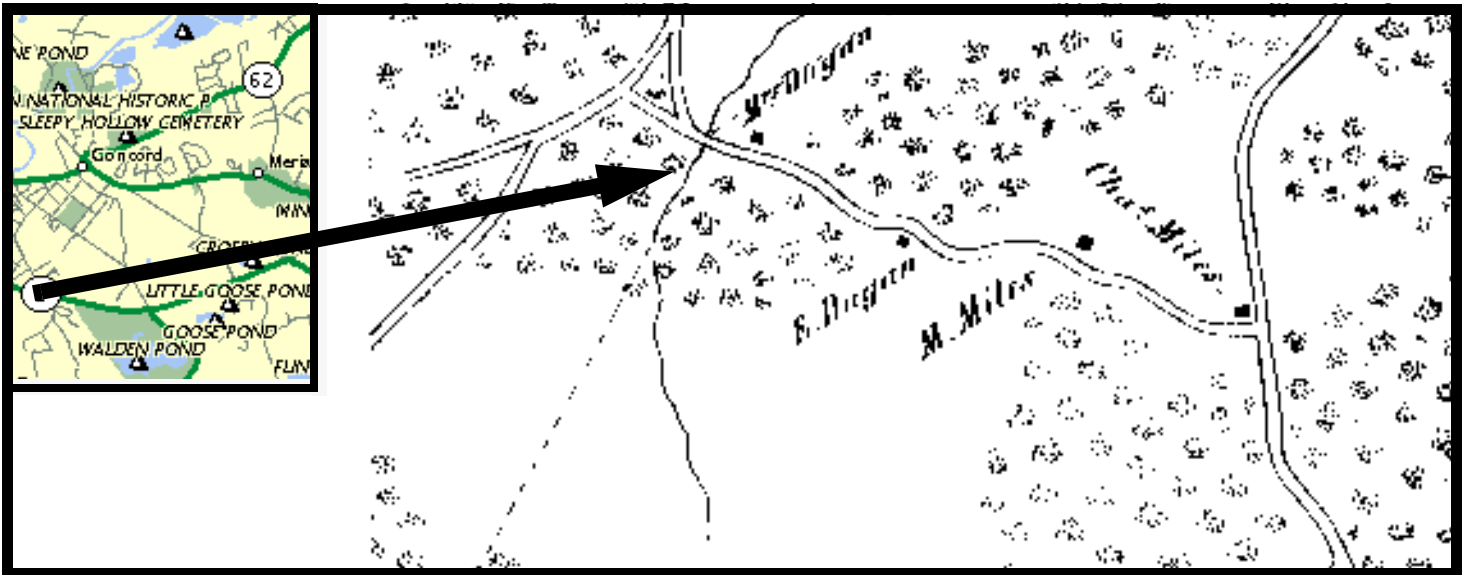
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& the well-cased & handsome leaf buds are not yet expanded at all – it is a kind of resurrection of the year these pliant & pendulous blossoms on this apparently dead bush while all is sere & tawny around, withered & bleached grass. A sort of harbinger of spring – this & the maple blossoms especially & also the early willow catkins. Even these humble & inconspicuous aments are as grateful now as the most beautiful flowers will be a month hence– They are 2¹/₂ inches long & more. This appears to be more forward and the aments larger than what I take to be the common alder hereabouts. This & the maple & the earliest willow are the most flowerlike now– The skunk cabbage is not yet fairly in blossom nor the may flower– In all the brooks I see the spotted tortoise *emys guttata* now– & in some fields & on some hill sides have seen holes apparently dug by turtles– but I have not yet noticed their tracks over the sand. The neat compact catkins of the hazel – fawn-colored? The birches still rather hard.



If I am too cold for human friendship – I trust I shall not soon be too cold for natural influences. It appears to be a law that you cannot have a deep sympathy with both man & nature. Those qualities which bring you near to the one estrange you from the other. 2nd Div. Brook– This is of similar character, but deeper than Nut Meadow Brook. It is pleasant that there be on a brook the remains of an old flume or dam or causeway as here – overgrown with trees – & whose rocks make stepping stones– Large skaters & small black water bugs are out now on the surface– Now then migrating fishes may come up the streams– The expanding may-flower buds show a little pinkish tint under the snow– The cress is apparently all last years– The cowslip does not yet spring– Very little change in anything since I was last here. Is that the *viburnum lentago* with the spear shaped buds?



They have cut down the black aspens that used to stand on the white Pond road – the Dantean trees. Thought I heard a snipe or an owl. White Pond about ¹/₄ or ¹/₅ open at the north end. NB A man who passed Walden today says it is melted 2 rods wide on N. side Here are large flocks of *fringilla hiemalis* in the stubble. Every man will be a poet if he can – otherwise a philosopher or man of science. This proves the superiority of the poet.

It is hard for a man to take money from his friends for any service– This suggests how all men should be related. –Ah! when a man has travelled, and robbed the horizon of his native fields of its mystery & poetry – its indefinite promise – tarnished the blue of distant Mts with his feet!! When he has done this he may begin to think of another world – what is this longer to him? I see now the mosses now in pastures bearing their light colored capsules on the top of red filaments. When I reach the bridge – it is become a serene evening – the broad



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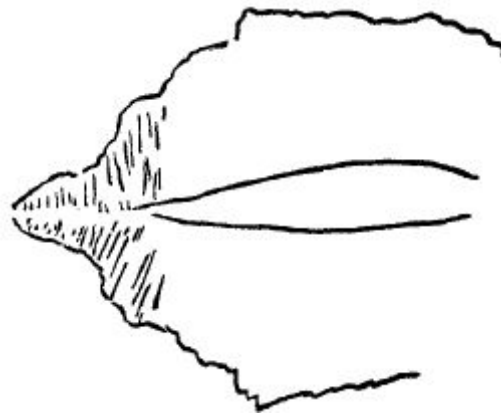
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waters are more & more smooth—& everything is more beautiful in the still light.

The view toward Fair Haven whose woods are now cut off is beautiful. No obvious sign of spring—The hill now dimly reflected – the air not yet quite still— The wood on conantum abuts handsomely on the water—& can ill be spared— The ground on which it stands is not level as seen from this point but pleasantly varied & swelling – which is important.

(Before my neighbors pig is cold his boys have made a football of his bladder!) So goes the world. No matter how much the boy snivles at first – he kicks the bladder with extacy.) This is the still evening hour – insects in the air The black birds whistle & sing “conqueree” the robin peeps & sings – the blue bird [Eastern Bluebird **Sialia sialis**] warbles.— The light of the setting sun on the pitch pines on Fair Haven & Bear Hill lights them up warmly – for the rays fall horizontally on them through the **mellow** evening atmosphere— They do not appear so bright to us at noon. nor do they now to the hawk **Sialia sialis** that comes soaring sluggishly over them – (the brown & dusky bird seen even from beneath) Of course the pines seen from above have now more of the evening shades in them than seen from the earth on one side. The catkins of the willow are silvery. The shadow of the wood named above at the river end is indispensable in this scene – and what is remarkable I see where it has reached across the river and is creeping up the hill with dark pointed spears – though the intermediate river is all sunny— The reflection of the sunny hill covered with withered grass being seen through the invisible shadow. A river is best seen breaking through highlands – issuing from some narrow pass— It imparts a sense of power. The shadow at the end of the wood makes it appear grander in this case. The serenity & warmth are the main thing after the windy & cool days we have had. You may even hear a fish leap in the water now. The lowing of a cow advances me many weeks towards summer. The reflections grow more distinct every moment.— At last the outline of the hill is as distinct below as above. And every object appears rhymed by reflection By partly closing my eyes & looking through my eyelashes – the wood end appears thus



Now the shadow reaching across the river has crept so far up the hill that I see its reflection on the hill side in the water—& in this way it may at length connect itself with its source. Clouds are now distinctly seen in the water. The bridge is now a station for walkers. I parted with my companion here, told him not to wait for me. Maple in the swamp answers to maple birch to birch. There is one clump of 3 birches particularly picturesque



In a few minutes the wind has thus gone down. At this season the reflections of deciduous trees are more picturesque and remarkable than when they are in leaf – because the branches being seen they make with their reflections a more wonderful rhyme— It is not mere mass or outline corresponding to outline but a kind

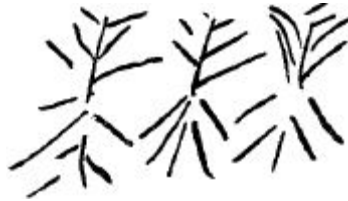


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of geometrical figure. The maples look thus &c



The twilight must to the extent above mentioned – be earlier to birds soaring in the sky, i.e. they see more decided shades of evening than a man looking east. The Frogs peep thinly.

My nature may be as still as this water – but it is not so pure & its reflections are not so distinct. The snow has turned yellow the opening leaves of the Nuphar. The song of a robin on an oak in Hubbard’s Grove sounds far off – so I have heard a robin within 3 feet in a cage in a dark bar room (how unstained by all the filth of that place!) with a kind of ventriloquism so singing that his song sounded far off on the elms. It was more pathetic still for this. The robins are singing now on all hands while the sun is setting. At what an expense any valuable work is performed – at the expense of a life. If you do one thing well what else are you good for in the meanwhile?

April 12, Monday: By torching two of the Cocopas villages of [Baja California](#), Lieutenant Thomas Sweeny induced 150 warriors of this tribe to join with his group of white men in an expedition against their tribal enemies, the Yumas.

[Henry Thoreau](#) read the [Reverend William Gilpin](#) on the turkeys of Windsor Forest, and in the afternoon he went with a companion to the powder mills at the extreme western edge of town. Since the companion make a coarse sex joke which saddened Thoreau, it seems rather likely that this was [Ellery Channing](#).



April 12, Monday: [Gilpin](#) says that our turkey was domesticated in Windsor Forest at one time & from its size was an object of consequence to lovers of the picturesque as most birds are not-& in its form & color & actions more picturesque than the peacock or indeed any other bird. Being recently reclaimed from the woods, its habits continue wilder than those of other domestic fowls– “It strays widely for its food–it flies well considering its apparent inactivity–and it perches, & roosts on trees.” He says of the leaf of the beech “on handling, it feels as if it were fabricated with metallic rigor” – – “For this reason, I suppose, as its rigor gives it an elastic quality, the common people in France & Switzerland use it for their beds.” I have heard thus far 2 sounds from 2 kinds of frogs I suppose–the hyla’s peep–& a rather faint croak in pond holes–

2 P M to the Powder Mills via Harringtons returning by RR. The road through the pitch pine woods beyond J. Hosmers is very pleasant to me curving under the pines –without a fence– the sandy road with the pines close abutting on it – yellow in the sun & low branched with younger pines filling up all to the ground.– I love to see a sandy road like this curving through a pitch pine wood where the trees closely border it without fences – a great cart path merely.

That is a pleasant part of the north river under the black-birches. The dog does not hesitate to take to the water for a stick but the current carries him rapidly down. The lines of saw dust left at different levels on the shore is just hint enough of a saw mill on the stream above. Saw the first blossoms (bright yellow stamens or pistils) on the willow catkins today– The speckled alders & the maples are earlier then. The yellow blossom appears first on one side of the ament and is the most of bright & sunny color the spring has showed.– the most decidedly flower like that I have seen Of flowers then I should say without regard to the skunk cabbage q.v. 1st the speckled alder –then the maple without keys –then this earliest perhaps swamp willow with its bright yellow blossoms on one side of the ament It is fit that this almost earliest spring flower should be yellow the color of the sun. Saw a maple **in the water** with yellowish flowers. Is it the water brings them forward? But I believe that these are all the barren flowers–& the perfect flowers appear afterward.– When I look closely

DOG



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I perceive the sward beginning to be green under my feet – very slightly. It rains with sleet & hail yet not enough to color the ground. At this season I can walk in the fields without wetting my feet in grass. Observed in the stonework of the R R. bridge I think it must be in acton– Many large stones more or less disintegrated & even turned to a soft soil into which I could thrust my finger – threatening the destruction of the bridge– A geologist is needed to tell you whether your stones will continue stones–& not turn to earth. It was very pleasant to come out on the RR in this gentle rain the track laid in grey sand looks best at such a time with the rails all wet– The factory bridge seen through the mist is agreeably indistinct seen against a dark greyish pine wood– I should not know there was a bridge there if I had not been there – the dark line made by its shaded underside is most that I see here spanning the road – the rails are quite indistinct. We love to see things thus with a certain indistinctness.

I am made somewhat sad this afternoon by the coarseness & vulgarity of my companion – because he is one with whom I have made myself intimate. He inclines latterly to speak with coarse jesting of facts which should always be treated with delicacy & reverence. I lose my respect for the man who can make the mystery of sex the subject of a coarse jest – yet when you speak earnestly & seriously on the subject is silent. I feel that this is to be truly irreligious. Whatever may befall me I trust that I may never lose my respect for purity in others. The subject of sex is one on which I do not wish to meet a man at all unless I **can** meet him on the most inspiring ground. If his view degrades, & does not elevate. I would preserve purity in act & thought as I would cherish the memory of my mother– A companion can possess no worse quality than vulgarity. If I find that **he** is not habitually reverent of the fact of sex– I–, even I, will not associate with. I will cast this first stone– What were life without some religion of this kind?

Can I walk with one who by his jests & by his habitual tone reduces the life of men & women to a level with that of cats & dogs? The man who uses such a vulgar jest describes his relation to his dearest friend. Impure as I am I could protect & worship purity.

I can have no really serious conversation with my companion. He seems not capable of it. The men whom I most esteem when they speak at all on this subject do not speak with sufficient reverence– They speak to men with a coarseness which they would not use in the presence of women–& I think they would feel a slight shame if a woman coming in should hear their remarks. A man’s speech on this subject should of course be ever as reverent and chaste & simple as if it were to be heard by the ears of maidens.

In the New Forest in Hampshire they had a chief officer called the lord-warden–& under him two distinct officers, one to preserve the *venison* of the forest, another to preserve its *vert* (ie woods – lawns &c) Does not our Walden need such. The lord-warden was a person of distinction, as the Duke of Gloucester.

Walden wood was my forest walk.

The English forests are divided into “walks” with a keeper presiding over each. My “walk” is 10 miles from my house every way. **Gilpin** says “It is a forest-adage of ancient date, *non est inquirendum unde venit venison*”. i.e. whether stolen or not.

“The incroachments of trespassers, and the houses, and fences thus raised on the borders of the forest” – – by forest borderers – – were “considered as great nuisances by the old forest-law, and were severely punished under the name of *purprestures*, as tending *ad terrorem ferarum – ad nocumentum forestae, &c*”

There is this afternoon & evening a rather cool April rain – pleasant to hear its steady dripping.

DOG

April 15, Thursday: Attorney **Abraham Lincoln** had a busy day in the Woodford County Circuit Court of Metamora, Illinois. First the State’s Attorney David B. Campbell entered a motion of nolle prosequi in the case of People v. Snyder et al. Campbell’s motion, ending the state’s prosecution of attorney Lincoln’s clients Isaac Snyder, John Johnson, Aaron Burt, and Dempsey Hawkins, who had been indicted on a charge of “gaming.” Then, in the chancery case of Dressler v. Dressler et al., attorney Lincoln filed an answer for the minor heirs of Abraham Dressler, to wit, Levi Dressler, Jane Dressler, and Hannah Dressler (Lincoln being the guardian ad litem for the children in that land partition case). Then, in the case of Rogers v. Rogers et al. (another chancery case involving the partition of land), attorney Lincoln filed a guardian ad litem’s answer for minor heirs Susan F. Morton, John W. Morton, Tabitha Ann Morton, Elizabeth Morton, Jeremiah R. Morton, and John A. Halderman.

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April 15, Thursday: My face still burns with yesterday's sunning. It rains this morning, as if the vapor from the melting snow was falling again. There is so much sun & light reflected from the snow at this season that it is not only remarkably white & dazzling but tans in a few moments. It is fortunate then that the sun on the approach of the snows – the season of snow – takes his course so many degrees lower in the heavens – else he might burn us off even at that season.

The face comes from the house of winter tender & white to the house of summer – and these late snows convey the sun to it with sudden & scorching power. It was not the march winds or others. It was a still warm beautiful day. I was out but 3 hours. It was the sun suddenly and copiously applied to a face from winter quarters.

The broad flat brown buds on Mr Cheney's elm containing 20 or 30 yellowish green threads surmounted with little brownish-mulberry cups which contain the stamens & the two styles – these are just expanding or blossoming now. The flat imbricated buds which open their scales both ways – have had a rich look for some weeks past. Why so few elms so advanced – so rich now? – Are the stameniferous & pistilliferous flowers ever on dif. trees.

It is according to Emerson the Dwarf Cassandra C. Calyculata of D. Don that is so common on the river meadows & in swamps & bogs – formerly called an Andromeda – of the Ericaceae or Heath family with the Uva Ursi (Arctostaphylos.)

Now well flower-budded. I had forgotten the aspen in my latest enumerations of flowers – v if its flowers have not decidedly appeared.

I think that the largest early catkined willow in large bushes in sand by water now blossoming – the fertile catkins with paler blossoms the sterile covered with polen a pleasant lively bright yellow – the brightest flower I have seen thus far –

Gilpin says of the stags in the New Forest (a hart is a stag in his 5th or 6th yr & upward – if one “be hunted by the king, and escape; or have his life given him for the sport he has afforded, he becomes from thence forward a **hart-royal**. – If he be hunted out of the forest, and there escape; the king hath sometimes honored him with a royal proclamation; the purport of which is, to forbid any one to molest him, that he may have free liberty of returning to his forest. From that time he becomes a **hart-royal proclaimed**.” As is said of Richard the 1st that having pursued a hart a great distance – “The king in gratitude for the diversion he had received, ordered him immediately to be proclaimed at Tickill, and at all the neighboring towns”.

Think of having such a fellow as that for a king causing his proclamation to be blown about your country towns at the end of his day's sport – at Tickill or elsewhere – that your hinds may not molest the hart that has afforded him such an ever memorable day's sport – Is it not time that his subjects whom he has so sorely troubled and so long, be **harts royal proclaimed** – who have afforded him such famous sport? It will be a finer days sport when the hinds shall turn and hunt the royal hart beyond the bounds of his forest – & his kingdom – & in perpetual banishment alone he become a royal-hart proclaimed. Such is the magnanimity of royal hearts – that through a whimsical prick of generosity spares the game it could not kill – & fetters its equals with its arbitrary will. Kings love to say shall & will.

Rain rain, rain, all day – carrying off the snow. It appears then that if you go out at this season and walk in the sun in a clear warm day like yesterday – while the earth is covered with snow – you may have your face burnt in a few moments. The rays glance off from the snowy crystals & scorch the skin.

Thinking of the value of the gull to the scenery of our river in the spring when for a few weeks they are seen circling about so deliberately & heavily yet gracefully – without apparent object beating like a vessel in the air.

Gilpin says something to the purpose – that water-fowl “discover in their flight some determined aim. They eagerly coast the river or return to the sea; bent on some purpose, of which they never lose sight. But the evolutions of the gull appear capricious, and undirected, both when she flies alone, and, as she often does, in large companies. – The more however her character suffers as a loiterer, the more it is raised in picturesque value, by her continuing longer before the eye; and displaying in her elegant sweeps through the air, her sharp-pointed wings, and her bright silvery hue. – She is beautiful also, not only on the wing, but when she floats, in numerous assemblies on the water; or when she rests on the shore, dotting either one, or the other with white spots; which, minute as they are, are very picturesque: – giving life & spirit to a view.”

He seems to be describing our very bird. I do **not remember** to have seen them over or in our river meadows when there was not ice there.

They come annually a-fishing here like royal hunters. to remind us of the sea – & that our town after all lies but further up a creek of the universal sea – above the head of the tide. So ready is a deluge to overwhelm our lands as the gulls to circle hither in the spring freshets. To see a gull beating high over our meadowy flood in chill & windy march – is akin to seeing a mackerel schooner on the coast. It is the nearest approach to sailing vessels in our scenery. I never saw one at Walden. O how it salts our fresh our Sweet watered Fair Haven all at once to see this sharp beaked greedy sea bird beating over it! For awhile the water is brackish to my eyes. It is




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merely some herring pond – and if I climb the eastern bank I expect to see the atlantic there covered with countless sails. whoever thought that walden’s blue & emerald water was ever prophaned by wing of gull or cormorant– At most it tolerates one annual loon. We are so far maritime – do not dwell beyond the range of the sea going gull – the littoral birds. Does not the gull come up after those suckers which I see? He is never to me perfectly in harmony with the scenery – but like the high water something unusual.

–What a novel life to be introduced to a dead sucker floating on the water in the spring!– Where was it spawned pray? The sucker is so recent – so unexpected – so unrememberable so unanticipatable a creation– While so many institutions are gone by the board and we are despairing of men & of ourselves there seems to be life even in a dead sucker – whose fellows at least are alive. The world never looks more recent or promising – religion philosophy poetry – than when viewed from this point. To see a sucker tossing on the spring flood – its swelling imbricated breast heaving up a bait to not despairing gulls– It is a strong & a strengthening sight. Is the world coming to an end?– Ask the chubs. As long as fishes spawn – glory & honor to the cold blooded who despair – as long as ideas are expressed – as long as friction makes bright – as long as vibrating wires make music of harps – we do not want redeemers. What a volume you might on the separate virtues of the various animals – the black duck & the rest.

How indispensable our one or two flocks of geese [[Canada Goose](#)  *Branta canadensis*] in spring & autumn– What would be a spring in which that sound was not heard.– Coming to unlock the fetters of northern rivers. Those annual steamers of the air

Would it not be a fine office to preserve the *vert* of this forest in which I ramble?

Channing calls our walks along the banks of the river – taking a boat for convenience at some distant point – **riparial** excursions It is a pleasing epithet – but I mistrust such – even as good as this, in which the mere name is so agreeable, as if it would ring hollow erelong – and rather the thing should make the true name poetic at last. Alcott wished me to name my book **Sylvania!** But he & C. are 2 men in these respects. We make a good many prairial excursions

We take a boat 4 or 5 miles out then paddle up the stream as much further, meanwhile land & making excursions inland or further along the banks.

Walden is but little more melted than yesterday.

I see that the grass, which unless in the most favored spots, did not show any evidence of spring to the casual glance, before the snow, will look unexpectedly green as soon as it has gone. It has actually grown beneath it. The lengthened spires about our pump – remind me of flame – as if it were a kind of green flame – allied to fire, as it is the product of the sun.

The Aspen on the RR is beginning to blossom showing the purple or mulberry – in the terminal catkins – though it droops like dead-cat’s tails in the rain. It appears about the same date with the elm.

Is it the chickweed so forward by our back door-step?

V that sentence in [Gilpin](#) about – A gentleman might keep a greyhound within ten miles of the forest if he was *lawed*– “*Lawing*, or *expedition*, was a forest-term for disqualifying a dog to exert such speed, as was necessary to take a deer. It was performed either by cutting out the sole of his foot, or by taking off two of his claws by a chisel, and mallet.”

It reminds me of the majority of human hounds that tread the forests paths of this world – they go slightly limping in their gait as if disqualified by a cruel fate to overtake the nobler game of the forest – their natural quarry– Most men are such dogs. Ever & anon starting a quarry – with perfect scent which from this cruel maiming & disqualification of the fates he is incapable of coming up with. Does not the noble dog shed tears? [Gilpin](#) on the subject of docking horse’s tails – thinks that leaving the tail may even help the racer to fly toward the goal

I notice that the sterile blossoms of that large catkin’d early willow begin to open on the side of the catkin – like a tinge of golden light – gradually spreading & expanding over the whole surface & lifting their anthers far & wide. The stem of these sterile catkins is more reddish smoother & slenderer than that of the female ones (pale flowered) which is darker & downy

ELLERY CHANNING

BRONSON ALCOTT

DOG

April 17, Saturday: Arriving in Montréal for a lecture engagement, [Waldo Emerson](#) walked across the still-frozen St. Lawrence River. Meanwhile, that afternoon in Concord, [Henry Thoreau](#) was walking up the east bank of the Sudbury River to Fair Haven Hill:



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April 17, Saturday: [Gilpin](#) says – “As the wheeling motion of the gull is beautiful, so also is the figured flight of the goose, the duck, and the widgeon; all of which are highly ornamental to coast-views, bays, and estuaries.” A flight of ducks adds to the wildness of our wildest river scenery. Undoubtedly the soaring & sailing of the hen hawk (the red-shouldered buzzard (?)) [[Red-tailed Hawk](#) [Buteo jamaicensis](#)] is the most ornamental – graceful – stately – beautiful to contemplate of all the birds that ordinarily frequent our skies – The eagle [[Bald Eagle](#) [Haliaeetus Leucocephalus](#)] is but a rare & casual visitor. – The goose [[Canada Goose](#) [Branta canadensis](#)] – the osprey [[Pandionhaliaetus](#)] – the great heron [[Great Blue Heron](#) [Ardea herodias](#)] – though interesting are either transient visitors or rarely seen. – they either move through the air as passengers or too exclusively looking for their prey – but the henhawk soars like a creature of the air. The flight of martins [[Purple Martin](#) [Progne subis](#)] is interesting in the same way. When I was young and compelled to pass my Sunday in the house without the aid of interesting books, I used to spend many an hour till the wished-for sun-down watching the martins soar (from an attic window – and fortunate indeed did I deem myself when a hawk appeared in the heavens though far toward the horizon against a downy cloud – and I searched for hours till I had found his mate. – They at least took my thoughts from earthly things.

[Gilpin](#) says that the black-cock, scarce in the New Forest, “has the honor, which no other bird can boast, of being protected as royal-game.”

Stood by the river side early this morning. The water has been rising during the night. The sun has been shining on it half an hour. It is quite placid. The village smokes are seen against the long hill. And now I see the river also is awakening – a slight ripple beginning to appear on its surface. It wakens like the village –

It proves a beautiful day, & I see that glimmering or motion in the air just above the fields, which we associate with heat. I noticed yesterday that some of those early staminate catkins had apparently been blasted on one side by the snow. – The waters are after all as quiet at noon as in the morning – & I see the reflections with rare distinctness from my window.

Up the E. bank of river to Fair Haven at 2 Pm.

The farmers are in haste beginning their plowing. The season is remarkably backward. The wind is rising at last & it is somewhat from the East S.E. but it is the more fresh & life giving. The water is over the corner road since last night, higher than before this season – so that we (I & C [[Ellery Channing](#)]) go not that way. In that little pasture of Potters under the oak – I am struck with the advantage of the fence in landscapes – Here is but a half acre inclosed – but the fence has the effect of confining the attention to this little undulation of the land – and to make you consider it by itself – and the importance of the oak is proportionally increased. This formation of the surface – would be lost in an unfenced prairie, but the fence which nearly enough defines it – frames it & presents it as a picture. Sat on the smooth river bank under Fair Haven – The sun-light in the wood across the stream. It proves a breezy afternoon. There are fresh cobwebs on the alders in the sun. The atmosphere grows somewhat misty & blue in the distance. The sun sparkle on the water is it not brighter now than it will be in summer? In this freshet & overflow – the permanent shore & shore-marks are obliterated – and the wooded point making into the water – shows no gradations – no naked stems beneath – but the pine boughs & the bushes actually rest gently on the water

There is no shore. The waters steal so gently and noiselessly over the land amid the alders & the copses – So soft so placid a shore – which would not wreck a cranberry! The groves are simply immersed – as when you raise the water in a wine glass by dropping pins into it.

What is that large hawk with a pure white belly & slender long black wings (a goshawk?) which I see sailing over the Cliffs – a pair of them – looking for prey? From this burnt shrub-oak plain beneath the Cliff where in spots not even the grass has caught again – I see the Pond southward through the hazy atmosphere – a blue-rippled water surrounded mistily by red shrub oak woods & on one side green pines & tawny grass – A blue-rippled water surrounded by low reddish shrub oak hills – the whole invested – softened & made more remote & indistinct by a blueish mistiness. I am not sure but the contrast is more exciting & lastingly satisfactory than if the woods were green. A meadow must not be deep nor have well defined shore. The more indented & finely divided & fringed & shallow & copsy its shore – the more islanded bushes & cranberry vines appear here & there above the surface, the more truly it answers to the word meadow or prairie. – These deep withdrawn bays – like that toward Well meadow – are resorts for many a shy flock of ducks. They are very numerous this afternoon we scare them up every quarter of a mile – mostly the whitish duck – which Brown thinks the Golden Eye – (we call them Whistlers) and also Black ducks, perchance also Shell-drakes – They are quite shy – swim rapidly away far into the pond – A flock which we surprised in the smooth Bay of well meadow, divided & showed much cunning – dodging under the shore to avoid us. Struck upon a wild maple swamp a little N W (?) of Well Meadow Head – where the ground had the appearances of a wild ravine running up from the swamp water here even to the rocks of the Cliffs which from no other point would be associated with this place. Here is a very retired wild swamp – now drowned land – with picturesque maples in it & the leaves and sticks on the



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bottom seen through the transparent water – the yellowish bottom – yellow with decayed leaves &c Found within the just swelling buds of the amelanchier evidences of the coming blossom. Observed in the 2nd of the chain of ponds between Fair Haven & Walden a large (for the pond) island patch of the dwarf Andromeda – I sitting on the east bank– Its fine brownish red color very agreeable & memorable to behold. In the last long pond looking at it from the south – I saw it filled with a slightly greyish shrub which I took for the sweet gale – but when I had got round to the east side chancing to turn round I was surprised to see that all this pond hole also was filled with the same warm brownish red colored Andromeda. The fact was I was opposite to the sun – but from every other other position I saw only the sun reflected from the surface of the andromeda leaves – which gave the whole a greyish brown hue tinged with red – but from this position alone I saw as it were through the leaves which the opposite sun lit up – giving to the whole this charming warm what I call **Indian** red color–the mellowest the ripest – red imbrowned color – but when I looked to the right or left i.e. N or S the more the swamp had the mottled light or greyish aspect – where the light was reflected from the surfaces of the leaves – And afterward when I had risen higher up the hill though still opposite the sun – the light came reflected upward from the surfaces & I lost that warm rich-red tinge – surpassing cathedral windows.

Let me look again at a different hour of the day & see if it is really so. It is a very interesting piece of magic. It is the autumnal tints in spring only more subdued & mellow– These leaves are so slow to decay. V. when they fall.–

Already these frogs are greened with frog spittle – & I see the tracks of muskrats through it.– Hear the faint croak of frogs & the still rather faint peeping of hylas. It is about 4¹/₂ Pm.

The form of the surface hereabouts is very agreeable. There are many dry hollows & Valleys hereabouts connecting these two ponds. The undulating ground. A fisherman making change the other day gave a ninepence whose pillars were indistinct – some of the women returned it – whereupon he took it & taking off his hat rubbed it on his hair saying he guessed he could make the pillars appear. The Pond is still half covered – with ice & it will take another day like this to empty it. It is clear up tight to the shore on the S side. dark grey cold ice – completely saturated with water– The air from over it is very cold– The scent of the earliest spring flowers! I smelt the willow catkins today. tender – & innocent – after this rude winter – yet slightly sickening – – Yet full of vernal promise. This odor– How unlike any thing that winter affords – or nature has afforded this 6 months! A mild sweet vernal scent– Not highly spiced & intoxicating as some erelong – but attractive to bees– That early yellow smell. The odor of spring – of life developing amid buds – of the earth's epithalamium – The first flowers are not the highest scented – as catkins – as the first birds are not the finest singers – as the black-birds & songsparrows [*Melospizamelodia*] &c. The beginnings of the year are humble. But though this fragrance is not rich – it contains & prophesies all others in it.

The leaves of the veratrum viride – Am. Hellebore now just pushing up.

April 18, Sunday: Going for a walk in the afternoon with [Ellery Channing](#) through S. Dennis's field near the Sudbury River, [Henry Thoreau](#) noted that [Walden Pond](#) was clear of ice:

WALDEN: In 1845 Walden was first completely open on the 1st of April; in '46, the 25th of March; in '47, the 8th of April; in '51, the 28th of March; in '52, the 18th of April; in '53, the 23rd of March; in '54, about the 7th of April.



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[Thoreau](#) worked on Gilpin and the scientific treatises of the [Harvard College](#) botanist [Asa Gray](#).



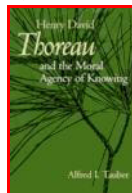
H. Daniel Peck claims that [Thoreau](#)'s conversion experience in regard to time and eternity occurred at this point, as he first conceptualized time as a circle and thus brought memory and anticipation together "as a single timeless dimension of experience."⁵⁶ I would have to say of Peck's attitude toward Thoreau's attitude toward temporality, what William Blake once said of Bible-reading: "thou readst black where I read white."⁵⁷ How about you, reader, do you sense something here that was not detectable in, say, the jottings of the year 1851?



April 18: For the first time I perceive this spring that the year is a circle – I see distinctly the spring arc thus far. It is drawn with a firm line. Every incident is a parable of the great teacher. The cranberries washed up in the meadows & into the road on the causeways now yields a pleasant acid.



56. THOREAU'S MORNING WORK, pages 46-7. Professor Tauber's later treatise seriously examines Peck's contribution: Dr. Alfred I. Tauber. HENRY DAVID THOREAU AND THE MORAL AGENCY OF KNOWING. Berkeley and Los Angeles CA; London, England: U of California P, 2001



57. This remark is to be found at the end of Blake's "The Everlasting Gospel." See BLAKE'S POETRY AND DESIGNS, Johnson, Mary Lynn and John E. Grant (Eds.), NY: Norton, 1979, page 372.



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My own analysis of this is that 1.) this is a whole lot of freight for Peck to impute to a phrase “For the first time” which is not all that unusual in Thoreau’s writing and which may be nothing more than a contraction for “For the first time this year,” that 2.) the excerpts quoted and chronologized in this file offer no support whatever to the idea that there was some radical break in Thoreau’s sensitivities just at this point in time, but instead very much to the contrary offer much support to the idea that there was no radical break in his sensitivities just at this point in time, and that 3.) Peck has not supplied the sort of penetrating analyses on other Thoreauvian topics which would lead anyone to defer judgment and suspect that here again he may be perceiving something in the material which as yet I have been spiritually unprepared to perceive — but has instead supplied to us a stream of off-the-cuff analyses of the general type which I tend to attribute to careerist educators who need to publish yet another insightful book in order to qualify, under some academic rule of thumb, for a raise in salary. Harsh, huh?



April 18, Sunday: The ground is now generally bare of snow – though it lies along walls & on the north sides of vallies in the woods – pretty deep – We have had a great deal of foul weather this season – scarcely two fair days together.

Gray refers the cone-like excrescences on the ends of willow twigs to the punctures of insects. I think that both these & the galls of the oak &c are to be regarded as something more normal than this implies. Though it is impossible to draw the line between disease & health at last

Day before yesterday I brought home some twigs of that earliest large oval catkinned willow just over Hubbards Bridge on the right-hand – a male tree. The anthers just beginning to show themselves (not **quite** so forward as those above the Dea. Hosmer House which I have thought to be the same.) They looked much the worse for the rain. Catkins about 1 inch long, not being (much expanded yet) opening a little below the apex 2 stamens to a scale. There are smaller female bushes further on on the left – catkins about the same size with greenish ovaries, stalked & rather small & slightly reddish stigmas. 4 divided. I thought this the other sex of the same tree.

There is also the very gray-hard-wood-like willow at the bars just beyond Hubbards brook with long cylindrical caterpillar like catkins – which do not yet show their yellow – And 3dly opposite the 1st name i.e. the other side the way a smaller catkined willow not yet showing its yellow – 4thly near the Conantum swamp sterile catkins **in blossom** on a bush willow 1 1/4 inches long – more forward than any – but the stamens 1 to a bract or scale & bifid or trifid or quatrifid toward the top!! 5thly what I should think the *S. humilis* i.e. of **Muhl.** shows its small catkins now – but not yet blossoms.

I still feel stiff places in the swamps where there is ice still. Saw yesterday on an apple tree in company with the *fringilla hiemalis* an olivaceous backed – yellow throated & yellow-brown spotted breast about the same size or a little less than they. – the first of the late coming or passing – or the summer birds? When we have got to these colors the olivaceous & yellow – then the sun is high in the sky. The *fringilla hiemalis* is the most common bird at present.

Was pleased to observe yesterday in the woods a new method (to me) which the wood chopper had invented to keep up his corded wood – where he could not drive a stake on account of the frost. He had set up the stake on the surface – then looped several large birch withes once about it – resting the wood on their ends – as he carried up the pile – or else he used a forked stick – thus –



2 Pm to River: A driving rain i.e. a rain with Easterly wind & driving mists. River higher than before this season – about 18 inches of the highest arch of the stone arch above water. Going through Dennis’ field with C. saw a flock of geese [**Canada Goose** **Branta canadensis**] on E. side of river near willows. 12 great birds on the troubled surface of the meadow delayed by the storm. We lay on the ground behind an oak & our umbrella 80 rods off & watched them. Soon we heard a gun go off but could see no smoke in the mist & rain. & the whole flock rose spreading their great wings & flew with clangor a few rods & lit in the water again – then swam swiftly toward our shore – with outstretched necks. I knew them first from ducks by their long necks. Soon appeared the man running toward the shore in vain in his great coat. But he soon retired in vain. We remained close under our umbrella by the tree – ever and anon looking through a peep hole between the umbrella & the tree at the birds – on they came, sometimes in 2 sometimes in 3 squads – warily – till we could see the steel blue

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& green reflections from their necks. We held the dog close the while C lying on his back in the rain had him in his arms – and thus we gradually edged round on the ground in this cold wet windy storm keeping our feet to the tree & the great calf of a dog with his eyes shut in our arms. We laughed well at our adventure. They swam fast. & warily – seeing our umbrella, occasionally one expanded a grey wing. They showed white on breasts. And not till after half an hour – sitting cramped & cold & wet on the ground did we leave them. Ducks also were on the meadow. I have seen more ducks within a few days than ever before. They are apparently delayed here by the backwardness of the season. Yesterday the river was full of them. It proves a serious storm The point of pines left by Britton on Hubbard's meadow. looks very dark in the mist. We cannot see more than 80 rods before as we walk. Saw a sizeable hawk in the meadow at N meadow crossing with a white rump – (the hen-harrier (?)) The catkins of the *Alnus incana* at Jennie's are longer than ever – 3 or 4 inches. Somebody keeps his minnows there in a barrel – Observed a thistle just springing up in the meadow – a disk of green a few inches in diameter in the midst of the old decayed leaves – which now being covered with rain drops beaded – & edged the close packed leaves **with purple** made a very rich sight – The green leaves of the thistle in a dense disk edged with purple & covered with bead-like rain drops – just springing from the meadow It reminded me of some delicious fruit – all ripe – quite flat. – We sought the desert it is so agreeable to cross the sand in wet weather. You might dig into the sand for dryness. I saw where somebody appeared to have dug there for turtles eggs. The catkins of some willows – silvery & not yet blossomed – covered with rain – like dew look like snow or frost – sleet adhering to the twigs. The andromeda in Tarbells swamp – does not look so fresh – nor red now – Does it require a sunny day? The buds of the balm of gilead coated with a gummy substance – mahogany (?) colored have already a fragrant odor – Heard the cackling of geese from over the ministerial swamp & soon appeared 28 geese [**Canada Goose** **Branta canadensis**] that flew over our heads toward the other river we had left – we now near the Black birches. With these great birds in it the air seems for the first time inhabited. We detect holes in their wings. Their Clank expresses anxiety.

[DOG](#)

The most interesting fact perhaps at present is these few tender yellow blossoms these half expanded sterile aments of the willow – seen through the rain & cold signs of the advancing year – pledges of the sun's return. Anything so delicate both in structure in color & in fragrance contrasts strangely with surrounding nature & feeds the faith of man. The fields are acquiring a greenish tinge.

The birds which I see & hear in the midst of the storm are robins – song sparrows [**Melospiza** **melodia**] blackbirds and crows [**American Crow** **Corvus Brachyrhynchos**] occasionally.

This is the spring of the year – Birds are migrating northward to their breeding places; the melted snows are escaping to the sea. We have now the unspeakable rain of the Greek winter. The element of water prevails. The river has far overflowed its channel. What a conspicuous place nature has assigned to the skunk cabbage – first flower to show itself above the bare ground! What occult relation is implied between this plant & man? Most buds have expanded perceptibly – show some greenness or yellowness. Universally nature relaxes somewhat of her rigidity – yields to the influence of heat. Each day the grass springs & is greener. The skunk cabbage is inclosed in its spathe but the willow catkin expands its bright yellow blossoms without fear at the end of its twigs. & the fertile flower of the hazel – has elevated its almost invisible crimson star of stigmas above the sober & barren earth.

The sight of the sucker floating on the meadow at this season affects me singularly. as if it were a fabulous or mythological fish – realizing my **idea** of a fish – It reminds me of pictures of dolphins or of proteus. I see it for what it is – not an actual terrene fish – but the fair symbol of a divine idea – the design of an artist – its color & form – its gills & fins & scales – are perfectly beautiful – because they completely express to my mind what they were intended to express – It is as little fishy as a fossil fish. Such a form as is sculptured on ancient monuments and will be to the end of time. – made to point a moral. I am serene & satisfied when the birds fly & the fishes swim as in fable, for the moral is not far off. When the migration of the goose is significant and has a moral to it. When the events of the day have a mythological character & the most trivial is symbolical.

For the first time I perceive this spring that the year is a circle – I see distinctly the spring arc thus far. It is drawn with a firm line. Every incident is a parable of the great teacher. The cranberries washed up in the meadows & into the road on the causeways now yields a pleasant acid.

Why should just these sights & sounds accompany our life? Why should I hear the chattering of blackbirds – why smell the skunk each year? I would fain explore the mysterious relation between myself & these things. I would at least know what these things unavoidably are – make a chart of our life – know how its shores trend – that butterflies reappear & when – know why just this circle of creatures completes the world. Can I not by expectation affect the revolutions of nature – make a day to bring forth something new?

As Cawley loved a garden, so I a forest. Observe all kinds of coincidences – as what kinds of birds come with what flowers.

An East Wind, I hear the clock strike plainly 10 or 11. Pm.

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Would this have been the “Dea. Hosmer House” of which Thoreau wrote?



April 21, Wednesday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) took a walk in the rain to the 1775 Battle-Ground across Old North Bridge over the Concord River.



April 21, Wednesday: The storm still continues. When I walked in the storm day before yesterday, I felt very cold when my clothes were first wet through but at last they being saturated with water were tight & kept out the air & fresh wet like a thicker & closer garment & the water in them being warmed by my person – I felt warmer & even drier.

The color of the water changes with the sky. It is as dull & sober as the sky today.

The woodchuck has not far to go to his home. In foul weather if he chooses he can turn in any where. He lives on & in the earth. A little parasite on the skin of the earth. – that knows the taste of clover & bean-leaves & beetles.

2 PM another walk in the rain.

The river is remarkably high – Nobody remembers when the water came into so many cellars The water is up to the top of the easternmost end of the easternmost iron truss on the S side of the Stone bridge – It is over the union turnpike that was west of the bridge – so that it is impassible to a foot traveller – & **just over** the road west of Woods bridge –

Of eight carriage roads leading into Concord the water to my knowledge is now over six – *viz* – Lees Bridge –

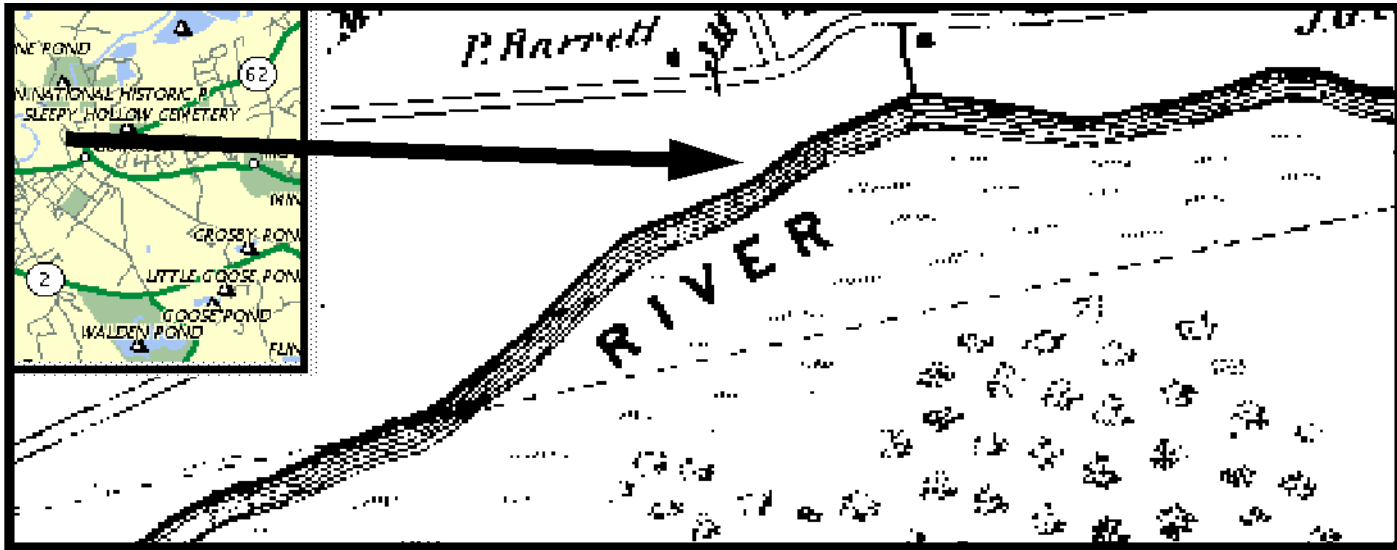
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the Corner Road – Wood’s Bridge – Stone Bridge – Red bridge on both sides full half a mile in all over the walls – & the Turnpike. All of these are impassible to foot travellers except Woods’ Bridge where only a lady would be stopped. – I should think that 9 inches more would carry it over Flint’s Bridge Road – How it is at the East Quarter school house I dont know – nor at the further Stone Bridge & above – nor at Derby’s Bridge It is probably over the road near Mile’s in the Corner and in 2 places on the Turnpike – perhaps between J P Browns & C. Miles. This may suggest how low Concord is situated. Most of the cellars on both sides of the main street E of our house have water in them – and some that are on high ground. All this has been occasioned by the repeated storms of snow & rain for a month or 6 weeks past especially the melting of the deep snow of April 13 and added to this the steady rain from Sunday morning Ap 18 to this moment 8 Pm Ap. 21st. The element of water is in the ascendant. From the Poplar Hill the expanse of water looks about as large on the S W as the N E. many new islands are made – of grassy & sometimes rocky knolls & clumps of trees and bushes where there is no dry land. Straight willow hedges rising above the water in some places marking the boundaries of some man’s improvements look prettily – Some of the bushy islands on the Great meadows are distinctly red at this distance even a mile off from the stems of some bush not red (distinctly in fair weather – wet now – Is it cornel? In front of Peters. The grass has been springing in spite of the snow & rain & the earth has an increased greenish tinge – though it is still decidedly tawny. – Men are out in boats in the rain for muskrats – ducks & geese [**Canada Goose** ■ *Branta canadensis*]. It appears to me as I stand on this hill that the white houses of the village seen through the whitish misty storm and rain are a very suitable color & harmonize well with the scenery – like concentrations of the mist. It is a cheerful color in stormy weather. A few patches of snow are still left. – The robins sing through the ceaseless rain and the song sparrows [*Melospiza* ■ *melodia*] & I hear a lark’s [**Eastern Meadowlark** ■ *Sturnella magna*] plaintive strain – I am glad that men are so dispersed over the earth. The need of fuel causes woods to be left – and the use of cattle and horses requires pastures – and hence men live far apart & the walkers of every town have this wide range over forest & field. Sitting behind the wall on the height of the road beyond N. Barretts – (for we have



come down the N bank of the river) – I love in this weather to look abroad & let my eye fall on some sandy hill clothed with pitch pines on its sides, & covered on its top with the whitish cladonia lichen – usually so dry – but now saturated with water – It reminds me of northern Regions. I am thinking of the hill near Tarbells – ³/₄ of a mile from me. They are agreeable colors to my eye – the green pine & on the summit the patches of whitish moss like mildew seen through the mist & rain. – for I think perhaps how much moisture that soil can bear, how grateful it is to it.

Proceed toward Hubbards Black birch Hill – the grass is greenest in the hollows where some snow & ice are still left – melting showing by its greenness how much space they recently covered. On the E side of Ponkawtassett I hear a robin singing cheerily from some perch in the wood – in the midst of the rain. – where the scenery is now wild & dreary – His song a singular antagonism & offset to the storm – As if nature said “have faith, these **two** things I can do.” It sings with power – like a bird of great faith – that sees the bright future through the dark present – to reassure the race of man – like one to whom many talents were given & who will

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improve its talents. They are sounds to make a dying man live. They sing not their despair. It is a pure immortal melody. The side of the hill is covered first with tall birches rising from a reddish ground – just above a small swamp – then comes a white pine wood whose needles covered with the fine rain drops have a light sheen on them. – I see one pine that has been snapped off half way up in the storm & seen against the misty back ground it is a distinct yellow mark. The sky is not one homogeneous color – but some what mottled with darker clouds & white intervals – & anon it rains harder than before. (I saw the other day the rootlets which spring from the alder above the ground – so tenacious of the earth is it) Was that a large shad bush where fathers mill used to be.? There is quite a water fall beyond. where the old dam was Where the rapids commence at the outlet of the pond, the water is singularly creased as it rushes to the fall – like braided hair as the poet has it. I did not see any inequalities in the rock it rushed over which could make it so plaited. Here is enough of that suds which in warm weather disperses such a sense of coolness through the air –

Sat under the dark hemlocks – gloomy hemlocks on the hill-side beyond. In a stormy day like this there is the gloom of night beneath them. The ground beneath them almost bare with wet rocks & fine twigs – without leaves (but hemlock leaves) or grass. The birds are singing in the rain about the small pond in front – The inquisitive chickadee [**Black-capped Chickadee** [█](#) *Parus atricapillus*] that has flown at once to the alders to reconnoitre as the black birds – the song-sparrow [*Melospiza* [█](#) *melodia*] telling of expanding buds. But above all the robin sings here too – I know not at what distance in the wood. Did he sing thus in Indian days? I ask myself – for I have always associated this sound with the village & the clearing, but now I do detect the aboriginal wildness in his strain – & can imagine him a woodland bird – and that he sang thus when there was no civilized ear to hear him – a pure forest melody even like the wood thrush. Every genuine thing retains this wild tone – which no true culture displaces – I heard him even as he might have sounded to the Indian singing at evening upon the elm above his wigwam – with which was associated in the red-man's mind the events of an Indian's life. – his childhood. Formerly I had heard in it only those strains which tell of the white man's village life – now I heard those strains which remembered the red-man's life – such as fell on the ears of Indian children. – as he sang when these arrow-heads which the rain has made shine so on the lean stubble field – were fastened to their shaft. Thus the birds sing round this piece of water – some on the alders which fringe – some farther off & higher up the hills – It is a centre to them. Here stand buttonwoods an uncommon tree in the woods. naked to look at & now covered with little tufts of twigs on the sides of the branches in consequence of the disease which has attacked them. The singing of birds implies fair weather. I see where some farmer has been at pains to knock to pieces the manure which his cattle have dropped in the pasture so to spread it over the sward. The yellow birch is to me an interesting tree from its remarkable & peculiar color – like a silvery gold – In the pasture beyond the brook where grow the barberries – huckleberries – creeping juniper &c are half a dozen huge boulders which look grandly now in the storm covered with greenish gray lichens alternating with the slateish colored rock. Slumbering – silent like the exuviae of Giants – some of their cattle left. From a height I look down on some of them as on the backs of oxen. A certain personality or at least brute life they seem to have. C. [\[Ellery Channing\]](#) calls it boulder field. There is a good prospect Southward over the pond – between the two hills – even to the **river meadows** now. – As we stand by the Mt on the Battleground – I see a white pine dimly in the horizon just north of Lee's Hill – at 5¹/₂ Pm, its upright stem & straight horizontal feathered branches – while at the same time I hear a robin sing. each enhances the other. That tree seems the emblem of my life – it stands for the west – the wild. The sight of its grateful to me as to a bird whose perch it is to be at the end of a weary flight. I not sure whether the music I hear is most in the robins' song or in its boughs. My money should be all in pine tree shillings. The pine tree that stands on the verge of the clearing – whose boughs point westward. Which the villager does not permit to grow on the common or by the road side. – which is banished from the village. – In whose boughs the crow [**American Crow** [█](#) *Corvus brachyrhynchos*] and the hawk have their nests.

We have heard enough none sense about the pyramids – If Congress should vote to rear such structures on the prairies today, I should not think it worth the while nor be interested in the enterprise. It was the foolish undertaking of some tyrant – But says my neighbor – when they were built all men believed in them & were inspired to build them. Nonsense nonsense – I believe that they were built essentially in the same spirit in which the public works of Egypt – of England & America are built today – The Mahmoudi-canal – the Tubular bridge & the Washington monument. The inspiring motive in the actual builders of these works is garlic – or beef – or potatoes – – for meat & drink – & the necessities of life men can be hired to do many things. Ah, says my neighbor, but the stones are fitted with such nice joints! But the joints were nicer yet before they were disjointed in the quarry. Men are wont to speak as if it was a noble work to build a pyramid. – to see forsooth a hundred thousand Irishmen at work at 50 cents a day – to piling stone. As if the good joints could ennoble it, if a noble motive was wanting. To ramble round the world to see that pile of stones which ambitious Mr Cheops & Egyptian booby – like some [Lord Timothy Dexter](#) – caused a hundred thousand poor devils to pile up for low



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wages. — Which contained for all treasure the thigh bone of a cow. The tower of Babel has been a good deal laughed at — It was just as sensible an undertaking as the pyramids which because they were completed & have stood to this day are admired. I dont believe they made a better joint than Mr Crab — the joiner can. I have not this season heard more robins sing than this rainy day.

[“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” Paragraph 31] Most men would feel insulted, if it were proposed to employ them in throwing stones over a wall, and then in throwing them back, merely that they might earn their wages. But many are no more worthily employed now. For instance: just after sunrise, one summer morning, I noticed Hayden⁵⁸ walking beside his team, which was slowly drawing a heavy hewn stone swung under the axle, surrounded by an atmosphere of industry, — his day’s work begun, — his brow commenced to sweat, — a reproach to all sluggards and idlers, — pausing abreast the shoulders of his oxen, and half turning round with a flourish of his merciful whip, while they gained their length on him. And I thought, Such is the labor which the American Congress exists to protect, — honest, manly toil, — honest as the day is long, — that makes his bread taste sweet, and keeps society sweet, — which all men respect and have consecrated: one of the sacred band, doing the needful, but irksome drudgery. Indeed, I felt a slight reproach, because I observed this from the window, and was not abroad and stirring about a similar business. The day went by, and at evening I passed a rich man’s yard,⁵⁹ who keeps many servants, and spends much money foolishly, while he adds nothing to the common stock, and there I saw Hayden’s stone⁶⁰ lying beside a whimsical structure intended to adorn this [Lord Timothy Dexter](#)’s premises, and the dignity forthwith departed from Hayden’s labor,⁶¹ in my eyes. In my opinion, the sun was made to light worthier toil than this.

April 26, Monday: [Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his [JOURNAL INTIME](#): “This evening a feeling of emptiness took possession of me; and the solemn ideas of duty, the future, solitude, pressed themselves upon me. I gave myself to meditation, a very necessary defense against the dispersion and distraction brought about by the day’s work and its detail. Read a part of [Christian Frederick] Krause’s book “Urbild der Menschheit” which answered marvelously to my thought and my need. This philosopher has always a beneficent effect upon me; his sweet religious serenity gains upon me and invades me. He inspires me with a sense of peace and infinity.

Still I miss something, common worship, a positive religion, shared with other people. Ah! when will the church to which I belong in heart rise into being? I cannot like Scherer, content myself with being in the right all alone. I must have a less solitary Christianity. My religious needs are not satisfied any more than my social needs, or my needs of affection. Generally I am able to forget them and lull them to sleep. But at times they wake up with a sort of painful bitterness ... I waver between languor and ennui, between frittering myself away on the infinitely little, and longing after what is unknown and distant. It is like the situation which French novelists are so fond of, the story of a vie de province; only the province is all that is not the country of the soul, every place where the heart feels itself strange, dissatisfied, restless and thirsty. Alas! well understood,

58. It is odd that Thoreau uses Eldridge G. Hayden’s last name in the lecture, for his usual practice was to preserve the anonymity of individuals. It is clear from the Nantucket [Inquirer](#) report of the lecture, however, that Thoreau read either the form “H.” — which is the form in the [Inquirer](#) — or “Hayden.” Bradley Dean’s decision to emend the essay copy-text from ‘one of my neighbors’ to ‘Hayden’ was based on the assumption that Thoreau would not have read “H.” in his lecture.

59. Bradley Dean emended the essay copy-text from ‘the yard of another neighbor’ to ‘a rich man’s yard’ on authority of the Nantucket [Inquirer](#) summary of the lecture. The rich man was Samuel G. Wheeler [See [JOURNAL](#) and the last sentence in “LIFE MISSPENT” 6; Wheeler “ran off” in December 1856 after borrowing money from, among others perhaps, Captain Elwell, who “was obliged to take [Wheeler’s] farm to save himself.”]

60. Bradley Dean emended the essay copy-text from ‘the stone of the morning’ to ‘Hayden’s stone’ on authority of the Nantucket [Inquirer](#) summary, which reads “H.’s stone.”

61. Bradley Dean emended the essay copy-text from ‘the teamster’s labor’ to ‘Hayden’s labor’ on authority of the Nantucket [Inquirer](#), which reads “H.’s labor.”



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this place is the earth, this country of one's dreams is heaven, and this suffering is the eternal homesickness, the thirst for happiness.

"In der Beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister," says Goethe. Mâle résignation, this also is the motto of those who are masters of the art of life; "manly," that is to say, courageous, active, resolute, persevering, "resignation," that is to say, self-sacrifice, renunciation, limitation. Energy in resignation, there lies the wisdom of the sons of earth, the only serenity possible in this life of struggle and of combat. In it is the peace of martyrdom, in it too the promise of triumph."

[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed, for [Ellery Channing](#), his [Concord](#) houseplot on Main Street that had formerly been owned by [John Shepard Keyes](#), adjacent to MacKay's lot.⁶²



April 26, Monday: Chickweed (*Stellaria media*) naturalized – shows its humble star-like white flowers now on rather dirty weather worn branches in low damp gardens now– Also the smaller white flowers of the shepherd's purse which is already 6 or 8 inches high in the same places *i.e.* Cheney's Garden. Both according to Dewey introduced & naturalized.

What they call April weather – threatening rain notwithstanding the late long continued rains–

DEWEY

P.M. — Rambled amid the shrub oak hills beyond Haden's.

Lay on the dead grass in a cup-like hollow sprinkled with half dead low shrub oaks– As I lie flat looking close in among the roots of the grass I perceive that its endless ribbon has pushed up about one inch & is green to that extent – such is the length to which the spring has gone here – though when you stand up the green is not perceptible. It is a dull rain dropping & threatening afternoon.– inclining to drowsiness– I feel as if I could go to sleep under a hedge– The landscape wears a subdued tone – quite soothing to the feelings – no glaring colors. I begin now to leave off my great coat.

The frogs at a distance are now so numerous – that instead of the distinct shrill peeps – it is one dreamy sound. It is not easy to tell where or how far off they are – when you have reached their pool they seem to recede as you advance. As you squat by the side of the pool you still see no motion in the water – though your ears ring with the sound – seemingly & probably within 3 feet– I sat for 10 minutes on the watch waving my hand over the water that they might betray themselves – a tortoise with his head out a few feet off watching me all the while – till at last I caught sight of a frog under a leaf – & caught & pocketed him – but when I looked afterward he had escaped. The moment the dog stepped into the water they stopped. They are very shy. Hundreds filled the air with their shrill peep. Yet 2 or 3 could be distinguished by some peculiarity or variation in their note. Are these different?

The *viola ovata* budded. Saw pollywogs 2 or 3 inches long.

62. The house was moved up Main Street and across the street near Love Lane. It was occupied for many years by the Misses Rood, and is now owned by the Roberts family. These survey papers are at the Thoreau Lyceum.



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April 28, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) commented in his journal about his reading either in [Évariste Régis Huc](#)'s 1850 work in French, *SOUVENIRS D'UN VOYAGE DANS LA TARTARIE, LE THIBET ET LA CHINE PENDANT LES ANNÉES 1844, 1845, ET 1846*, or in William Hazlett's translation HUC AND GABET: TRAVELS IN TARTARY, THIBET AND CHINA, DURING THE YEARS 1844-5-6 which had appeared in 1851: "I scarcely know why I am excited when in M. Huc's Book I read of the country of the Mongol Tartars as the "Land of Grass," but I am as much as if I were a cow."

[CHINA](#)



In [Ellery Channing](#)'s journal we find that on this date Thoreau caught a hyla, that is, a tree frog, but it was able to effect an escape.

At 12 o'clock noon a telegraphic fire alarm system, constructed on the basis of plans prepared by Dr. [William Francis Channing](#) and a self-effacing telegraphic engineer, Moses Gerrish Farmer, went into operation in [Boston](#), with the fire alarm office being situated in the City Building at Court Square and Williams Court. Staff included a superintendent, fire alarm operators, and repairmen. The system consisted of a closed electrically supervised assembly of circuits, street fire alarm boxes with code wheels and key breaks determining the number of current interruptions which produced coded signals on local instruments at a central office, where an operator transmitted signals received over separate fire alarm circuits to the appropriate fire house. The system featured telegraphic communication by key and sounder between individual street boxes and the

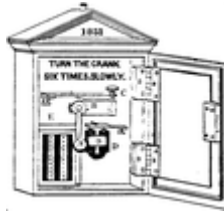


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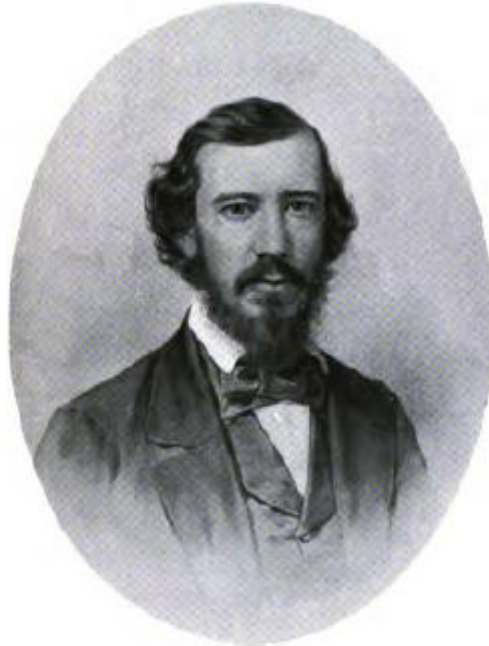
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central office. The system consisted of 40 street boxes connected into 3 box circuits, 3 bell circuits, 16 additional alarm bells for a total of 19, and a crude central office apparatus. The street fire alarm boxes were painted black and had an outside door that was kept locked. Each such box contained a manual crank (the sort of alarm device on which one merely pulled an arm downward would not be introduced, experimentally, until 1864).



Soon after his older brother Peyton's death, [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) appeared at the big brick [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in Sandy Spring, [Maryland](#). He was due to resume his duties as a Methodist circuit-rider but was troubled whether he was "living in full faith up to the Inward Voice." One of the Quakers, [Friend](#) Roger Brooke,⁶³ took him home to dinner and conversation after silent worship:



My uncle Dr. John Henry Daniel said to me, when I was leaving home, "So you are going to be a journeyman soul-saver." I did not begin life with that burden on me, and, when it came, was too young to question whether it was part of me – my hunch – or a pack of outside things like that strapped on Bunyan's pilgrim. My pack was symbolized in my saddle-bags, where the Bible, Emerson's "Essays," Watson's "Theology," Carlyle's "Latter Day Pamphlets," Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," the Methodist Discipline, and Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection" got

63. A relative of the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, the Honorable Roger Brooke Taney, as our Southern correspondent does not hesitate to make clear.



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on harmoniously, – for a time. Dr. Daniel's label, "a journeyman soul-saver," told true in a sense: it was really my own enmeshed soul I had to save. I was struggling at the centre of an invisible web of outer influences and hereditary forces. I was without wisdom. How many blunders I made in my sermons, with which I took so much pains, I know not, but I remember a friendly hint from the wife of the Hon. Bowie Davis that a sermon was too "agrarian." In another case the recoil was more serious; it came through my presiding elder, who said, "From what I hear, a sermon of yours on the new birth was too profound." This troubled me deeply. I had supposed that Jesus meant to be profound, and put much study into the sermon, the only favourable response to which was from an aged negro woman who, long after I had left Methodism, laid her hand on my head, and said, "I never knew what the Lord meant by our being born again until I heard you preach about it, and bless the Lord, it's been plain ever since!" My early training in law courts determined my method of preaching. In preparing a sermon I fixed on some main point which I considered of vital importance, and dealt with it as if I were pleading before judge and jury. This method was not Methodism. I was in continual danger of being "too profound," and though congregations were interested in my sermons, they brought me more reputation for eccentricity than for eloquence. This, however, was not a matter of concern to me. Ambition for fame and popularity was not among my faults. My real mission was personal, – to individuals. In each neighbourhood on my circuit there were some whom I came to know with a certain intimacy, aspiring souls whose confidences were given me. However far away I might be, they rose before me when I was preparing for that appointment; they inspired passages in the sermon. No general applause could give me the happiness felt when these guests of my heart met me with smiles of recognition, or clasped my hand with gratitude.

It was an agricultural region, in which crime and even vices were rare. Slavery existed only in its mildest form, and there was no pauper population to excite my reformatory zeal. Nor was there even any sectarian prejudice to combat; the county was divided up between denominations friendly to each other and hospitable to me. My personal influence was thus necessarily humanized. I could not carry on any *propaganda* of Methodism in the homes of non-Methodist gentlemen and ladies who entertained me, – even had I felt so inclined, ? without showing my church inferior to theirs.

My belief is that I gradually preached myself out of the creeds by trying to prove them by my lawyer-like method. Moreover, I had the habit of cross-examining the sermons of leading preachers, finding statements that in a law court would have told against their case. At a camp-meeting in 1851 I learned that our presiding elder was about to preach on the resurrection of the body. I slipped into his hand the following query: ?

A soldier fallen in the field remains unburied; his body mingles with the sod, springs up in the grass; cattle graze there and



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atoms of the soldier's body become beef; the beef is eaten by a man who suddenly dies while in him are particles of the soldier's body conveyed to him by the grass-fed beef. Thus two men die with the same material substance in them. How can there be an exact resurrection of both of those bodies as they were at the moment of death?

The preacher read out the query, and said, "All things are possible with God." Nothing more. It made a profound impression on me that a divine should take refuge in a phrase. The doctrine in question involved the verbal inspiration of Scripture and the "Apostles' Creed."

I made a note of another thing at this camp-meeting. The Rev. Lyttleton Morgan, an accomplished preacher, declared that in his Passion and Crucifixion Christ suffered all that the whole human race must have suffered in hell to all eternity but for that sacrifice. At dinner some ministers demurred at this doctrine; I maintained that it appeared to be a logical deduction from our theory of the Atonement. But I soon recognized that it was a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Rockville Circuit being near Washington, I was able at times to pass a few days in the capital, where I had relatives and acquaintances. I attended the debates in Congress, and in the Supreme Court, — where I heard Daniel Webster's speech in the famous Gaines case. It was a powerful speech, impressively delivered, but I had sufficient experience in courts to recognize several passages meant for the fashionable audience with which the room was crowded. He was against the appellant, Mrs. Gaines, who was pleading for her legitimacy as well as property, and described his client persistently besieged by litigation as a rock beaten by ocean waves. He drew all eyes on pleasant Myra Gaines, and I remember thinking the metaphor infelicitous. My sympathies were with the lady, and the "rock" might symbolize the stony heart of the man holding on to her property. But I was so interested in Webster's look and manner that, in my ignorance of the evidence, my attention to what he said was fitful, and the speech was obliterated by the thrilling romance rehearsed by the judges in their decisions. For it was in favor of the man holding on to her property. But I was so interested in Webster's look and manner that, in my ignorance of the evidence, my attention to what he said was fitful, and the speech was obliterated by the thrilling romance rehearsed by the judges in their decisions, for it was in two volumes, the minority opinion of Justice Wayne and Justice Daniel (my grand-uncle) in favour of Mrs. Gaines being especially thrilling. No American novelist would venture on such a tale of intrigue, adultery, bigamy, disguises, betrayal, as those justices searched through unshrinkingly, ignoring the company present. On one of my visits to Washington I heard a sermon from the famous Asbury Roszel which lifted the vast audience to exultation and joy. His subject was the kingdom of God and triumphs of the Cross, and he began by declaring that it was universally agreed that ideal government was the rule of one



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supreme and competent individual head. This Carlylean sentiment uttered in the capital of the so-called Republic gave me some food for thought at the time; and I remembered it when I awakened to the anomaly of disowning as a republican the paraphernalia of royalty, while as a preacher I was using texts and hymns about thrones and Crowns and sceptres, and worshipping a king.

My interest in party politics had declined; I began to study large human issues. One matter that I entered into in 1851 was International Copyright. On this subject I wrote an article which appeared in the "National Intelligencer." I took the manuscript to the office, and there saw the venerable Joseph Gales, who founded the paper, and W.W. Seaton, the editor. Mr. Seaton remarked that I was "a very young man to be in holy orders," and after glancing at the article said he was entirely in sympathy with it. In that article I appealed to Senator Sumner to take up the matter, and thenceforth he sent me his speeches.

I little imagined how much personal interest I was to have some years later in Gales and Seaton, who were among the founders of the Unitarian church in Washington. I used sometimes to saunter into the bookshop of Frank Taylor, or that of his brother Hudson Taylor, afterwards intimate Unitarian friends, before I knew that there was a Unitarian church in Washington. From one of them I bought a book that deeply moved me: "The Soul: her Sorrows and her Aspirations. By Francis William Newman." I took this book to heart before I was conscious of my unorthodoxy, nothing in it then suggesting to me that the author was an unbeliever in supernaturalism.

The setting given by Newman's book to Charles Wesley's hymn — "Come, O thou Traveller unknown" — made that hymn my inspiration, and it has been my song in many a night wherein I have wrestled with phantoms.

But my phantoms were not phantasms, and brought no horrors into those beautiful woods and roads of Montgomery County. These were my study. I was wont to start off to my appointments early, in order that I might have no need to ride fast, and when clear of a village, take from my saddlebags my Emerson, my Coleridge, or Newman, and throwing the reins on my horse's neck, read and read, or pause to think on some point.

I remember that in reading Emerson repeatedly I seemed never to read the same essay as before: whether it was the new morning, or that I had mentally travelled to a new point of view, there was always something I had not previously entered into. His thoughts were mother-thoughts, to use Balzac's word. Over the ideas were shining ideals that made the world beautiful to me; the woods and flowers and birds amid which I passed made a continuous chorus for all this poetry and wit and wisdom. And science also; from Emerson I derived facts about nature that filled me with wonder. On one of my visits to Professor Baird, at the Smithsonian Institution, I talked of these statements; he was startled that I should be reading Emerson, with whose writings he was acquainted. At the end of our talk Baird said, "Whatever may be thought of Emerson's particular views of



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nature, there can be no question about the nature in him and in his writings: that is true and beautiful."

A college-mate, Newman Hank, was the preacher on Stafford Circuit, Virginia, and it was arranged that for one round of appointments he and I should exchange circuits. I thus preached for a month among those who had known me from childhood. Though few of them were Methodists, they all came to hear me, and I suppose many were disappointed. I had formerly spoken in their debating societies with the facility of inexperience, but was no longer so fluent.

At Fredericksburg, June 19, I preached to a very large congregation, and was invited to the houses of my old friends (none of them Methodists); but the culminating event was my sermon in our own town, Falmouth, three days later. How often had I sat in that building listening to sermons – Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian – occasionally falling under the spell of some orator who made me think its pulpit the summit of the world! How large that church in my childhood, and how grand its assemblage of all the beauty and wealth of the neighbourhood! When I stood in the pulpit and realized how small the room was, and could recognize every face, and observe every changing expression, – and when I saw before me my parents, my sister and brothers, with almost painful anxiety in their loving eyes, – strange emotions came to me; the first of my phantoms drew near and whispered, "Are you sure, perfectly sure, that the seeds you are about to sow in these hearts that cherish you are the simple truth of your own heart and thought?" My text was, "Thou wilt show me the path of life;" my theme, that every human being is on earth for a purpose. The ideal life was that whose first words were, "I must be about my Father's business," and the last, "It is finished."

When we reached home my uncle Dr. John Henry Daniel said, "There was a vein of Calvinism running all through that sermon." "I hate Calvinism," cried I. "No matter: the idea of individual predestination was in your sermon. And it may be true." My father was, I believe, gratified by the sermon, but he said, with a laugh, "One thing is certain, Monc: should the devil ever aim at a Methodist preacher, you'll be safe!"

In this sermon, which ignored hell and heaven, and dealt with religion as the guide and consecration of life on earth, I had unconsciously taken the first steps in my "Earthward Pilgrimage." When I returned to my own circuit, a burden was on me that could not roll off before the cross.

Our most cultured congregation was at Brookville, a village named after the race of which Roger Brooke was at this time the chief. Our pretty Methodist church there was attended by some Episcopalian families – Halls, Magruders, Donalds, Coulters – who adopted me personally. The finest mansion was that of John Hall, who insisted on my staying at his house when I was in the neighbourhood. He was an admirable gentleman and so friendly with the Methodists that they were pleased at the hospitality shown their minister. Mrs. Hall, a grand woman intellectually



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and physically, was a daughter of Roger Brooke. She had been "disowned" by the Quakers for marrying "out of meeting," but it was a mere formality; they all loved her just as much. Her liberalism had leavened the families around her. She was not interested in theology, and never went to any church, but encouraged her lovely little daughters (of ten and twelve years) to enjoy Sunday like any other day. After some months she discovered that some of my views resembled those of her father, and desired me to visit him.

There was a flourishing settlement of Hicksite Quakers at Sandy Spring, near Brookville, but I never met one of them, nor knew anything about them. "Hicksite" was a meaningless word to me. "Uncle Roger," their preacher, was spoken of throughout Montgomery County as the best and wisest of men, and I desired to meet him. When I afterwards learned that "Hicksite" was equivalent to "unorthodox," it was easy to understand why none of them should seek the acquaintance of a Methodist minister. The Quakers assembled twice a week, and happening one Wednesday to pass their meeting-house, I entered, — impelled by curiosity. Most of those present were in Quaker dress, which I did not find unbecoming for the ladies, perhaps because the wearers were refined and some of them pretty. After a half-hour's silence a venerable man of very striking appearance, over six feet in height and his long head full of force, arose, laid aside his hat, and in a low voice, in strange contrast with his great figure, uttered these words: "Walk in the light while ye are children of the light, lest darkness come upon you." Not a word more. He resumed his seat and hat, and after a few minutes' silence shook hands with the person next him; then all shook hands and the meeting ended.

I rode briskly to my appointment, and went on with my usual duties. But this my first Quaker experience had to be digested. The old gentleman, with his Solomonic face (it was Roger Brooke), who had broken the silence with but one text, had given that text, by its very insulation and modification, a mystical suggestiveness.

After I had attended the Quaker meeting several times, it was heard of by my Methodist friends. One of these, a worthy mechanic, told me that Samuel Janney had preached in the Quaker meeting, and once said that "the blood of Jesus could no more save man than the blood of a bullock." This brother's eyes were searching though kindly. Roger Brooke belonged to the same family as that of Roger Brooke Taney, then chief justice of the United States. His advice, opinion, arbitration, were sought for in all that region. Despite antislavery and rationalistic convictions, he leavened all Montgomery County with tolerance.⁶⁴ One morning as I was riding off from the Quaker meeting, a youth overtook me and said uncle Roger wished to speak to me. I turned and approached the old gentleman's carriole. He said, "I have seen thee at one or two of our meetings. If thee can find it

64. Helen Clark, daughter of the Right Hon. John Bright, showed me a diary written by Mr. Bright's grandmother, Rachel Wilson, while travelling in America in 1768-69. She was a much esteemed Quaker preacher, and gives a pleasant account of her visit to the Friends at Sandy Spring, where she was received in the home of Roger Brooke. This was the grandfather of "uncle Roger."



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convenient to go home with us to dinner, we shall be glad to have thee." The faces of his wife and daughter-in-law beamed their welcome, and I accepted the invitation. The old mansion, "Brooke Grove," contained antique furniture, and the neatness bespoke good housekeeping. So also did the dinner, for these Maryland Quakers knew the importance of good living to high thinking.

There was nothing sanctimonious about this home of the leading Quaker. Uncle Roger had a delicate humour, and the ladies beauty and wit. The bonnet and shawl laid aside, there appeared the perfectly fitting "mouse-colour" gown, of rich material, with unfigured lace folded over the neck: at a fancy ball it might be thought somewhat coquettish.

They were fairly acquainted with current literature, and though not yet introduced to Emerson, were already readers of Carlyle. I gained more information about the country, about the interesting characters, about people in my own congregations, than I had picked up in my circuit-riding. After dinner uncle Roger and I were sitting alone on the veranda, taking our smoke, — he with his old-fashioned pipe, — and he mentioned that one of his granddaughters had rallied him on having altered a Scripture text in the meeting. "In the simplicity of my heart I said what came to me, and answered her that if it was not what is written in the Bible I hope it is none the less true." I afterwards learned that he had added in his reply, "Perhaps it was the New Testament writer who did not get the words quite right." I asked him what was the difference between "Hicksite" and "Orthodox Quakers; but he turned it off with an anecdote of one of his neighbours who, when asked the same question, had replied, "Well, you see, the orthodox Quakers will insist that the Devil has horns, while we say the Devil is an ass." I spoke of the Methodist ministers being like the Quakers "called by the Spirit" to preach, and he said, with a smile, "But when you go to an appointment what if the Spirit does n't move you to say anything?"

Uncle Roger had something else on his mind to talk to me about. He inquired my impression of the Quaker neighbourhood generally. I said he was the first Quaker I had met, but the assembly I had seen in their meeting had made an impression on me of intelligence and refinement. For the rest their houses were pretty and their farms bore witness to better culture than those in other parts of the county. "That I believe is generally conceded to us," he answered; "and how does thee explain this superiority of our farms?" I suggested that it was probably due to their means, and to the length of time their farms had been under culture. The venerable man was silent for a minute, then fixed on me his shrewd eyes and said, "Has it ever occurred to thee that it may be because of our paying wages to all who work for us?"

For the first time I found myself face to face with an avowed abolitionist! My interest in politics had lessened, but I remained a Southerner, and this economic arraignment of slavery



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came with some shock. He saw this and turned from the subject to talk of their educational work, advising me to visit Fairhill, the Friends' school for young ladies.

The principal of the school was [William Henry Farquhar](#), and on my first visit there I heard from him an admirable lecture in his course on History. He had adopted the novel method of beginning his course with the present day and travelling backward. He had begun with the World's Fair and got as far as Napoleon I, - subject of the lecture I heard. It was masterly. And the whole school - the lovely girls in their tidy Quaker dresses, their sweet voices add manners, the elegance and order everywhere - filled me with wonder. By this garden of beauty and culture I had been passing for six months, never imagining the scene within.

The lecture closed the morning exercises, and I had an opportunity for addressing the pupils. I was not an intruder, but taken there by Mrs. Charles Farquhar, daughter of Roger Brooke and sister-in-law of the principal, so I did not have the excuse that it would not be "in season" to try and save some of these sweet sinners from the flames of hell. It was the obvious duty of the Methodist preacher on Rockville Circuit to cry, - "O ye fair maids of Fair Hill, this whited sepulchre of unbelief, - not one of you aware of your depravity, nor regenerate through the blessed bloodshed - your brilliant teacher is luring you to hell!" Those soft eyes of yours will be lifted in torment, those rosebud mouths call for a drop of water to cool your parched tongues; all your affection, gentleness, and virtues are but filthy rags, unless you believe in the Trinity, the blood atonement, and in the innate corruption of every heart in this room!"

But when the junior preacher is made, the susceptible youth is not unmade. According to Lucian, Cupid was reproached by his mother Venus for permitting the Muses to remain single, and invisibly went to their abode with his arrows; but when he discovered the beautiful arts with which the Muses were occupied, he had not the heart to disturb them, and softly crept away. This "pagan" parable of a little god's momentary godlessness may partly suggest why no gospel arrows were shot that day in Fairhill school; but had I to rewrite Lucian's tale I should add that Cupid went off himself stuck all over with arrows from the Muses' eyes.

However, Cupid had nothing to do with the softly feathered and imperceptible arrows that were going into my Methodism from the Quakers, in their homes even more than in this school. I found myself introduced to a circle of refined and cultivated ladies whose homes were cheerful, whose charities were constant, whose manners were attractive, whose virtues were recognized by their most orthodox neighbours; yet *what I was preaching as the essentials of Christianity were unknown among them*. These beautiful homes were formed without terror of hell, without any cries of what shall we do to be saved? How had these lovely maidens and young men been trained to every virtue, to domestic



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affections and happiness? I never discussed theology with them; but their lives, their beautiful spirit, their homes, did away with my moral fears, and as the dogmas paled, creedless freedom began to flush with warm life. These good and sweet women, who said no word against my dogmas, unconsciously to themselves or me charmed me away from the dogmatic habitat.

When I left the Baltimore Conference, the Quakers were given by many Methodists the discredit of having undermined my faith, but their only contribution to my new faith was in enabling me to judge the unorthodox tree by its fruits of culture and character. If theology were ever discussed by them, it was I who introduced the subject. They had no proselyting spirit. I thought of joining the Quaker Society, but Roger Brooke advised me not to do so. "Thee will find among us," he said, "a good many prejudices, for instance, against music, of which thou art fond, and while thou art mentally growing would it be well to commit thyself to any organized society?"⁶⁵

How often have I had to ponder those words of Jesus, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Men do not forsake their God, he forsakes them. It is the God of the creeds that first forsakes us. More and more the dogmas come into collision with plain truth: every child's clear eyes contradict the guilty phantasy of inherited depravity, every compassionate sentiment abhors the notions of hell and salvation by human sacrifice. Yet our tender associations, our affections, are intertwined with these falsities, and we cling to them till they forsake us. For more than a year I was like one flung from a foundered ship holding on to a raft till it went to pieces, then to a floating log till buffeted off, — to every stick, every straw. One after another the gods forsake us, — forsake our common sense, our reason, our justice, our humanity.

In the autumn of my first ministerial year I had to take stock of what was left me that could honestly be preached in Methodist pulpits. About the Trinity I was not much concerned; the morally repulsive dogmas, and atrocities ascribed to the deity in the Bible became impossible. What, then, was "salvation"? I heard from Roger Brooke this sermon, "He shall save the people from their sins, — not *in* them." It is the briefest sermon I ever heard, but it gave me a Christianity for one year, for it was sustained by my affections. They were keen, and the thought of turning my old home in Falmouth into a house of mourning, and grieving the hearts of my friends in Carlisle, and congregations that so trusted me, appeared worse than death. My affections were at times rack and thumbscrew.

I had no friend who could help me on the intellectual, moral, and philosophical points involved. Roger Brooke and William Henry Farquhar were rationalists by birthright; they had never had any dogmas to unlearn, nor had they to suffer the pain of being sundered from relatives and friends. In my loneliness I stretched appealing hands to Emerson. After his death my friend

65. When Benjamin Hallowell, the eminent teacher in Alexandria, Va., came to reside at Sandy Spring, I had many interesting talks with him, but found that even his philosophical mind could not free itself from the prejudice against musical culture. The musical faculty, he admitted, had some uses — e.g., that mothers might sing lullabies.



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Edward Emerson sent me my letters to his father, and the first is dated at Rockville, November 4, 1851. Without any conventional opening (how could I call my prophet "Dear Sir"!) my poor trembling letter begins with a request to know where the "Dial" can be purchased, and proceeds: -

I will here take the liberty of saying what nothing but a concern as deep as Eternity should make me say. I am a minister of the Christian Religion, - the only way for the world to reënter Paradise, in my earnest belief. I have just commenced that office at the call of the Holy Ghost, now in my twentieth year. About a year ago I commenced reading your writings. I have read them all and studied them sentence by sentence. I have shed many burning tears over them; because you gain my assent to Laws which, when I see how they would act on the affairs of life, I have not courage to practise. By the Law sin revives and I die. I sometimes feel as if you made for me a second Fall from which there is no redemption by any atonement.

To this there came a gracious response: -

Concord, Mass., 13th November, 1851.

Dear Sir, - I fear you will not be able, except at some chance auction, to obtain any set of the "Dial." In fact, smaller editions were printed of the later and latest numbers, which increases the difficulty.

I am interested by your kind interest in my writings, but you have not let me sufficiently into your own habit of thought, to enable me to speak to it with much precision. But I believe what interests both you and me most of all things, and whether we know it or not, is the morals of intellect; in other words, that no man is worth his room in the world who is not commanded by a legitimate object of thought. The earth is full of frivolous people, who are bending their whole force and the force of nations on trifles, and these are baptized with every grand and holy name, remaining, of course, totally inadequate to occupy any mind; and so sceptics are made. A true soul will disdain to be moved except by what natively commands it, though it should go sad and solitary in search of its master a thousand years. The few superior persons in each community are so by their steadiness to reality and their neglect of appearances. This is the euphrasy and rue that purge the intellect and ensure insight. Its full rewards are slow but sure; and yet I think it has its reward in the instant, inasmuch as simplicity and grandeur are always better than dapperness. But I will not spin out these saws farther, but hasten to thank you for your frank and friendly letter, and to wish you the best deliverance in that contest to which every soul must go alone.

Yours, in all good hope,



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R.W. EMERSON.

This letter I acknowledged with a longer one (December 12, 1851), in which I say: "I have very many correspondents, but I might almost say yours is the only Letter that was ever written to me."

Early in 1852 Kossuth visited Washington, and enthusiasm for him and his cause carried me there. The Washington pulpits had not yet said anything about slaves at our own doors, but it was easy to be enthusiastic for liberty as far away as Hungary, and so the preachers all paid homage to Kossuth. I stopped at the house of Rev. Lyttleton Morgan, whose wife was an authoress, and her sister, Carrie Dallam, the most attractive friend I had in Washington. With her I went to the New Year "levee" at the White House, and also to call on the widow of President John Quincy Adams, a handsome and entertaining old lady. I also think it was then and by her that I was taken to see the widow of Alexander Hamilton. Mayor Seaton entered, and in courtly style took her hand in both of his and kissed it, bending low. She was still (her ninety-fifth year) a cheerful and handsome lady, gracious and dignified. Her narratives of society in that city, as she remembered it, sounded like ancient legends. I remember particularly her account of a president's drawing-room in the time of President Jackson. Mrs. Hamilton was, I believe, the first to introduce ices into the country. At any rate, she told me that President Jackson, having tasted ices at her house, resolved to have some at his next reception, — for in those days so simple and small were the receptions that refreshments were provided. Mrs. Hamilton related that at the next reception the guests were seen melting each spoonful of ice-cream with their breath preparatory to swallowing it! The reception itself was, she said, more like a large tea-party than anything else.

Kossuth was a rather small man with a pale face, a soft eye, a poetic and pathetic expression, and a winning voice. He spoke English well, and his accent added to his eloquence by reminding us of his country, for which he was pleading. I followed him about Washington, to the Capitol, the White House, the State Department, etc., listening with rapt heart to his speeches, and weeping for Hungary. I find this note (undated): "Kossuth received to-day a large number of gentlemen and ladies, to whom he discoursed eloquently of the wrongs of Hungary. Many were moved to tears, and some ladies presented their rings and other trinkets for the cause of the oppressed. A large slave-auction took place at Alexandria just across the river on the same day."⁶⁶ But, alas, I presently had a tragedy of my own to weep for, the death of my elder brother, Peyton. He had long suffered from the *sequelæ* of scarlatina, but, nevertheless, had studied law and begun practice. During the summer of 1851 he visited me on my circuit (Rockville) and accompanied me to St. James Camp-

66. When this entry was written no word had reached me of the vain efforts of abolitionists to get from Kossuth an expression of sympathy with their cause. The "independence" pleaded for by Kossuth had no more to do with personal freedom than this had to do with the "independence" fought for in 1776 by American slaveholders, who forced Jefferson to strike out of the Declaration its antislavery section.



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meeting. He was deeply affected on hearing me preach, and approached the "mourner's bench." No "conversion" occurred, and he returned home (Falmouth) in a sad mood. Then there arose in him the abhorrence of dogmas and the ideal of a church of pure reason, absolutely creedless and uneclesiastical, uniting all mankind. Alas, little did he know that his brother, even myself, was at that moment in mortal inward struggle with a creed! But this I learned only after his death. For at that critical moment he died of typhoid fever, — March 18, 1852, fourteen days after his twenty-second birthday. There was bequeathed to my later years the miserable reflection that possibly he might have survived the attack but for the lowering of his strength by agitation under my preaching at the camp-meeting.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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April 28, Wednesday: I scarcely know why I am excited when in M. [Huc](#)'s Book I read of the country of the Mongol Tartars on the "Land of Grass", but I am as much as if I were a cow.

2 1/2 Pm to Cliffs & Heywood's Brook.

Are not the flowers which appear earliest in the spring the most primitive & simplest? They have been in this town thus far, as I have observed them this spring, putting them down in the order in which I think they should be named.

Using Grays names—

Symplocarpus Foetidus

Alnus Incana Ap. 11

“ Serrulata 8th

Acer Rubrum 9th one by Red Bridge

Willow earliest 12

Ulmus Americana 15 one — Cheney's (others 10 days or 14 later)

Populus Tremuloides 15

Corylus Americana 16 perhaps before the last

Carex Pennsylvanica 22

Caltha Palustris 25 many

Stellaria Media 26 Cheney's garden

Capsella Bursa Pastoris 26 “

Taraxacum Dens-leonis 25 one in water (seen by another the 20th)

Equisetum Arvense 25 in water

Gnaphalium Purpureum 27

Saxifraga Virginiensis 27

Antennaria Plantaginifolia 27

Ranunculus Fascicularis 28 only 2

All but the 3d 8th 11th 12th observed in the **very best** season. & these within a day (?) of their flowering. I observe that the first six are decidedly water or water-loving plants & the 10, 13th, & 14th were found in the water — & are equally if not more confined to that element. — — — The 7th & 8th belong to the cooler zones of the earth — the 7th ac. to Emerson as far N as 64° — & comes up (is it this?) on burnt lands first & will grow in




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dry cool dreary places.---- The 9th on a dry warm rocky hill-side the earliest(?) grass to blossom also the 18th--the 11th & 12 in cold damp gardens -- like the earth first made dry land. -- --the 15th & 17 on dry (scantly clad with grass) fields & hills -- hardy-- --the 16th sunny bare rocks -- in seams on moss where also in a day or two the columbine will bloom. The 18th is also indebted to the warmth of the rocks-- This may perhaps be nearly the order of the world's creation-- Thus we have in the spring of the year the spring of the world represented-- Such were the first localities afforded for plants --Water-bottoms -- bare rocks -- & scantily clad lands -- & land recently bared of water.

The spotted tortoise is spotted on shell head --tail --& legs. Fresh leaves of a *Neottia* pale & not distinctly veined. Red solomon seal berries on their short stems prostrate on the dead leaves, some of them plump still. One man has turned his cows out to pasture. Have not seen the Slate col. snowbird [**Dark-eyed Junco**  *Junco hyemalis*] for a few days. I am getting my greatcoat off, but it is a cold & wintry day -- with snow clouds appearing to draw water, but cold water surely or out of the north side of the well. a few flakes in the air -- drawing snow as well as water. From fair Haven the landscape all in shadow apparently to the base of the mts -- but the Peterboro hills are in sun shine and unexpectedly are white with snow (no snow here unless in some hollows in the woods) reflecting the sun -- more obvious for the sun shine-- I never saw them appear so near. It is startling thus to look into winter.

How suddenly the flowers bloom -- 2 or 3 days ago I could not or did not find the leaves of the crowfoot. Today not knowing it well I looked in vain. --till at length in the very warmest nook in the grass above the rocks of the Cliff -- I found 2 bright yellow blossoms which betrayed the inconspicuous leaves & all. The spring flowers wait not to perfect their leaves before they expand their blossoms. The blossom in so many cases precedes the leaf so with poetry? --they flash out. In the most favorable locality you will find flowers earlier than the May goers will believe. This year at least one flower (of several) hardly precedes another -- but as soon as the storms were over & pleasant weather came -- all bloomed at once. having been retarded so long.-- This **appears** to be particularly true of the herbaceous flowers. How much does this happen every year?

There is no important change in the color of the **woods** yet-- There are fewer dry leaves -- buds color the maples -- and perhaps the bark on some last year's shoots as the willows are brighter & some **willows** covered with catkins--& even alders maples elms & poplars show at a distance. The earth has now a greenish tinge-- & the ice of course has universally given place to water for a long time past. These are general aspects-- The *Veratrum Viride* at Well meadow is 15 or 16 inches high -- the most of a growth this year. The angelica? at the Corner Spring is pretty near it.

I suppose the geese [**Canada Goose**  *Branta canadensis*] are all gone. And the ducks? Did the Snow birds [**Dark-eyed Junco**  *Junco hyemalis*] go off with the pleasant weather. Standing above the 1st little pond E of Fair Haven-- This bright reflecting water surface is seen plainly at a higher level than the distant pond --It has a singular but pleasant effect on the beholder to see considerable sheets of water standing at different levels.-- Pleasant to see lakes like platters full of water. Found a large cockle (?) shell by the shore of this little pond-- It reminds me that all the earth is sea-shore-- The sight of these little shells inland It is a beach I stand on. Is the male willow on the E End of this pondlet -- catkins about 3/4 inch long & just bursting commonly on the side & all before any leaves, the Brittle Gray W. S. grisea.

That small flat downy gnaphalium in sandy paths -- is it the fragrant life-everlasting.

The Andromeda requires the sun-- It is now merely a dull reddish brown -- with light (greyish?) from the upper surface of the leaves.

Frogspawn a mass of transparent jelly bigger than the two fists composed of contiguous globules or eyes with each a little squirming pollywog? in the centre 1/3 inch long -- Walden is yellowish (apparently) next the shore where you see the sand -- then green in still shallow water -- then or generally deep blue. This as well under the R.R. and now that the trees have not leaved out -- as under pines.

That last long storm brought down a coarse elephantine sand foliage in the Cut. Slumbrous ornaments for a cave or subterranean temple, such as at Elephantium? I see no willow leaves yet-- A maple by Heywood's meadow has opened its sterile blossoms -- why is this (and maples generally) so much later than the Red Bridge one?

A week or more ago I made this list of **early** willows in Mass according to Gray putting Emerson in brackets--
Salix tristis. Sage Willow

- S. humilis (Low Bush Willow) S. Muhlenbergiensis. S Conifera.
- S. discolor (Glaucus Willow) [2 Colored Willow.--Bog Willow] S. Sensitiva.
- S. eriocephala (Silky Headed Willow) S. Prinooides?
S crassa. "closely resembles the last" i.e. S. discolor [Wolly Headed Swamp]



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S. sericea (Silky-leaved Willow) S. Grisea. [Brittle-Gray]

At Lancy, a village near Geneva, [Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “Once more I feel the spring languor creeping over me, the spring air about me. This morning the poetry of the scene, the song of the birds, the tranquil sunlight, the breeze blowing over the fresh green fields, all rose into and filled my heart. Now all is silent. O silence, thou art terrible! terrible as that calm of the ocean which lets the eye penetrate the fathomless abysses below. Thou showest us in ourselves depths which make us giddy, inextinguishable needs, treasures of suffering. Welcome tempests! at least they blur and trouble the surface of these waters with their terrible secrets. Welcome the passion blasts which stir the wares of the soul, and so veil from us its bottomless gulfs! In all of us, children of dust, sons of time, eternity inspires an involuntary anguish, and the infinite, a mysterious terror. We seem to be entering a kingdom of the dead. Poor heart, thy craving is for life, for love, for illusions! And thou art right after all, for life is sacred.

In these moments of tête-à-tête with the infinite, how different life looks! How all that usually occupies and excites us becomes suddenly puerile, frivolous and vain. We seem to ourselves mere puppets, marionettes, strutting seriously through a fantastic show, and mistaking gewgaws for things of great price. At such moments, how everything becomes transformed, how everything changes! Berkeley and Fichte seem right, Emerson too; the world is but an allegory; the idea is more real than the fact; fairy tales, legends, are as true as natural history, and even more true, for they are emblems of greater transparency. The only substance properly so called is the soul. What is all the rest? Mere shadow, pretext, figure, symbol, or dream. Consciousness alone is immortal, positive, perfectly real. The world is but a firework, a sublime phantasmagoria, destined to cheer and form the soul. Consciousness is a universe, and its sun is love....

Already I am falling back into the objective life of thought. It delivers me from — shall I say? no, it deprives me of the intimate life of feeling. Reflection solves reverie and burns her delicate wings. This is why science does not make men, but merely entities and abstractions. Ah, let us feel and live and beware of too much analysis! Let us put spontaneity, naïveté, before reflection, experience before study; let us make life itself our study. Shall I then never have the heart of a woman to rest upon? a son in whom to live again, a little world where I may see flowering and blooming all that is stifled in me? I shrink and draw back, for fear of breaking my dream. I have staked so much on this card that I dare not play it. Let me dream again....

Do no violence to yourself, respect in yourself the oscillations of feeling. They are your life and your nature; One wiser than you ordained them. Do not abandon yourself altogether either to instinct or to will. Instinct is a siren, will a despot. Be neither the slave of your impulses and sensations of the moment, nor of an abstract and general plan; be open to what life brings from within and without, and welcome the unforeseen; but give to your life unity, and bring the unforeseen within the lines of your plan. Let what is natural in you raise itself to the level of the spiritual, and let the spiritual become once more natural. Thus will your development be harmonious, and the peace of heaven will shine upon your brow; always on condition that your peace is made, and that you have climbed your Calvary.

Afternoon — Shall I ever enjoy again those marvelous reveries of past days, as, for instance, once, when I was still quite a youth, in the early dawn, sitting among the ruins of the castle of Faucigny; another time in the mountains above Lavey, under the midday sun, lying under a tree and visited by three butterflies; and again another night on the sandy shore of the North Sea, stretched full length upon the beach, my eyes wandering over the Milky Way? Will they ever return to me, those grandiose, immortal, cosmogonic dreams, in which one seems to carry the world in one’s breast, to touch the stars, to possess the infinite? Divine moments, hours of ecstasy, when thought flies from world to world, penetrates the great enigma, breathes with a respiration large, tranquil, and profound, like that of the ocean, and hovers serene and boundless like the blue heaven! Visits from the muse, Urania, who traces around the foreheads of those she loves the phosphorescent nimbus of contemplative power, and who pours into their hearts the tranquil intoxication, if not the authority of genius,



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

moments of irresistible intuition in which a man feels himself great like the universe and calm like a god! From the celestial spheres down to the shell or the moss, the whole of creation is then submitted to our gaze, lives in our breast, and accomplishes in us its eternal work with the regularity of destiny and the passionate ardor of love. What hours, what memories! The traces which remain to us of them are enough to fill us with respect and enthusiasm, as though they had been visits of the Holy Spirit. And then, to fall back again from these heights with their boundless horizons into the muddy ruts of triviality! what a fall! Poor Moses! Thou too sawest undulating in the distance the ravishing hills of the promised land, and it was thy fate nevertheless to lay thy weary bones in a grave dug in the desert! Which of us has not his promised land, his day of ecstasy and his death in exile? What a pale counterfeit is real life of the life we see in glimpses, and how these flaming lightnings of our prophetic youth make the twilight of our dull monotonous manhood more dark and dreary!”

April 30, Friday: [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) considered that he had completed his manuscript of THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE (then titled “Hollingsworth” and already being advertized by Boston’s Ticknor, Reed and Fields as such although actually at this point the book ended at Chapter XXVIII with the events at Zenobia’s grave in Blithedale pasture, there as yet existing no Chapter XXIX with its reference to a confession by Miles Coverdale).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked with [Ellery Channing](#) out Boston or Lexington Road and the Cambridge Turnpike, taking in Saw Mill Brook and venturing onto C. Smith’s highlands. At some point along the way Channing had occasion to discover that Thoreau considered it inappropriate to attempt to frighten away territorial dogs by throwing rocks, preferring instead to attempt to learn to negotiate the hostilities on the dog’s own terms.



April 30th: 2 Pm Down the Boston Road & across to Turnpike &c &c. The elms are now generally in blossom & Cheney’s elm still also. The last has leaf buds which show the white. Now before any leaves have appeared their blossoms clothe the trees with a rich warm brown color – which serves partially for foliage to the street walker. & makes the tree more obvious. Held in the hand the blossoms of some of the elms is quite rich & variegated – now purple & yellowish-specked with the dark anthers &c & light stigmas (?) I know not why some should be so much earlier than others. It is a beautiful day – a mild air – & all farmers & gardeners out & at work– Now is the time to set trees & consider what things you will plant in your garden– Yesterday I observed many fields newly plowed – the yellow soil looking very warm & dry in the sun.–& one boy had fixed his hand-kerchief on a stick & elevated it on the yoke where it flapped or streamed & rippled gaily in the wind as he drove his oxen dragging a harrow over the ploughed field. I see now what I should call a small sized bull-frog in the brook in front of Alcotts house that was. The sweet gale is in blossom. Its rich reddish brown buds have expanded into yellowish & brown blossoms – all male blossoms that I see. Those handsome buds that I have observed are the male blossom buds then This has undoubtedly been in bloom a day or two in some places. I saw yesterday a large sized water-bug – today many in the brook– Yesterday a trout to-day shiners I think. The huckleberry bird sings. When I look hence to the hills on the Boston Road under which the inhabitants are beginning to plant in their gardens – the air is so fine & peculiar – that I seem to see the hills & woods through a mirage.– I am doubtful about their distance & exact form & elevation. The sound of a spade too sounds musical on the spring air. (To night for the first time I sit without a fire) One plougher in a red flannel shirt who looks picturesquely under the hill, suggests that our dress is not commonly of such colors as to adorn the landscape. (To night & last night the speaker’s light is seen on the meadows he has been delayed by the height of the water) I like very well to walk here on the low ground in the meadow – to see the churches & houses in the horizon against the sky & the now very blue mt wachusetts seeming to rise from amid them. When you get still further off still on the lowest ground you see distant barns & houses against the horizon & the mt appears to preside over this vale alone, which the adjacent hills on rt & left fence in. The season advances by fits & starts you would not believe that there could be so many degrees to it– If you have had foul & cold weather still some advance has been made as you find when the fair weather comes – new deliveries of warmth & summeriness – which make yesterday seem far off–& the dog days or mid-summer incredibly nearer. Yesterday I would not have believed that there could have been such an improvement on that day as this is –

BRONSON ALCOTT



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short of mid summer or June. My pocket being full of the flowers of the maple – elm &c my hand-kerchief by its fragrance reminded me of some – fruitful or flowery bank I know not where. A pleasant little green knoll N of the turnpike near the Lincoln line I thought that the greenness of the sward there on the highest ground was occasioned by the decay of the roots of 2 oaks whos old stumps still remained– The greenness covered a circle about 2 rods in diameter. It was too late to feel the influence of the drip of the trees. We have had no such summer heat – this year (unless when I was burned in the deep cut)– Yet there is an agreeable balmy wind. I see here while looking for the first violet those little heaps made by the mole cricket (?) or by worms (?)– I observe to-day the bright crimson? perfect flowers of the maple – crimson styles – sepals & petals (crimson or scarlet?) whose leaves are not yet – very handsome in the sun as you look to the sky – & the hum of small bees from them. So much color have they. Crossing the Turnpike we entered Smiths highlands. Dodging behind a swell of land to avoid the men who were ploughing – I saw unexpectedly (when I looked to see if we were concealed by the field) the blue mts line in the west (the whole intermediate earth & towns being concealed–) this greenish field for a fore ground sloping upward a few rods–& then those grand mts seen over it in the back ground so blue – sea shore – earth shore – & warm as it is covered with snow which reflected the sun. Then when I turned I saw in the east just over the woods the modest pale cloud like moon 2/3 full – looking spirit like on these day-light scenes.⁶⁷ Such a sight excites me the earth is worthy to inhabit. The far river reach from this hill– It is not so placid a blue – as if with a film of azure over it today however. The more remote the water the lighter the blue perchance. It is like a lake in Tartary – there our camels will find water. Here is a rock made to sit on. Large & inviting, which you do not fear to crush. I hear the flicker & the huckleberry bird– Yet no leaves apparent. This in some measure corresponds to the fine auttumn weather after the leaves have fallen– Though there is a different kind of promise now than then. We are now going out into the field to work – then we were going into the house to think. I love to see alders & dog wood instead of peachtrees. May we not see the melted snow lapsing over the rocks on the **mts** in the sun as well as snow? The white surfaces appear declivitous. While we sit here I hear for the first time the flies **buzz** so dronishly in the air. I see travellers like mere dark objects on the Yellow road afar – (the turnpike) Hosmers house & cottage under its elms & on the Summit of green smooth slopes looks like a terrestrial paradise the abode of peace & domestic happiness. Far over the woods westward a shining vane – glimmering in the sun. At Saw Mill run the Samp(?) Goose bery is it – is partly leaved out– This being in the shade of the woods (and not like the thimble berry in a warm & sunny place methinks is the earliest shrub or tree that shows **leaves**.

The Missouri currant in gardens is equally forward. the cultivated gooseberry nearly so – the Lilack not so. The neatly & closely folded plaited leaves of the hellebore are rather handsome objects now– As you pull them apart they emit a slight marshy scent some what like the skunk cabbage– They are tender–& dewy within – folded fan-like. I hear a wood-thrush [**Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus***⁶⁸] here with a fine metallic ring to his note. This sound most adequately expresses the immortal beauty & wildness of the woods. I go in search of him. He sounds no nearer. On a low bough of a small maple near the brook in the swamp he sits with ruffled feathers singing more low or with less power – as it were ventriloquising for though I am scarcely more than a rod off – he seems further off than ever. Caught 3 little peeping frogs – when I approached & my shadow fell on the water I heard a peculiarly trilled & more rapidly vibrated note (somewhat in kind like that which a hen makes to warn her chickens when a hawk goes over) & most stopped peeping & another trill & all stopped. It seemed to be a note of alarm. I caught one– It proved to be two coupled. They remained together in my hand. This sound has connexion with their loves probably. (I hear a trilled sound from a frog this evening. It is my dreaming mid summer frog, & he seems to be toward the depot). I find them generally sitting on the dead leaves near the waters edge from which they leap into the water. On the hill behind Hosmers 1/2 hour befor sunset The hill on the Boston road is very handsome with its regular promontories.–& the smokes now seen against it rising from the chimneys – what time the laborer takes his tea. The robins [**American Robin *Turdus migratorius***] sing powerfully on the elms – the little frogs peep – the wood-pecker’s harsh & long continued cry is heard from the woods – the huckleberry birds – simple sonorous trill. The ploughed land shines where a drag has passed over it. It is a pleasant place for a house because you overlook the road and the near land seems to run into the meadow. Saw male willow catkins in Tuttle’s lane now just out of bloom about 2 inches long.– The flower of some of the earliest elms is by no means to be despised at this season– It is conspicuous & rich in any nosegay that can now be made.– The female plants of the sweet gale are rare? here. The scales of the male catkins are “set with amber colored resinous dots” Emerson–

HUC

67. The moon would be full on May 2nd.

68. Helen Gere Cruickshank reports: “Though Thoreau recognized the hermit thrush, he used the inclusive term ‘wood thrush’ for all the beautiful thrush songs he heard. This is not surprising, for his two most important references, Wilson and Audubon, both wrote that the hermit thrush was destitute of song. Some of the selections included under wood thrush may refer to the hermit thrush, but since there is not enough information to be sure, all are left under the preceeding heading except April selections and that of May 3, 1852. The hermit thrush arrives in Concord in late March or early April, but the wood thrush is not expected before May 5.”



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

May 4, Tuesday: [Ellery Channing](#) arrived in Provincetown, intending to walk Cape Cod alone.
However, he changed his mind and stayed in Provincetown.

[Henry Thoreau](#) made an entry in his journal “This excitement about [Kossuth](#) is not interesting to me, it is so



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superficial....” that he was later to copy into his early lecture “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” as:

[Paragraph 71] That excitement about Kossuth, consider how characteristic, but superficial, it was! — only another kind of politics or dancing. Men were making speeches to him all over the country, but each expressed only the thought, or the want of thought, of the multitude. No man stood on truth. They were merely banded together, as usual, one leaning on another, and all together on nothing; as the Hindoos made the world rest on an elephant, the elephant on a tortoise, and the tortoise on a serpent, and had nothing to put under the serpent.¹ For all fruit of that stir we have the Kossuth hat.²

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

1. Actually, Thoreau misunderstood: after that elephant “it’s turtles all the way down.” :-)

2. The Kossuth hat was a black, low-crowned felt hat with the left side of the brim fastened to the crown and ornamented with a [peacock] feather. The story of its “invention” by John Nicholas Genin (1819-78) and its rise to high fashion is told in Donald S. Spencer’s LOUIS KOSSUTH AND YOUNG AMERICA: A STUDY OF SECTIONALISM AND FOREIGN POLICY, 1848-1852 (Columbia MO: University of Missouri Press, 1977), pages 59-61.

LAJOS KOSSUTH



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

KOSSUTH
AT
CONCORD!

Thoreau also made an entry that he was later to use in his lecture “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” in combination with an entry made on November 10, 1851:

[Paragraph 64] You come from attending the funeral of mankind to attend to a natural phenomenon. A little thought is sexton to all the world.



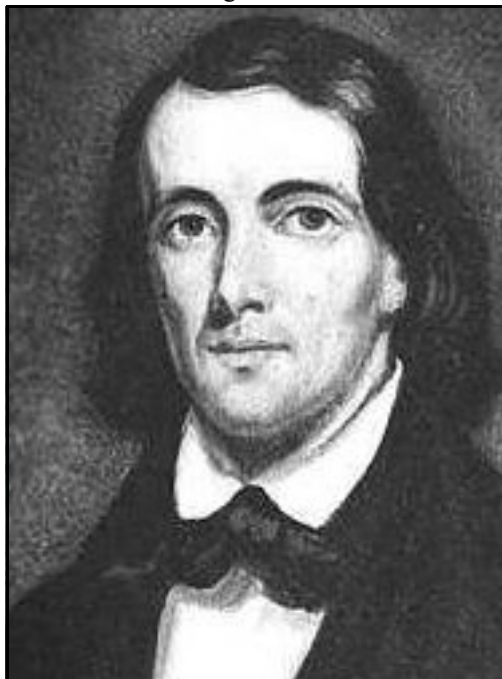
THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

May 11, Tuesday: At the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society the Garrisonians and [Frederick Douglass](#) began to engage in an intense public confrontation over whether the federal Constitution was irredeemably proslavery and whether to seek to dissolve the American Union. By the point at which this meeting wound to its conclusion on Thursday the 13th, the split between the two groups would have become irreconcilable.

While [Ellery Channing](#) was returning from Provincetown to Boston on a sailing vessel, he conversed with a Portuguese sailor who claimed to be knowledgeable as to the customs of the Western Islands.



In Illinois, [Welborn Beeson](#) confided to his diary that “About three I saw a black covered wagon coming to our house and I did not know who it was. They staid a little while and then went away. After they was gone Father came to me in the field and told me that it was two young men from below Grand Ville. They had brought a runaway Negro on his road to Canada. His name is William Casey. Father wants me to take him to Ottawa tomorrow.”

[UNDERGROUND RAILROAD](#)

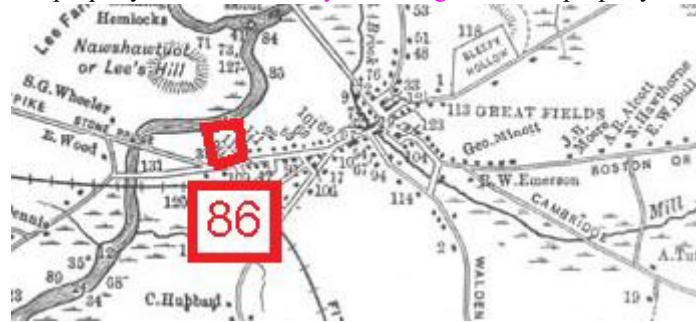


THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

May 25, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed, for J. Bernard McKay (T. Bernard MacKay?), a plot on Main Street in [Concord](#) between the property of [William Ellery Channing II](#) and the property of Frances Monroe.



View [Henry Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/86.htm

[Waldo Emerson](#)'s 49th birthday.



[Charles Theodore Russell](#)'s AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE BOSTON YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR FIRST ANNIVERSARY, IN PARK STREET CHURCH, BOSTON, TUESDAY EVENING, MAY 25, 1852 (George C. Rand, Printer, No. 3 Cornhill, Boston, 1852)

MAY 25, 1852 AT THE YMCA

**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

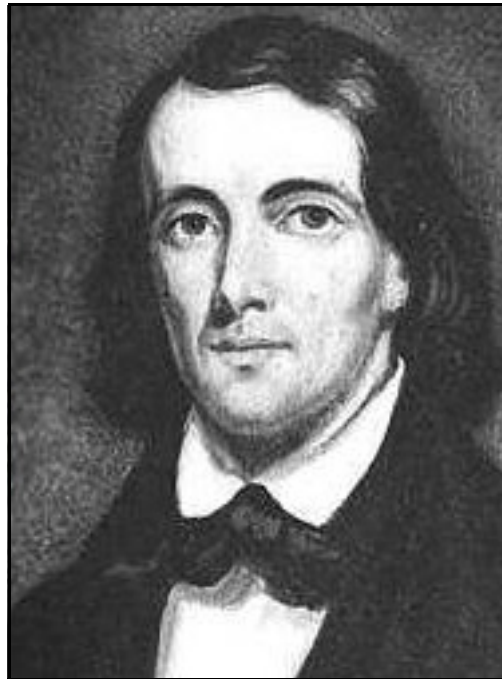
PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

June 12, Saturday, 1852: [Waldo Emerson](#) to his journal after a walk in which [Ellery Channing](#) was displaying a superficial Thoreauvianism:

Yesterday a walk with Ellery C. to the Lincoln Mill-Brook, to Nine Acre Corner, & Conantum. It was the first right day of summer. Air, cloud, river, meadow, upland, mountain, all were in their best. We took a swim at the outlet of the little brook at Baker-Farm. Ellery is grown an accomplished Professor of the Art of Walking, & leads like an Indian. He likes the comic surprise of his botanic information which is so suddenly enlarged. Since he knew Thoreau, he carries a little pocket-book, in which he affects to write down the name of each new plant or the first day on which he finds the flower. He admires viburnum & cornel, & despises dooryards with foreign shrubs.

BAKER FARM

JAMES BAKER



The period in [Henry Thoreau](#)'s life which he would describe in WALDEN in the following section clearly postdates the sojourn on [Walden Pond](#), appearing for the 1st time as of Draft E in the late 1852-1853 timeframe and describing a period during which Channing was residing on Main Street opposite the Thoreaus. I am therefore taking the risk of including the material here, as probably pertaining to the activities of this particular summer season:

[following screen]



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

WALDEN: SOMETIMES I had a companion in my fishing, who came through the village to my house from the other side of the town, and the catching of the dinner was as much a social exercise as the eating of it.

Hermit. I wonder what the world is doing now. I have not heard so much as a locust over the sweet-fern these three hours. the pigeons are all asleep upon their roosts, -no flutter from them. Was that a farmer's noon horn which sounded from beyond the woods just now? The hands are coming in to boiled salt beef and cider and Indian bread. Why will men worry themselves so? He that does not eat need not work. I wonder how much they have reaped. Who would live there where a body can never think for the barking of Bose? And O, the housekeeping! to keep bright the devil's door-knobs, and scour his tubs this bright day! Better not keep a house. Say, some hollow tree; and then for morning calls and dinner-parties! Only a woodpecker tapping. O, they swarm; the sun is too warm there; they are born too far into life for me. I have water from the spring, and a loaf of brown bread on the shelf. -Hark! I hear a rustling of the leaves. Is it some ill-fed village hound yielding to the instinct of the chase? or the lost pig which is said to be in these woods, whose tracks I saw after the rain? It comes on apace; my sumachs and sweet-briars tremble. -Eh, Mr. Poet, is it you? How do you like the world to-day?

Poet. See those clouds; how they hang! That's the greatest thing I have seen to-day. There's nothing like it in old paintings, nothing like it in foreign lands, -unless when we were off the coast of Spain. That's a true Mediterranean sky. I thought, as I have my living to get, and have not eaten to-day, that I might go a-fishing. That's the true industry for poets. It is the only trade I have learned. Come, let's along.

Hermit. I cannot resist. My brown bread will soon be gone. I will go with you gladly soon, but I am just concluding a serious meditation. I think that I am near the end of it. Leave me alone, then, for a while. But that we may not be delayed, you shall be digging the bait meanwhile. Angle-worms are rarely to be met with in these parts, where the soil was never fattened with manure; the race is nearly extinct. The sport of digging the bait is nearly equal to that of catching the fish, when one's appetite is not too keen; and this you may have all to yourself today. I would advise you to set in the spade down yonder among the ground-nuts, where you see the johnswort waving. I think that I may warrant you one worm to every three sods you turn up, if you look well in among the roots of the grass, as if you were weeding. Or, if you choose to go farther, it will not be unwise, for I have found the increase of fair bait to be very nearly as the squares of the distances.

Hermit alone. Let me see; where was I? Methinks I was nearly in this frame of mind; the world lay about at this angle. Shall I go to heaven or a-fishing? If I should soon bring this meditation to an end, would another so sweet occasion be likely to offer? I was as near being resolved into the essence of things as ever I was in my life. I fear my thoughts will not come back to me. If it would do any good, I would whistle for them. When they make us an offer, is it wise to say, We will think of it? My thoughts have left no track, and I cannot find the path again. What was it that I was thinking of? It was a very hazy day. I will just try these three sentences of Con-fut-see; they may fetch that state about again. I know not whether it was the dumps or a budding ecstasy. Mem. There never is but one opportunity of a kind.

Poet. How now, Hermit, is it too soon? I have got just thirteen whole ones, beside several which are imperfect undersized; but they will do for the smaller fry; they do not cover up the hook so much. Those village worms are quite too large; a shiner may make a meal off one without finding the skewer.

Hermit. Well, then, let's be off. Shall we to the Concord? There's good sport there if the water be not too high.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN



Boys are bathing at Hubbard's Bend playing with a boat. (I at the willows) The color of their bodies in the sun at a distance is pleasing, the not often seen flesh color—I hear the sound of their sport borne over the water. As yet we have not man in nature. What a singular fact for an angel visitant to this earth to carry back in his note book, that men were forbidden to expose their bodies under the severest penalties.— A pale pink which the sun would soon tan. White men! There are no white men to contrast with the red & the black—they are of such colors as the weaver gives them. I wonder that the dog knows his master when he goes in to bathe & does not stay by his clothes.

DOG



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

August 2, Monday: [Ellery Channing](#) walked past the red farmhouse next-door to the [Waldo Emersons](#) in which he and his wife Ellen had lived in 1843-1844, and waxed nostalgic:

There is a house in which I spent one of the most happy years of my life.

[Henry Thoreau](#) for the 4th time (Dr. Bradley P. Dean has noticed) deployed in his journal a weather term that had been originated by [Luke Howard](#): “We have had a day or two (and here is another) of hanging clouds not threatening rain yet affording shade, so that you are but little incommoded by the sun in a long walk. Varied, dark, and downy **cumulus** –fair-weather clouds, well nigh covering the sky– with dark bases and white glowing fronts and brows.” Thoreau sat on Fair Haven Hill and thought some thoughts which lead me to infer that whatever “knowledge” he had of the historical events which had occurred in the vicinity of Wachusett and in the vicinity of Mount Misery –historical events relating to his personal Huguenot ancestry and to his honest concern over genocide against Native American groups– could at most have been a subliminal and intuitive “knowledge” and must be considered to have been completely severed from any actual historical record available to him. —For he displays, in the following passage from his journal, no awareness whatever that there had been a Huguenot settlement near Wachusett in Nipmuc Country, or that these religious refugees had been driven into the Calvinist and Puritan towns by the threat from the Nipmuk tribe when it allied with Metacom, or that the local center of forest resistance to the Europeans in 1675-1676 had been the vicinity of Wachusett, or that there had been Concord Native Americans living on Sandy or Flint’s Pond, or that some of the Native American women and children had been murdered by white Concordians on the slopes of Mount Misery:



August 2: At 5.30 this morning, saw from Nawshawtuct the trees on the Great Meadows against and rising out of the dispersing wreaths of fog, on which the sun was shining.

Just before sunset. At the window. — The clear sky in the west, the sunset window, has a cloud both above and below. The edges of these clouds about the sun glow golden, running into fuscous. A dark shower is vanishing in the Southeast. There will commonly be a window in the west. The sun enters the low cloud, but still is reflected brightly, though more brassily perhaps, from the edges of the upper cloud. There is as yet no redness in the heavens. Now the glow becomes redder, tingeing new edges of the clouds near and higher up the sky, as they were clipped in an invisible reddening stream of light, into a rosy bath. Far in the southwest, along the horizon, is now the fairer rose-tinted or flesh-colored slay, the west being occupied by a dark cloud mainly, and, still further south, a huge boulder shines like a chalk cliff tinged with pink. The rear of the departing shower is blushing.

Before this, at 2 P.M., walked to Burnt Plain.

I do not remember to have heard tree-toads for a long time. We have had a day or two (and here is another) of hanging clouds, not threatening rain, yet affording shade, so that you are but little incommoded by the sun in a long walk. Varied dark and downy cumulus, fair-weather clouds, well-nigh covering the slow. with (lark bases and white Y;lowing fronts and brows. You see the blue slay on every side between clouds. Is this peculiar to this season, early August? the whole cope equally divided into sky and cloud. Merely a rich drapery in the sky. Arras or curtains to adorn the gorgeous days. The midday is very silent. *Trichostema dichotomum* just out. The common St. John’s-wont is now scarce. The reddening sumach berries are of rare beauty. Are they crimson or vermilion? Some sumach leaves, where the stem has broken, have turned red. Blue-eyed grass lingers still. Is the dodder out of bloom, or merely budded? It is a new era with the flowers when the small purple fringed orchis, as now, is found in shady swamps standing along the brooks. It appears to be alone of its class. Not to be overlooked, it has so much flower, though not so high-colored as the arethusa. Together with the side-flowering skull-cap, etc. The arethusas, pogonias, calopogons all gone, and violets of all kinds.

We had a little rain after all, but I walked through a long alder copse, where the leafy tops of the alders spread

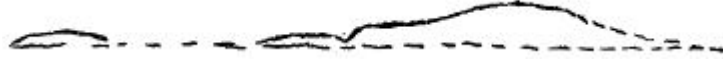


THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

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like umbrellas over my head, and heard the harmless pattering of the rain on my roof. Wachusett from Fair Haven Hill looks like this: —



the dotted line being the top of the surrounding forest. Even on the low principle that misery loves company and is relieved by the consciousness that it is shared by many, and therefore is not so insignificant and trivial, after all, this blue mountain outline is valuable. In many moods it is cheering to look across hence to that blue rim of the earth, and be reminded of the invisible towns and communities, for the most part also unremembered, which lie in the further and deeper hollows between me and those hills. Towns of sturdy uplandish fame, where some of the morning and primal vigor still lingers, I trust. Ashburnham, Rindge, Jaffrey, etc.,—it is cheering to think that it is with such communities that we survive or perish. Yes, the mountains do thus impart, in the mere prospect of them, some of the New Hampshire vigor. The melancholy man who had come forth to commit suicide on this hill might be saved by being thus reminded how many brave and contented lives are lived between him and the horizon. Those hills extend our plot of earth; they make our native valley or indentation in the earth so much the larger. There is a whitish line along the base of Wachusett more particularly, as if the reflection of bare cliffs there in the sun. Undoubtedly it is the slight vaporous haze in the atmosphere seen edgewise just above the top of the forest, though it is a clear day. It, this line, makes the mountains loom, in fact, a faint whitish line separating the mountains from their bases and the rest of the globe.

August 11, Wednesday: Thoreau recorded [Ellery Channing](#) as having remarked as part of his conversation that he kept “a dog for society — to stir up the air of the room when it becomes dead — for he experiences awful solitudes. — Another time thinks we must cultivate the social qualities — perhaps had better keep 2 dogs apiece.” (Some of such conversation might be passed off as bantering, but in the case of Channing it seems an astute piece of observation for Thoreau to remark that his friend experienced “awful solitudes.” Perhaps, in analyzing Thoreau’s published comment about people who lead lives of confirmed desperation, we might note that within two months Channing’s wife would announce that she was taking the children and leaving to live separately, and accept Thoreau’s Concord walking buddy Channing to have been a type case of that sort of personality syndrome.)

DOG



Aug. 11. Wednesday. [Alcott](#) here the 9th and 10th. He, the spiritual philosopher, is, and has been for some months, devoted to the study of his own genealogy, — he whom only the genealogy of humanity, the descent of man from God, should concern! He has been to his native town of Wolcott, Connecticut, on this errand, has faithfully perused the records of some fifteen towns, has read the epitaphs in as many churchyards, and, wherever he found the name Alcock, excerpted it and all connected with it, — for he is delighted to discover that the original name was *All-cock* and meant something, that some grandfather or great-grandfather bore it, Philip Alcock (though his son wisely enough changed it to Alcott). He who wrote of *Human Culture*, he who conducted the *Conversations on the Gospels*, he who discoursed of Sleep, Health, Worship, Friendship, etc., last winter, now reading the wills and the epitaphs of the Alcocks with the zeal of a professed antiquarian and genealogist! He has discovered that one George Alcock (afterwards Deacon George) came over with Winthrop in 1630 and settled in Roxbury. Has read Eliot’s account of him in the Church records and been caught by a passage in which [his] character is described by Eliot as being of “good savor.” I think it is. But he has by no means made out his descent from him. Only knows that family owned lands in Woodstock, Connecticut. Nevertheless the similarity of name is enough, and he pursues the least trace of it. Has visited a crockery-dealer in Boston who trades with Alcocks of Staffordshire (?), England, *great* potters who took a prize at the world’s fair. Has through him obtained a cup or so with the name of the maker Alcock on it. Has it at his house. Has got the dealer to describe the persons of those Staffordshire Alcocks, and finds them to be of the right type, even to their noses. He knew they must be so. Has visited the tomb of Dr. John Alcock in the Granary Burying-Ground, read, and copied it. Has visited also the only bearer of the name in Boston, a sail-maker perchance, — though there is no evidence of the slightest connection except. through Adam, — and communicated with him. He says I should survey Concord and put down every house exactly as it stands with the name. Admires the manuscript of the old records; more pleasing than print. Has some design to collect and print epitaphs. Thinks they should be collected and printed *rcrbatim et literatim*, every one in every yard, with a perfect index added, so that persons engaged in such pursuits as himself might he absolutely sure, when they turned to the name Alcock, for

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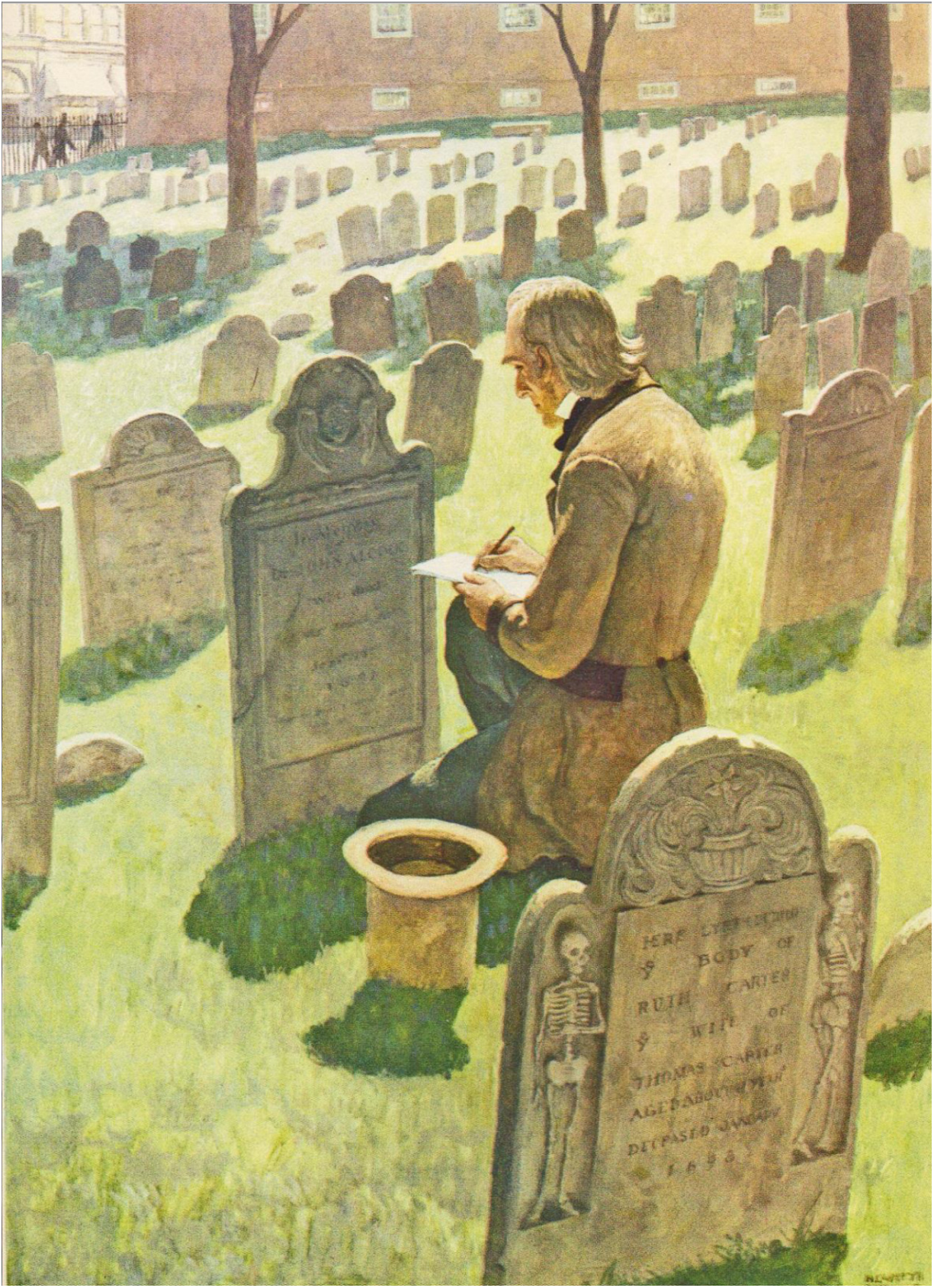
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instance, to find it if it was there, and not have to look over the whole yard. Talks of going to England- says it would be in his way to visit the Alcocks of Staffordshire. Has gone now to find where lie the three thousand acres granted to the Roxbury family in 16— “on the Assabett,” and has talked with a lawyer about the possibility of breaking the title, etc., etc., from time to time pulling out a long notebook from his bosom, with epitaphs and the like copied into it. Had copied into it the epitaph of my grandmother-in-law which he came across in some graveyard (in Charlestown), thinking “it would interest me!” C says he keeps a dog for society, to stir up the air of the room when it becomes dead, for he experiences awful solitudes. Another time thinks we must cultivate the social qualities, perhaps had better keep two dogs apiece.

P.M. — To Conantum.

The mountain-ash berries are turning. We had a ripe watermelon on the 7th. I see the great yellow flowers of the squash amid the potatoes in the garden, one of the largest yellow flowers we have. How fat and rich! Of course it is long since they blossomed. Green corn begins. The autumnal ring of the alder locust. White lilies are not very numerous now. The skunk-cabbage leaves are fallen and decaying and their fruit is black. Their fall is earlier than that of other plants. What is that tall plant now budded by the Corner Spring? [*Chelone glabra*] I am attracted by the clear dark-green leaves of the fever-bush. The rum cherry is ripe. The *Collinsonia Canadensis* just begun. The great trumpet-weeds now fairly out. Sumach berries now generally red. Some naked viburnum berries are red. The sweet viburnum turning. The larger skull-cap is quite an important and interesting flower. *Platanthera blephariglottis*, white fringed orchis. This side of Hubbard’s Meadow Bridge, *Lespedeza hirta* (hairy), *Cannabis sativa*, apparently out. *Aster corymbosus*, path beyond Corner Spring and in Miles Swamp. *Cicuta bulbifera*, first seen July 21st and called *Sium lincare*. The true (?) *Sium lincare*, probably last month. [Vide July 8]

Fall: As he had done with his brother John Thoreau at the beginning of fall in 1839, at the beginning of this fall season [Henry Thoreau](#) went river-sailing. This time he went with [Ellery Channing](#) to Peterboro and Mount Monadnock and returned from Troy, New Hampshire by train (when Ellery would return to Concord he would find his wife preparing to take their children and separate from him).



[Lysander Spooner](#)’s TRIAL BY JURY attempted to make it the duty of the juror to produce justice. What justice these legal professionals, the judges and lawyers, are unwilling to provide, the people must produce on their own behalf — an argument in favor of that ever-proscribed and always-punished behavior, juror nullification.

[John Adams](#) went up into the mountains of [California](#) in an old wagon pulled by two oxen, armed with a pistol and two rifles, plus bowie knives. Despite his maimed condition after having been mauled by a Bengal tiger, he would be able to catch bears in log traps and construct cages in which to transport them for sale. He would venture eventually as far as eastern Washington. He would contribute mightily to the extinction of the grizzly, so that the only bear that now remains in this mountain range is the smaller brown bear.

[Kate Fox](#) left for school and [Maggie Fox](#), in the company of her mother, traveled to Philadelphia and set up shop in the bridal suite of Webb’s Union Hotel. It was there that the young and handsome [Dr. Elisha Kent Kane](#), still grieving from the recent death of his youngest brother Willie, would come one November morning to investigate the “Spiritual Manifestations” that enthralled the nation (whether this is properly to be described as “love at first sight” as Margaret would later assert is a matter for speculation).

SPIRITUALISM

Early October: [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) advised [Ellery Channing](#) that she had decided to take the children and separate from him. When he begged for another chance, they did not immediately depart.



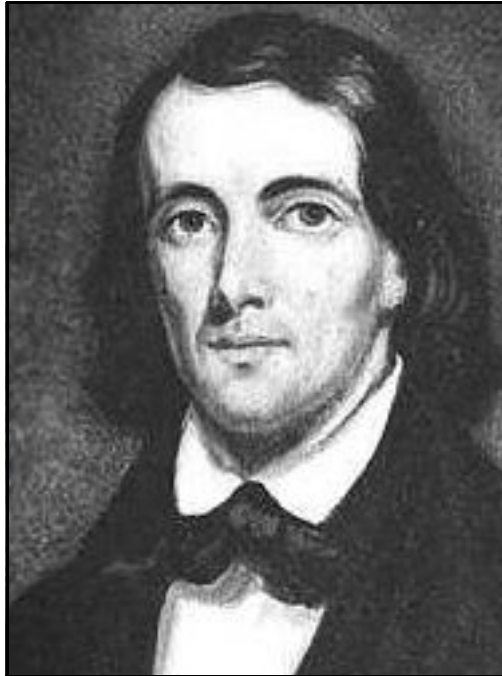
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October 15, Friday: Marietta Alboni gave a recital in Manhattan.

One day in mid-October, perhaps this day and perhaps not, [Ellery Channing](#) threw a fit at his dinner table and declared that from that time forward he would be taking his meals in the kitchen.



His wife [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) would seek advice from her relatives, such as legal advice from her brother Richard Fuller, and from Ellery's own relatives, such as spiritual advice from the Reverend [William Henry Channing](#), and also from the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) and [Mrs. Higginson](#). She would be barricading the door to her bedroom.



Oct. 15. 9 A.M. — The first snow is falling (after not very cool weather), in large flakes, filling the air and obscuring the distant woods and houses, as if the inhabitants above were emptying their pillow-cases. Like a mist it divides the uneven landscape at a little distance into ridges and vales. The ground begins to whiten, and our thoughts begin to prepare for winter. Whiteweed. The Canada snapdragon is one of the latest flowers noticed, a few buds being still left to blossom at the tops of its spike or raceme. The snow lasted but half an hour. Ice a week or two ago.

P. M. — Walden.

The water of Walden is a light green next the shore, apparently because of the light rays reflected from the sandy bottom mingling with the rays which the water reflects. Just this portion it is which in the spring, being warmed by the heat reflected from the bottom and transmitted through the earth, melts first and forms a narrow canal about the still frozen pond. The water appears blue when the surface is much disturbed, also in a single cake of ice; that is, perhaps, when enough light is mixed with it.

The flight of a partridge [[Ruffed Grouse](#) [Bonasa umbellus](#) (Partridge)], leaving her lair (?) on the hillside only a few rods distant, with a gentle whirring sound, is like the blowing of rocks at a great distance.

Perhaps it produces the same kind of undulations in the air.

The rain of the night and morning, together with the wind, had strewn the ground with chestnuts. The burrs, generally empty, come down with a loud sound, while I am picking the nuts in the woods. I have come out before the rain is fairly over, before there are any fresh tracks on the Lincoln road by Britton's shanty, and I find





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the nuts abundant in the road itself.

It is a pleasure to detect them in the woods amid the firm, crispy, crackling chestnut leaves. There is somewhat singularly refreshing in the color of this nut, the chestnut color. No wonder it gives a name to a color. One man tells me he has bought a wood-lot in Hollis to cut, and has let out the picking of the chestnuts to women at the halves. As the trees will probably be cut for them, they will make rapid work of it.

flow Father Le Jeune pestered the poor Indians with his God at every turn (they must have thought it his one idea), only getting their attention when they required some external aid to save them from starving! Then, indeed, they were good Christians.

November 18, Wednesday: The Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) brought a carriage to the door, and [Ellery Channing](#)'s family left him. He remained in his room and gave no sign of awareness of what was happening. After the carriage had departed, he took up a pen and wrote a one-sentence letter to the Reverend Higginson:

*I will consider it a great favor,
if you will never call on me again.*

November 19, Friday: In the evening Mrs. Barzillai Frost, the preacher's wife, walking on the street in front of the Channing home, shepherding the morals of her [Concord](#) community, overheard what seemed to her to be [Ellery Channing](#) and [Henry Thoreau](#) having "a jubilee in the front parlor." She would of course report this unseemly jubilation to [Ellen Fuller Channing](#)'s mother. Whatever attempt was being made by friends and neighbors to cheer Channing up, this effort also included going boating regularly with Thoreau, being invited by [Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau](#) to dinner at the Thoreau home on at least one occasion, and regular dining at the [Waldo Emerson](#) home. However, the forlorn husband was not only being helped, he was also being most carefully watched, for instance by the railroad agent at the depot down the street.

And in fact Ellery was on his best behavior and was detected being polite to certain persons to whom he had previously behaved somewhat rudely.

November 25, Thursday: [Herman Melville](#) wrote [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#):

My dear Hawthorne,—
The other day, at Concord, you expressed uncertainty concerning your undertaking the story of Agatha, and, in the end, you urged me to write it. I have decided to do so, and shall begin it immediately upon reaching home; and so far as in me lies, I shall endeavor to do justice to so interesting a story of reality. Will you therefore enclose the whole affair to me; and if anything of your own has occurred to you in your random thinking, won't you note it down for me on the same page with my memorandum? I wish I had come to this determination at Concord, for then we might have more fully and closely talked over the story, and so struck out new light. Make amends for this, though, as much as you conveniently can. With your permission I shall make use of the "Isle of Shoals," as far as the name goes at least. I shall also introduce the old Nantucket seaman, in the way I spoke to you about. I invoke your blessing upon my endeavors; and breathe a fair wind upon me. I greatly enjoyed



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my visit to you, and hope that you reaped some corresponding pleasure.

H. Melville Julian, Una, and Rose, my salutations to them.


In agony and despair [Ellery Channing](#) wrote to [Ellen Channing](#) (as depicted on a subsequent screen).

December 9, Thursday: [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) received a notification from George M. Brooks, a [Concord](#) attorney, threatening legal action unless she return custody of the [Ellery Channing](#) children to their father within one week.⁶⁹

Thoreau wrote in his journal about a coffee-table book that was forthcoming from a New-York trade press, [George William Curtis](#)'s [HOMES OF AMERICAN AUTHORS](#):



December 9: To C. Smith's Hill.

Those little ruby-crowned wrens (?) [**Common Redpoll**  *Carduelis flammea*] still about. They suddenly dash away from this side to that in flocks, with a tumultuous note, half jingle, half rattle, like nuts shaken in a bag, or a bushel of nutshells, soon returning to the tree they had forsaken on some alarm. They are oftenest seen on the white birch, apparently feeding on its seeds, scattering the scales about.



A fresh dandelion.

The chestnuts are almost as plenty as ever, both in the fallen burs and out of them. There are more this year than the squirrels can consume. I picked three pints this afternoon, and though some bought at a store the other day
69. At the time American judges were simplistically presuming that all children always belonged like slaves with their father (they would transit from that wickedness into the equally simplistic but opposite wicked presumption that all children always belong with their mother). The reason why we have thus transited from a wicked simplicitude into an opposite wicked simplicitude is clear: our judges truly don't have the slightest concern for what happens to other people's children, and thus settle upon one or another simplifying presumptiveness — in order to be spared the frustration and annoyance of trying to figure anything out in the mysterious realm of "what's in the best interests of the child" (there is a nasty reason why we aver such great concern for our children: it is that this avowal is a necessary mask obscuring our persistent and very real refusal to allow this to be an actual priority in our lives). Thoreau put the nastiness of our attitude most succinctly in his journal entry for this day: "Very nice; as the old lady said when she had got a gravestone for her husband."

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To Mrs Ellen K F. Channing, Concord Nov. 25, 1853

I command you as your husband, as you have left my bed & board without provocation to return forthwith with my children. I make this order absolutely & for the last time. I have never & shall never consent to a separation between us, and in no case will I relinquish my rights to and in my children. I am & have always been willing to do anything to make your life more agreeable to you here, & shall continue in that mind. Should you not accede to this perfectly reasonable & right request, I must then proceed to take those other steps which will be so painful to my children to yourself & to me. I advise you to leave your children for a day & to come here, & talk over this matter. Any day you may appoint I shall be here to see you.

W E Channing

It seems to me so totally out of your character to deliberately sit down to destroy a man, who has never done you an injury in his life, that I cannot believe it. I have never & in the presence of God I would say the same, done you an injury. I have never even so much as faintly dreamed of a separation from you up to the moment last spring I believe, you first spoke of it. But if I had done you all the injuries ever inflicted by the worst man who ever lived, what could they be compared with the injury, the living death you propose to me. To endeavor to deprive me of the only beings on earth for whom I have any fondness, or who are in any manner connected with me, to propose seriously to seize from a father his children, all his children, because you may think I have done you injuries, but great God! what has this to do with my children, beings who owe their life to me, who are mine as much as they are yours, to become the deliberate murder of your husband's peace of mind, to make the earth a living grave to him, a man who has done all on earth that he could do, for you, & to set yourself up in judgment over me. Why did you not poison me, or stab me, or kill me outright, or do you think that I can live here and die by inches? And to think that you can have advised with strangers over this, with your mother or brothers, over my death, over this cruel, horrible unnatural murder of a man who has never consciously injured you in his life, & you a woman, one who values herself upon her heart. There must be a God, there must be justice, there must be for horrible crimes a horrible end. I do not wish to bring upon my children the awful recollection of their father's violent death, I do not wish to bring them into Courts of Justice, but I am innocent man, & to have my whole heart and mind destroyed without fault is too horrible to contemplate.



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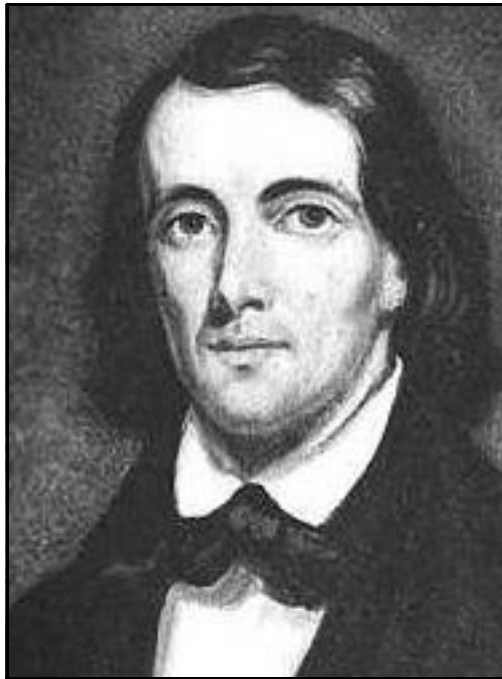
were more than half mouldy, I did not find one mouldy one among these which I picked from under the wet and mouldy leaves, where they have been snowed on once. Probably they do not heat, though wet. These are also still plump and tender. I love to gather them, if only for the sense of the bountifulness of nature they give me. A few petals of the witch-hazel still hold on.

In the "[Homes of American Authors](#)" it is said of most that at one time they wrote for the [North American Review](#). It is one of my qualifications that I have not written an article for the [North American Review](#).

A man tells me he saw a violet to-day.

Very nice; as the old lady said when she had got a gravestone for her husband.

December 21, Tuesday: When [Ellery Channing](#) took the 9AM train to Boston, the station agent, Mr. Wild, telegraphed ahead to the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) as he had promised, warning of this. There was to be no attempt to kidnap the Channing children. (Since the despairing Channing in fact did nothing, the security arrangements and the surveillance placed on him by this conspiracy of friends and neighbors were gradually relaxed.)



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1853

March 20, Sunday: On the other side of the earth from China –in Richmond, Virginia to be specific– [Anthony Burns](#) was sighted at work as usual at his place of obligation, by a white man named William Brent who was responsible to Anthony’s owner Mr. Charles Francis Suttle for among other duties leasing out this slave’s work to various purchasers.

Meanwhile, in Europe, [Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” was writing in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “I sat up alone; two or three times I paid a visit to the children’s room. It seemed to me, young mothers, that I understood you! sleep is the mystery of life; there is a profound charm in this darkness broken by the tranquil light of the night-lamp, and in this silence measured by the rhythmic breathings of two young sleeping creatures. It was brought home to me that I was looking on at a marvelous operation of nature, and I watched it in no profane spirit. I sat silently listening, a moved and hushed spectator of this poetry of the cradle, this ancient and ever new benediction of the family, this symbol of creation, sleeping under the wing of God, of our consciousness withdrawing into the shade that it may rest from the burden of thought, and of the tomb, that divine bed, where the soul in its turn rests from life. To sleep is to strain and purify our emotions, to deposit the mud of life, to calm the fever of the soul, to return into the bosom of maternal nature, thence to re-issue, healed and strong. Sleep is a sort of innocence and purification. Blessed be He who gave it to the poor sons of men as the sure and faithful companion of life, our daily healer and consoler.”

[Ellery Channing](#) walked with [Henry Thoreau](#) to the other side of the granite stone house that had been built in Lincoln by Cyrus Pierce in 1852 for [Loring Henry Austin and Mary Jane Goodwin Austin](#) of Cambridge.



March 20. Sunday: 8 A.M. – *Via* Walden, Goose, Flint’s, and Beaver Ponds and the valley of Stony Brook to the south end of Lincoln.

A rather cool and breezy morning, which was followed by milder day. We go listening for early birds, with bread and cheese for our dinner.

(Yesterday I forgot to say I painted my boat. Spanish brown and raw oil were the ingredients. I found the painter had sold me the brown in bard lumps as big as peas, which I could not reduce with a stick; so I passed the whole when mixed through an old coffee-mill, which made a very good paint-mill, catching it in an old coffeepot, whose holes I puttied up, there being a lack of vessels; and then I broke up the coffee-mill and nailed a part over the bows to protect them, the boat is made so flat. I had first filled the seams with some grafting-wax I had, melted.)

It was a question whether we should not go to Fair Haven to see the gulls, etc. I notice the downy, swaddled plants now and in the fall, the fragrant life-everlasting and the ribwort, innocents born in a cloud. Those algæ I saw the other day in John Hosmer’s ditch were the most like seaweed of anything I have seen in the county. They made me look at the whole earth as a seashore; reminded me of Nereids, sea nymphs, Triton, Proteus, etc., etc.; made the ditches fabulate in an older than the arrow-headed character. Better learn this strange character which nature speaks to-day than the Sanscrit. Books in the brooks. Saw a large dead water-bug on Walden. I suspect he came out alive.

Walden is melting apace. It has a canal two rods wide along the northerly side and the west end, wider at the east end, yet, after running round from west to east, it does not keep the south shore, but crosses in front or of the deep cove in a broad crack to where it started, by the ice ground. It is glorious to behold the life and joy of this ribbon of water sparkling in the sun. The wind blows eastward over the opaque ice, unusually hard, owing to the recent severe though transient cold, all watered or waved like a tessellated floor, a figured carpet; yet dead, yet in vain, till it slides on to the living water surface, where it raises a myriad brilliant sparkles on the bare face of the pond, an expression of glee, of youth, of spring, as if it spoke the joy of the: fishes within it and of the sands on its shore, a silvery sheen like the scales of a leuciscus, as if it were all one active fish in the spring. It is the contrast between life and death. There is the difference between winter and spring. The bared face of the



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pond sparkles with joy. How handsome the curves which the edge of the ice makes, answering somewhat to those of the shore, but more regular, sweeping entirely round the pond, as if defined by a vast, bold sweep!

It is evident that the English do not enjoy that contrast between winter and summer that we do, — that there is too much greenness and spring in the winter. There is no such wonderful resurrection of the year. Birds kindred with our first spring ones remain with them all winter, and flowers answering to our earliest spring ones put forth there in January. In one sense they have no winter but such as our spring. Our April is their March; our March, their February; our February, January, and December are not theirs at all under any name or sign.

Those alder catkins on the west side of Walden tremble and undulate in the wind, they are so relaxed and ready to bloom, — the most forward blossom-buds. Here and there, around the pond, within a rod of the water, is the fisherman's stone fireplace, with its charred brands, where he cheered and warmed himself and ate his lunch.

The peculiarity of to-day is that now first you perceive that dry, warm, summer-presaging scent from dry oak and other leaves, on the sides of hills and ledges. You smell the summer from afar. The warm [*sic*] makes a man young again. There is also some dryness, almost dustiness, in the roads. The mountains are white with snow, and sure as the wind is northwest it is wintry; but now it is more westerly. The edges of the mountains now melt into the sky. It is affecting to be put into communication with such distant objects by the power of vision, — actually to look into rich lands of promise. In this spring breeze, how full of life the silvery pines, probably the under sides of their leaves. Goose Pond is wholly open. Unexpectedly dry and crispy the grass is getting in warm places.

At Flint's Pond, gathered a handful or two of chestnuts on a sloping bank under the leaves, *every one* sound and sweet, but mostly sprouting. There were none black as at C. Smith's, proving that in such places as this, somewhat warm and dry, they are all preserved the winter through. Now, then, new groves of chestnuts (and of oaks?) are being born. Under these wet leaves I find myriads of the snow-fleas, like powder. Some brooks are full of little wiggling creatures *somewhat* like caddis-worms, stemming the stream, — food for the early fishes. The canoe birch sprouts are red or salmon-colored lilac those of the common, but soon they cast off their salmon-colored jackets and come forth with a white but naked look, all dangling with ragged reddish curls. What is that little bird that makes so much use of these curls in its nest, lined with coarse grass? The snow still covers the ground on the north side of hills, which are hard and slippery with frost.

I am surprised to find Flint's Pond not more than half broken up. Probably it was detained by the late short but severe cold, while Walden, being deeper, was not. Standing on the icy side, the pond appears nearly all frozen; the breadth of open water is far removed and diminished to a streak; I say it is beginning to break up. Standing on the water side (which in Flint's is the middle portion), it appears to be but bordered with ice, and I say there is ice still left in the pond.

Saw a bluish-winged beetle or two. In a stubble-field east of Mt. Tabor, started up a pack (though for number, about twenty, it may have been a bevy) of quail, which went off to some young pitch pines, with a whirl like a shot, the plump, round birds. The redpolls are still numerous. On the warm, dry cliff, looking south over Beaver Pond, I was surprised to see a large butterfly, black with buff-edged wings, so tender a creature to be out so early, and, when alighted, opening and shutting its wings. What does it do these frosty nights? Its chrysalis must have hung in some sunny nook of the rocks. Born to be food for some early bird.

Cutting a maple for a bridge over Lily Brook, I was rejoiced to see a sap falling in large, clear drops from the wound.

April 14, Thursday: Francisco de Lersundi y Hormaechea replaced Federico Roncali as Prime Minister of Spain.

[Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) departed for Washington DC to take part in the division of the spoils. [Ellery Channing](#) asked for himself: "an appointment to any office."

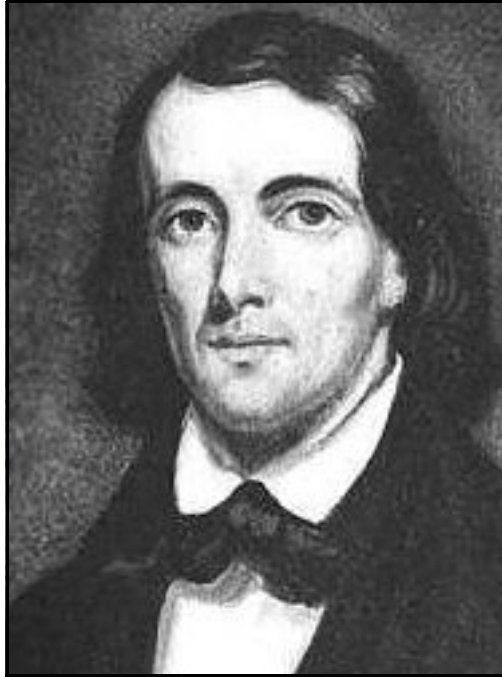


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September: [Ellery Channing](#) of Concord was completing his COUNTRY WALKING project.



“What a gump!...On the whole, he is but little better than an idiot. He should have been whipt often and soundly in his boyhood; and as he escaped such wholesome discipline then, it might be well to bestow it now.”

– [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), about [Ellery Channing](#)



October: [Louisa May Alcott](#) left the employ of the family of James Richardson in Dedham, Massachusetts.

Presumably she had earned her \$2.⁰⁰ a week fending off the sexual advances of Mr. Richardson, and presumably she had not found her way clear to inform her parents in Concord of the demands made of her, which offers us an interesting insight into 19th-Century sensitivities. Later, when she would write a story entitled “How I Went out to Service,” she would imply that this elderly lawyer’s reading his poetry to her amounted to a solicitation of sex. At any rate, as she left Richardson paid due wages of \$4.⁰⁰ and she sent that \$4.⁰⁰ back to him. It was presumably during this month that [Ellery Channing](#) wrote to [Henry Thoreau](#), as

[THE ALCOTT FAMILY](#)

follows:

Mr Thoreau

If you are not engaged to-day I should like to make an excursion with you on the river. If you are [some] other day next week.

WEC



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

*the undersigned lend to Michael Flannery the following sums,
till the 1st of
amounting in all to 50- dollars*

*November, 1854. so to enable his family him to transport to this
county
^ viz—*

(We see that [Thoreau](#) has subsequently utilized this scrap as scratchpaper for the subscription he was getting together among Concord folk, that would enable local [Irish](#) laborer [Michael Flannery](#) to bring his wife and children over from Ireland.)

The Reverend Samuel Ringgold Ward, although ill, toured and spoke in Scotland.

Many of the most prominent members of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada are natives of Scotland. Knowing the very active part some of the very best of their countrymen took in the emancipation struggle, and knowing as well how warmly the Scottish heart beats for liberty, especially upon its native soil, they kindly gave me letters of introduction to many persons of great eminence there. After I arrived in England, the Committee of the Glasgow New Abolition Society very cordially invited me to visit the North. What I knew of Scotchmen whom I had met, what I had read, and the natural desire to see such a country and such a people, made me but too happy to accept their kind invitation. Accordingly, in October, 1853, I paid my first visit to the land of Bruce and Burns, of Campbell, Gordon, and Scott. I was invited to attend a bazaar, and to speak. Though very ill, I made the attempt. The Rev. Dr. Lorimer was in the chair, sustained by some of the most learned of the Glasgow clergy, and gentlemen of high standing in other professions. The kind and, I am sure, too partial manner, in which the excellent Dr. Robertson, of Manchester, had written and spoken of me, made me the welcome guest of Captain Hamilton,⁷⁰ of Rutherglen — a fit representative of the Scottish laird and the British officer. William P. Paton, Esq., and Hugh Brown, Esq., laid me under obligations by kindly receiving me at their homes, and by introducing me to some of the most eminent Scottish ministers. It was at the house of the former that I first had the gratification of meeting the Rev. Dr. Urwick, of Dublin, and the Rev. Noble Shepherd, of Sligo. At the house of Mr. Brown I had the pleasure of meeting the Rev. Dr. Arnot. At the hospitable board of the Rev. Dr. Lorimer I was honoured by an introduction to the Rev. Dr. Robson. Through the kindness of another friend, John Bain, Esq., I had the privilege of becoming acquainted with the Rev. Dr. Roxburgh.⁷¹ John Smith, Esq., treated me like a brother, and Mrs. Smith

70. Captain Hamilton did me the honour to introduce me to Rev. Mr. Monro, of Rutherglen, whose kind people contributed most liberally to our cause.

71. Dr. Roxburgh invited me to preach for him, and kindly allowed me to plead the cause of the Canadian Anti-Slavery Society in his pulpit. The collection was the largest I ever received, £50. 1s. 4d.



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sustained him in it. David Smith, Esq., the elder brother of Mr. John Smith, conferred upon me one of the highest favours a Scotchman could confer or a Negro could appreciate – he gave me a copy of Burns' poems, from his own library. That was almost equal to proffering me the freedom of Glasgow, or making me a Scotchman! Well did I use that volume, while sojourning in the country which gave birth to it and its immortal author! O that I liked oaten cakes, haggis, cockie-leekie, or BAGPIPES, as much as Burns! May my Scotch brethren forgive me for being so incorrigible a creature as to cling to old-fashioned likes and dislikes, acquired before I went to Scotland!

...It was a cold, damp, foggy winter – a winter of such "darkness as may be felt." I had before heard that "a Scotch mist will wet an Irishman to the skin." A Scotch fog went through my skin, and gave me a worse congestion of the lungs than I had before suffered from in twenty years. So severe was it, as to compel me to suspend labour, and return to England. I went to the coast of Kent, to recover; and while there, received an invitation from my honoured friend, William Crossfield, Esq., to spend some time at his very pleasant residence, near Liverpool. In the course of a month I was able to resume my labours. Thanks to my kind hostess, Miss Jurdison, of Ramsgate; to the very amiable family of Mr. Crossfield, and other numerous friends in Liverpool, including Rev. Dr. Raffles, J. Cropper, Esq., E. Cropper, Esq., Rev. Chas. Birrell, G. Wright, Esq., the Misses Wraith, and others! Their great kindness did more than medicine towards my restoration.

I saw a good deal of Scotland, however, that winter, and became acquainted with some of the very best classes of Scotch gentry. I met, and worshipped with, and preached for, some of the best congregations – as Rev. Mr. Munro's, of Rutherglen; Rev. Dr. Wardlaw's, Rev. Dr. Roxburgh and others, in Glasgow; Rev. Mr. Campbell's and Rev. Dr. Alexander's, in Edinburgh; Rev. Mr. Gilfillan's, Rev. Mr. Lang's, and Rev. Mr. Borwick's, of Dundee; Rev. Dr. Brown's, of Dalkeith; &c.

I was in Scotland, alas! too late to see the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw. I had received from him kind, loving messages of sympathy, fraternity, and encouragement. They came like the words of one just entering the world of love – were destitute of stiff formality, and fragrant with the spirit of heaven. On an appointed day, a party of us went to his residence, to see him. The carriage which conveyed me arrived just as others were leaving, and the fatigue of the interview could neither be prolonged nor repeated. Thus I lost the opportunity of seeing on earth one of the men to meet whom will be one of the attractions of heaven. I had been equally unsuccessful in seeing Dr. Collyer, the first day I preached in his chapel. Before I was there again, he and the sainted Wardlaw were with Jesus.

I had the melancholy pleasure of mingling my tears with the many who heard Rev. Dr. Alexander preach Dr. Wardlaw's funeral sermon. I never before heard such a discourse. It was a noble tribute to the learning, piety, attainments and character, of



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the deceased, by one who intimately knew him and dearly loved him. The oration spoke wonders both for the dead and the living. It showed that the living speaker knew how to appreciate the great and shining qualities of the deceased. The sermon was delivered in the earnest impressive style of Scotch divines, tempered and chastened by the superior refinement of the respected preacher, who is, I think, one of the most finished – if not, indeed, the most finished – pulpit orator I heard in Scotland.

The deep sensation felt all through the commercial metropolis of Scotland upon the death of Dr. Wardlaw, the words of praise which every lip gave him, the reverence with which his name was spoken, testified plainly, to the most casual observer, how deep and firm a hold he had upon all hearts while living. The same feeling pervaded all classes in the provinces. In his case was verified the scriptural expression, "The memory of the just is blessed."

Society in Scotland differs from that in England, as does the society of Boston and Massachusetts generally from that of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. I was struck with this while travelling northwards. The northern people are more familiar, more democratic. A Scotchman does not feel under the particular necessity of sitting next you all day in a railway carriage without saying a word, as an Englishman does. Betwixt different classes there is more familiarity, less distance, in Scotland, than in England. The different orders of society seem to approach more nearly to each other, without either losing or forgetting its place. There is less of the feeling, so prevalent in small towns in the South, that merchants and professional men must by all means avoid contact with shopkeepers. The chief order of nobility is the clergy, and all join to pay deference to them; but the general spread of religion, and the very upright and pious habits of the population – the familiarity of the ministers with people, join to produce a brotherly feeling of oneness, which is abundantly apparent in the national character and in the state of society.

Besides, I do not think that mere ceremony is half so much studied by the Scotch. They are great believers in realities; they are a substantial people; and what is merely formal, unless it be formal after the Scottish mode, is not commendable to them, and it costs them but little to say, "I canna be fashed wi sic clishmaclaver." Hence, you get at a Scotchman's heart at once. He will not profess to be what he is not. When you go to his house, and he extends his hand and says, "Come away," you may know you are welcome. I like this straightforward way of doing things: it is far more expressive of true generosity than the set courtly phrases of mere conventionalism.

A sort of independence of character is far more prevalent and observable in the Scotch peasantry than in either the English, the Irish, or the Welsh. Everybody expects to find it so; if not he will find himself much mistaken. Several anecdotes have been given me illustrative of this; but as I am not at home in telling



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Scotch tales, I dare not insert any of them. The fact, however, is most palpable. Doubtless the universal diffusion of education has much to do with it.

How readily, and how generously, did the Scottish people respond to the claims of the anti-slavery cause! Dr. Pennington found it so, when he was there; so did Mr. Garnet; so did Frederic Douglass. There is far more of active, organized, anti-slavery vitality, among the three millions of Scottish population, than among the seventeen millions of English people. There are classes in England which the anti-slavery cause never reaches — the classes who compose the multitude. It is not so in Scotland, because the whole population, high and low, attend divine service, and they naturally enough acquire the habit of attending the kirk on any subject for which it is open. In England, millions of the working classes (not to mention others) do not attend any place of worship, and therefore never hear, know, or care, about the moral movements of the age. The same result is seen in Ireland. There are multitudes there, to be seen in the streets, who never enter any other than a Roman Catholic place of worship, and who accordingly know literally nothing of what is going on in the great moral field. In Wales, on the other hand, religion is as universal as education is in Scotland. Hence the Welsh, like the Scotch, go en masse to the meetings for religious and benevolent purposes.

November: A 1st child was born to the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 and Mrs. [Virginia Young Roberts](#).

[Ellen Fuller Channing](#) took the Channing children and left the home of her husband [Ellery Channing](#) in [Concord](#). Horace Rice Hosmer was serving as a clerk in Walcott's Grocery Store in Concord. After Ellen left, the Reverend Barzillai Frost arranged for her personal effects to be shipped to her in Worcester, Massachusetts. Hosmer saw the personal effects in transit out of the Channing home on Main Street, and felt very angry with Ellery Channing for a number of reasons, including the fact that he considered Ellen to be "refined and ladylike" — and would have liked to have been married to her himself:

One day three rough cases or boxes were brought to the store containing her books, thrown in like so much rubbish. I looked them over when I had a chance, and ... [t]here were books in Spanish, German and Italian. French of course was well represented, and I think many of them had [Margaret Fuller](#)'s name in them. They remained in the upper room of the store some days till directions were received where to send them. A store keeper like a Doctor has to hold his tongue, but I should have enjoyed lynching Channing at that time.



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1854

January 6, Friday: Sherlock Holmes was born (or so we are told).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) led William Tappan, a young Transcendentalist friend of [Waldo Emerson](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) to whom Thoreau had been introduced while living on Staten Island, down the railroad tracks to see Heywood Brook, Fair Haven Bay, and Fair Haven Cliffs.



January 6. Walked Tappan in P.M. down railroad to Heywood Brook, Fair Haven, and Cliffs. At every post along the brook-side, and under almost every white pine, the snow strewn with the scales and seeds of white pine cones left by the squirrels. They have sat on every *post* and dropped them for a great distance, also acorn-shells. The surface of the snow was sometimes strewn with the small alder scales, i.e. of catkins; also, here. and there, the large glaucous lichens (cetrarias?). Showed Tappan a small shadbush, which interested him and reminded him of a greyhound, rising so slender and graceful with its narrow buds above the snow. To return to the squirrels, I saw where they had laid up a pitch pine cone in the fork of a rider in several places. Many marks of partridges, and disturbed them on evergreens. A winter (?) gnat out on the bark of a pine. On Fair Haven we slumped nearly a foot to the old ice. The partridges were budding on the Fair Haven orchard, and flew for refuge to the wood, twenty minutes or more after sundown. There was a low, narrow, clear segment of sky in the west at sunset, or just after (all the rest overcast), of the coppery yellow, perhaps, of some of Gilpin's pictures, all spotted coarsely with clouds like a leopard's skin. I took up snow in the tracks at dark, but could find no fleas in it then, though they were exceedingly abundant before. Do they go into the snow at night? Frequently see a spider apparently stiff and dead on snow.

In [Vimont's](#) Jesuit Relation for 1642, he describes the customs of the Iroquois. As in the case of the Hurons, everything is done by presents. The murderer and robber are restrained by the very defect of justice, and because the community (his relations or tribe) whips itself for his fault. They must appease the injured with costly presents. They make that he shall involve his friends in ruin along with himself, and if he would injure any one, shall injure them too. By making it impossible for him to do an injury without doing a greater injury than he wishes, they restrain him.

January 22, Sunday: Birth of the Reverend [John Stetson Barry](#) and [Louisa Young Barry](#)'s 4th child, [Esther Stetson Barry](#), who would become a teacher and a clerk.



Jan. 22nd 54 Saw Jan 20th some tree sparrows in the yard. Ones or twice of late I have seen the mother-o'-pearl tints & rain-bow flocks in the western sky— The usual time is when the air is clear & pretty cool, about an hour before sundown. Yesterday I saw a very permanent specimen like a long knife-handle of mother of pearl very pale with an interior blue. & rosaceous tinges. Methinks the summer sky never exhibits this so finely.

When I was at Cs the other evening, he punched his cat with the poker because she purred too loud for him.

R. Rice says he saw a white owl 2 or 3 weeks since. [Harris](#) told me on the 19th ult that he had never found the snow flea—

No 2d snowstorm in the winter can be so fair & interesting as the 1st. Last night was very windy — & today I see the dry oak leaves collected in thick beds in the little hollows of the snow-crust — these later falls of the leaf—

A fine freezing rain on the night of the 19th ult produced a hard crust on the snow — which was but three inches deep & would not bear.

CAT

ELLERY CHANNING



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February 2, Thursday: The Reverend [Henry Ward Beecher](#) wrote in [The Independent](#) that since the Old Testament amounted to “records of rude society four thousand years ago,” it should not determine our present-day attitudes toward a wrong such as human slavery:


The question between you and the public is not whether Hebrew slavery was right. Nor whether Roman slavery was right. Nor even whether American slavery is right. The question is simply this: Can John Mitchel be an American slaveholder without apostasy from the grounds which he took against the English government?... Please let Moses sleep; and come back from your retreat behind the dust of 4000 years.”

[Henry Thoreau](#) and a companion, presumably [Ellery Channing](#), walked in the cold and snow up the river to Clematis Brook, then up Corner Road and on the ice at Potter’s Meadow. They noticed it was comparatively very warm under the south side of Bittern Cliff and stopped for awhile there.



February 2: Up river on ice to Clematis Brook.

Another warm, melting day, like yesterday. You can see some softening and relenting in the sky. Apparently the vapor in the air makes a grosser atmosphere, more like that of a summer eve. We go up the Corner road and take the ice at Potter’s Meadow. The Cliff Hill is nearly bare on the west side, and you hear the rush of melted snow down its side in one place. Here and there are regular round holes in the ice over the meadow, two or three feet in diameter, where the water appears to be warmer, –perchance there is a spring there, –and therein, in shallow water, is seen the cress and one or two other plants, still quite fresh. The shade of pines on the snow is in some lights quite blue.

We stopped awhile under Bittern Cliff, the south side, where it is very warm. There are a few greenish radical leaves to be seen, –primrose and Johnswort, strawberry, etc., and spleenwort still green in the clefts. These sunny old gray rocks, completely covered with white and green lichens and overrun with ivy, are a very cozy place. You hardly detect the incited snow swiftly trickling down them until you feel the drops on your cheek. The winter gnat is seen in the warm air before the rock. In the clefts of these rocks are the latebræ of many insects, spiders, etc. Were they not sowbugs I found under the *Marchantia polymorpha* (?) ? The ice is about eighteen inches thick on Fair Haven. Saw some pickerel just caught there, with a fine lustre to them. Went to the pond in the woods which has an old ditch dug from it near Clematis Brook. The red twigs of the cornets and the yellow ones of the sallows surrounding it are interesting at this season. We prize the least color now. As it is a melting day, the snow is everywhere peppered with snow-fleas, even twenty rods from the woods, on the pond and meadows. The scream of the jay [**Blue Jay**  *Cyanocitta cristata*] is a true winter sound. It is wholly without sentiment, and in harmony with winter. I stole up within five or six feet of a pitch pine behind which a downy woodpecker was pecking. From time to time he hopped round to the side and observed me without fear. They are very confident birds, not easily scared, but incline to keep the other side of the bough to you, perhaps. Already we begin to anticipate spring, and this is an important difference between this time and a month ago. We begin to say that the day is springlike.

Is not January the hardest month to get through? When you have weathered that, you get into the gulf-stream of winter, nearer the shores of spring.

**Ross/Adams
commentary**

February 20, Monday: [Robert Schumann](#) was well enough to finish proofs of his Cello Concerto.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) [skated](#) to Fair Haven Pond and made a fire on the south side of the pond, using canoe birch bark and oak leaves for kindling. When they [skated](#) home at dusk, the odor of smoke in their clothing was noticeable.



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February 20: Channing saw yesterday three little birds olive-green above, with yellowish-white breasts and, he thinks, bars on wings. Were they goldfinches?

P.M. — Skating to Fair Haven Pond.

Made a fire on the south side of the pond, using canoe birch bark and oak leaves for kindlings. It is best to lay down first some large damp wood on the ice for a foundation, since the success of a fire depends very much on the bed of coals it makes, and, if these are nearly quenched in the basin of melted ice, there is danger that it will go out. How much dry wood ready for the hunter, inviting flames, is to be found in every forest, — dry bark fibres and small dead twigs of the white pine and other trees, held up high and dry as if for this very purpose! The occasional loud snapping of the fire was exhilarating. I put on some hemlock boughs, and the rich salt crackling of its leaves was like mustard to the ears, — the firing of uncountable regiments. Dead trees love the fire.

We skated home in the dusk, with an odor of smoke in our clothes. It was pleasant to dash over the ice, feeling the inequalities which we could not see, now rising over considerable hillocks, — for it had settled on the meadows, — now descending into corresponding hollows.

We have had but one⁷² (and that I think was the first) of those gentle moist snows which lodge perfectly on the trees and make perhaps the most beautiful sight of any. Much more common is what we have now, i.e.—

March 5, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) chatted with [Ellery Channing](#), and in the afternoon he walked to Upper Nut Meadow.

The forces of Fort Union under Lieutenant Colonel Philip St. George Cooke defeated the Jicarilla Apaches led by Lobo Blanco.



March 5. Channing, talking with Minott the other day about his health, said, “I suppose you’d like to die now.” “No:” said Minott, “I’ve toughed it through the winter, and I want to stay and hear the bluebirds once more.” The patches of bare ground grow larger and larger, of snow less and less; even after a night you see a difference. It is a clear morning with some wind beginning to rise, and for the first time I see the water looking blue on the meadows. Has not the johnswort two lives, in winter sending out radical shoots which creep flat on the ground under the snow, in the summer shooting upward and blossoming?

P.M.—To Upper Nut Meadow. The river is breaking up. The meadows are already partly bare, for it has only been cold enough to form a thin ice on them since this last freshet, and the old ice still lies concealed on the bottom. Great fields of thick ice from the channel, or between the channel and meadows, are driven by the wind against the thick ice on the channel. Hence the meadow ice appears to break up first. The waves dash against the edge of the ice and eat into it fast. As I go along on the snow under Clamshell Hill I hear it sing around me, being melted next the ground. This is a spring sound. I cannot yet see the marchantia (?) in the ditches, for they are yet filled with ice or flooded. I see no horse-tail (unless one) nor flags, etc., yet started in Nut Meadow, nor any minnows out. This brook has run clear of ice a long time. Near Jenny’s its sides are strewn with the wreck of angelic stems and asters. I go along looking at its deep, sometimes yellow, shelving bottom, sprinkled with red pebbles. In the upper meadow the sweet-gale grows rankly along its edges, slanted over the water almost horizontally, so as frequently to meet and conceal it altogether. It is here a dark and sluggish water, comparatively shallow, with a muddy bottom. This sweet-gale is now full of fruit. This and the water andromeda are wild plants, as it were driven to the water’s edge by the white man, Saw a wood tortoise at the bottom. A reptile out of the mud before any bird, and probably quadruped. Not yet a frog, I think. The down of some willow catkins by this brook may have started forward this spring, though it is doubtful. Those which look most forward now will not be so a fortnight hence. It grew colder before I left. I saw some crystals beginning to shoot on the pools between the tussocks, shaped like feathers or fan coral,—the most delicate I ever saw. Thus even ice begins with crystal leaves, and birds’ feathers and wings are leaves, and trees and rivers with intervening earth are vast leaves. Saw a small blackish caterpillar on the snow. Where do they come from? And crows, as I think, migrating northeasterly. They came in loose, straggling flocks, about twenty to each, commonly silent, a quarter to a half a mile apart, till four flocks had passed, and perhaps there were more. Me thinks I see them going southwest in the fall.

72. No more this winter

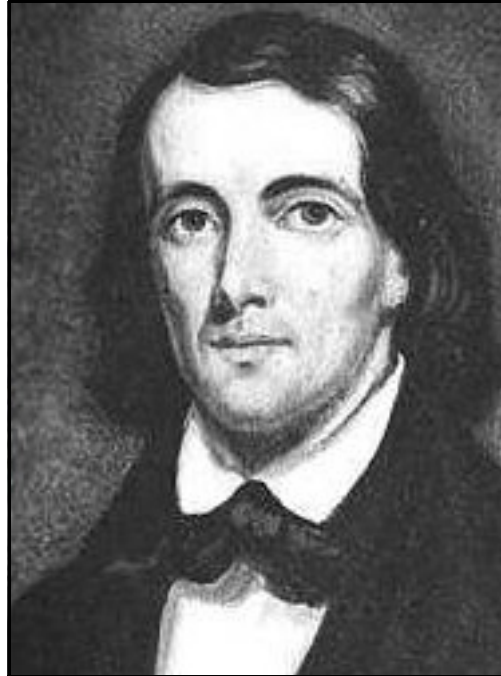


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April: [Ellery Channing](#) visited the Tappans in Lenox, Massachusetts for two weeks. Then he visited [Cincinnati](#), where he and [Ellen Fuller](#) had courted.



July 2, Sunday: At 4 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Hill. In the afternoon he and [Ellery Channing](#) went to Flint's Pond and Smith's Hill.

The Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)'s sermon this morning at Boston Music Hall in beautiful downtown [Boston](#) would be taken down "phonographically" (which is to say, stenographically) by [Rufus Leighton](#) and printed by James Manning Winchell Yerington as [A SERMON OF THE DANGERS WHICH THREATEN THE RIGHTS OF MAN IN AMERICA](#); PREACHED AT THE MUSIC HALL, ON SUNDAY, JULY 2, 1854, BY THEODORE PARKER, MINISTER OF THE XXVIII. CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY. {PHONOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED BY MESSRS. YERINGTON AND LEIGHTON.]



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July 11, Tuesday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) took his boat to Fair Haven.

[Ellen Channing](#) recorded that subsequent to her separation from [Ellery Channing](#) due to her fear of him in his mental condition (“Oh Wentworth I am really **afraid of him**”) and her resettlement with their children in Dorchester, Massachusetts, the forlorn husband had been writing letters replete with affectionate regard:

*He really persuades himself that he has been
a fond & devoted father.*

Commodore Matthew Perry signed an agreement with the “King of the Lew Chew (Ryukyu) Islands” recognizing the islands as independent of [Japan](#) and [China](#) and opening them to western trade.

An armed [nativist](#) mob attacked the Irish district of Lawrence, Massachusetts.



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August 15, Tuesday: At 5:15AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went by boat to Nawshawtucl or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6). Beginning at 9AM, he and [Ellery Channing](#) walked all day, northwest into Acton and [Carlisle](#). In the evening, at Miss MacKay's, Thoreau looked through Mr. Russell's microscope at a section of pontederia leaf.

There appeared a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), by "W," under the heading "New Publications" in the Albany, New York [Argus](#), 2:7:

The book purports to have been written chiefly while the author resided in the woods, and earned his living by the labor of his hands. It contains a record of a strange experience, in connection with the many bright thoughts on various subjects that were suggested by it. It is an intensely entertaining production.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

A review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) appeared under the heading "New Publications, &c" in the [Massachusetts Life Boat: Devoted to Temperance, Morals, Education, Business and General Information](#), 2:6:

The author is certainly a great genius, and though something of a hermit, is making his mark in the world.... While we admire many passages in the book, and not a few of the author's thoughts, we cannot subscribe to all his sentiments. [Long Quotation from the final chapter of the book]

Meanwhile Elizabeth Rogers Mason Cabot,⁷³ a Boston debutante who ordinarily lived at 63 Mount Vernon Street in Boston but who was vacationing at the Cabots' summer home in New Hampshire, was writing

73. Any relation to the Nathaniel Peabody Rogers of Concord, New Hampshire who put out the [Herald of Freedom](#) prior to his death in 1846, and about whom [Thoreau](#) wrote in the last issue of [THE DIAL](#)? To Thoreau's friend James Elliot Cabot who had written on the philosophy of the Hindoos?




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in her diary:




I have finished this morning Thoreau's CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS; it has given me a little tidbit of reading every day for a long time, and is far from exhausted yet, for I am eager to go back and examine some of the truths more thoroughly. It is a life-giving book and gives a picture of life from a point of view entirely unaffected by the artificial world created by man. He is a man without money, not poor, because able to get his daily bread with small toil, and desiring nothing more, untrammelled entirely (as no man with very warm affections I think could be) by the opinions or feelings of others, afraid of nothing, intimate with nature as a bosom friend, learned in all the wisdom of the world handed down in books, ignoring ambition, position, aimless as far as concerns this world, and as unbiased as I can imagine possible. Added to these advantages are a pure large nature, vigorous intellect, and healthy life moral and physical. He is all-convincing at the time, and ought to be, for he is merely putting in practice, the principles which all daily preach, but none entirely make facts. Yet when we would follow him, our old habits of feeling rush back on us, making his purer practice a sort of dream, from which we awake, sorry that it is gone, and almost doubting still which is the unreality, the world we have left, or the world we awake to. I believe solemnly and sincerely that the spiritual life should be first, material last, and needs a very small corner, and yet we place it practically first, because other people do. I know no better reason. -FROM MORE THAN COMMON POWERS OF PERCEPTION: THE DIARY OF ELIZABETH ROGERS MASON CABOT edited by P.A.M. Taylor (Boston MA: Beacon Press, 1991).

September 14, Thursday: [Missa solemnis in B-flat minor for soloists, chorus, orchestra, and organ](#) by Anton Bruckner was performed for the initial time, for the installation of a new prior at St. Florian Priory.

An army of 60,000 British, French, and Turkish troops landed near Eupatoria (Yevpatoriya) in the [Crimea](#), northwest of Simferopol.

At 6 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Nawshawtuct or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6), and at 8 AM he and [Ellery Channing](#) went by boat to opposite Pelham's Pond. On their return they stopped at Fair Haven Hill (Gleason H7). In the course of the day they had rowed some 25 miles. The allied armies of Britain, France, and Turkey invaded the Crimea.

In a letter to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#), the budding apologist, Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR, summarized the





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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

contents of his new book of apologetics, QUESTIONS OF THE SOUL, an irenic treatise on the basic drives of the human emotional system which attempted to make itself attractive not only to the general run of non-Catholics inclined to mysticism and asceticism but also to New England Unitarians and Transcendentalists and others who had given up on Puritanism:



I take an occasion to break a lance with [Ralph Waldo] Emerson [William Ellery] Channing, etc whenever I meet them. There will be no want of boldness & aspiration in it.

WALDO EMERSON

This treatise, although non-traditional, was careful to portray Roman Catholicism as the only conceivable answer:



My object in view is to bring minds similarly constituted as my own to similar convictions & results, by the same process as I passed through.

The leading idea is to expose the wants of the heart and demand their proper objects, rather than a logical defense of the Church.

Father Thomas depicted the inner exigencies of the human soul as naturally oriented to receive an incarnational and historical revelation; humankind turns toward God as naturally as a field of flowers turn toward the sun. But a clear channel for these communication is mandatory; the sacramental channels of divine grace must be kept open by the necessary dredges of the Church, one of which is its infallible teaching authority.

November 8, Wednesday: Henry Thoreau raked clams.

The Constituent Cortes opened in Spain.

November 10, Friday: In the afternoon Henry Thoreau and Ellery Channing sailed to Ball's Hill (Gleason D9).

December 8, Friday: The dogma of the Immaculate Conception was made an article of faith by Pope Pius.

In the afternoon Henry Thoreau went up the river and meadow on the ice to Hubbard's Bridge (Gleason H6) across the Sudbury and from there to Walden Pond. Ellery Channing, walking at Fair Haven Bay, noted that it had already frozen over.



Winter has come unnoticed by me, I have been so busy writing. This is the life most lead in respect to Nature. How different from my habitual one! It is hasty, coarse, and trivial, as if you were a spindle in a factory. The other is leisurely, fine, and glorious, like a flower. In the first case you are merely getting your living; in the second you live as you go along.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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December 14, Thursday: [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) again came across [Thomas Cholmondeley](#), in [Edwin Morton](#)'s room. The trio walked into Boston at sunset to listen to a speech by [Wendell Phillips](#). — The view was beautiful as they crossed the bridge, [Sanborn](#) would recall, with in the west the sunset glowing above the Brookline hills and a few long slender clouds lying just above the hilltops. In the east they could view the magnificent city of Boston, topped by the golden dome of the State House. They parted at the Athenaeum, [Sanborn](#) setting out for the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)'s in hopes of getting a free pass so Cholmondeley could join them at the lecture by Phillips that night. However, according to the [Reverend Parker](#), [Phillips](#) had already given away the remaining tickets. When [Morton](#) came in [Sanborn](#) hit on an idea: [Cholmondeley](#) could attend with Miss Ednah Dow Littlehale and Miss Helen Morton. He was certain Helen would have a spare ticket. [Phillips](#) was advocating disunion (secession) as the only remedy for New England's present predicament, of disastrous submission to the slave power. After the lecture, [Sanborn](#) departed with [Morton](#) and [Cholmondeley](#) for the [Reverend Parker](#)'s, where he and [Cholmondeley](#) spoke together while [Morton](#) sang. — [Sanborn](#) would write that they came away with the echoes of "Lauriger Horatius" still in their ears. — It was hard upon 11PM when they got to the Albion where [Cholmondeley](#) invited them to join him for supper. They sat and chatted till midnight and when that hour had passed, [Morton](#) proposed a toast "To The Pilgrim Fathers!"

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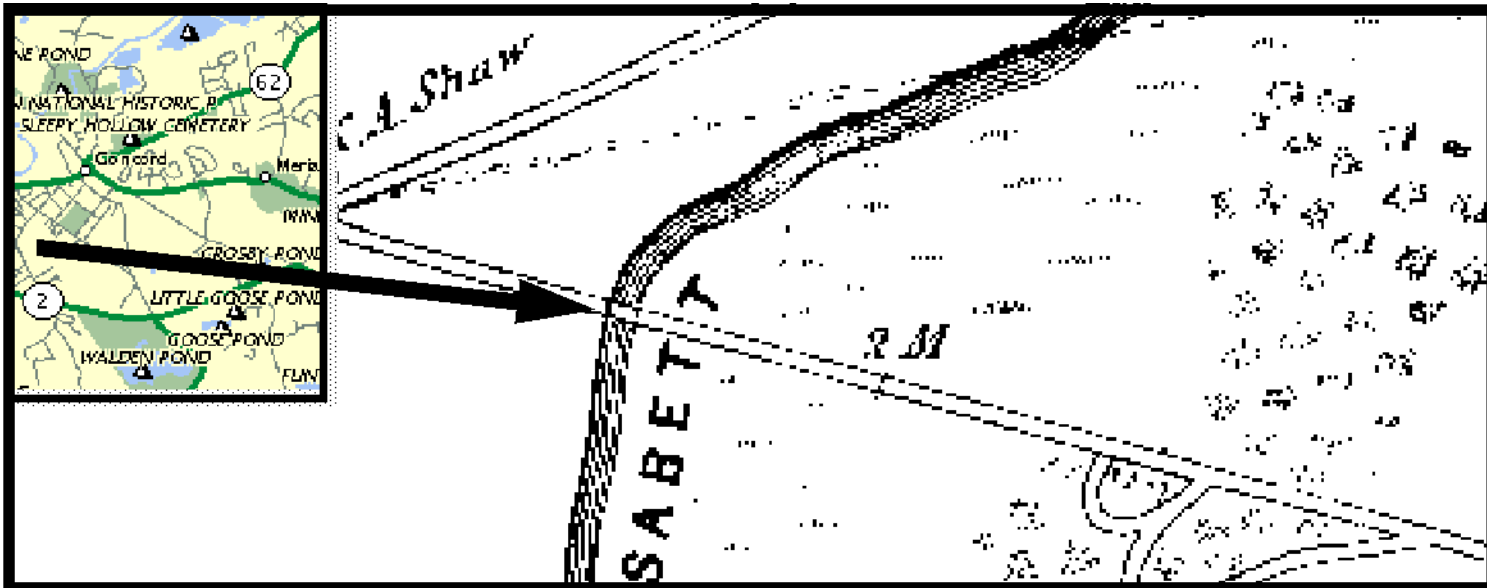
THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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[Cholmondeley](#) took this up, declaiming, “Yes! And may the spirit which brought them here, return again to England, and may we have a Commonwealth, if not as great as yours, at least as happy and as well ordered!” We drank the toast with applause. It was 2AM before he finally got to bed.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) walked up the north bank of the Assabet River to the one-arch stone bridge:



From [New Bedford](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) wrote to [Thoreau](#):

Wrote an invitation to H.D. Thoreau of Concord, author of Walden, and sent a letter which I had on hand some time.

All slaves belonging to the Portuguese state became free.

Anton Rubinstein gave a solo concert at the Leipzig Gewandhaus. The press was largely positive.

December 20, Wednesday: At 7 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) skated to Nawshawtuct or Lee’s Hill (Gleason F6). In the afternoon he and [Ellery Channing](#) skated to Fair Haven Pond or Bay (Gleason J7), and Thoreau noted that it was “killing work” for Channing not only because of his skates but also because he wasn’t using an “easy” skating technique.

The Boston [Evening Transcript](#) carried on its 1st page a notice:

Messrs. George W. Briggs & Co. have published an illustrated work entitled *Flower Fables*, by [Louisa May Alcott](#). It contains several agreeable sketches, in prose and verse, adapted to the capacity of intelligent young persons.⁷⁴

74. [Louisa May Alcott](#). FLOWER FABLES. Boston MA: George W. Briggs & Co., 1855



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

[Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in New Bedford.

*H. D. Thoreau
Dear Sir,
Yours of the 19th came
to hand this evening.
I shall therefore look for
you on Monday next.
My farm is 3 mi. north
of New Bedford. Say to
the conductor to leave you
at the Tarkiln Hill station,
where I or some of my folks
will be in readiness for you*

Page 2
*on the arrival of the evening
train. Should you intend
coming earlier in the day
please inform me in time.
I will get word to the Com^e
of the N B Lyceum as
you desire.
If I do not hear from
you again, I shall pre-
pare for your arrival
as before.*

Page 3
*In the meantime I remain
Yours very truly
Danl Ricketson
Brooklawn
near New Bedford
Wednesday eveg. Dec 20. '54*



I am surprised to find how fast the dog can run in a straight line on the ice. I am not sure that I can beat him on skates, but I can turn much shorter.

DOG



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1855

January 1, Monday: In Hamburg, Germany, an overflow of the Elbe River put the greater part of the city under water.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) [skated](#) to Pantry Brook. The [Nantucket Island Inquirer](#) printed a long account of Thoreau's lecture, which began:

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" By Henry D. Thoreau, Esq. Notwithstanding the damp, uncomfortable weather of Thursday evening, and the muddy streets, a large audience assembled to listen to the man who has rendered himself notorious by living, as his book asserts, in the woods, at an expense of about sixty dollars per year, in order that he might there hold free communion with Nature, and test for himself the happiness of a life without manual labor or conventional restraints. His lecture may have been desultory and marked by simplicity of manner; but not by paucity of ideas.¹

1. Nantucket [Inquirer](#), January 1, 1855, page 2, columns 2-3; Don Jordan, "Thoreau's Nantucket Lecture," [Thoreau Society Bulletin](#) 166 (Winter 1984): 1-3.

The reviewer went on for 128 sentences, the lengthiest contemporary newspaper summary of any of Thoreau's lectures. Clearly, "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" had been well received.

[Louisa May Alcott](#) began her diary for the new year:

Twenty-two Years Old

The principal event of the winter is the appearance of my book "Flower Fables." An edition of sixteen hundred. It has sold very well, and people seem to like it. I feel quite proud that the little tales that I wrote for Ellen E. when I was sixteen should now bring money and fame.

I will put in some of the notices as "varieties." Mothers are always foolish over their first-born.

Miss Wealthy Stevens paid for the book, and I received \$32.

ELLEN EMERSON
THE ALCOTT FAMILY



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

March 28, Wednesday: [Waldo Emerson](#) lectured at the [Concord](#) Town Hall on “Beauty,” and there introduced [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) to [Henry Thoreau](#). Sanborn’s idea at this time was to reside with [Ellery Channing](#) in Concord, and see much of Thoreau.

[Professor Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “Not a blade of grass but has a story to tell, not a heart but has its romance, not a life which does not hide a secret which is either its thorn or its spur. Everywhere grief, hope, comedy, tragedy; even under the petrification of old age, as in the twisted forms of fossils, we may discover the agitations and tortures of youth. This thought is the magic wand of poets and of preachers: it strips the scales from our fleshly eyes, and gives us a clear view into human life; it opens to the ear a world of unknown melodies, and makes us understand the thousand languages of nature. Thwarted love makes a man a polyglot, and grief transforms him into a diviner and a sorcerer.”



March 28. P.M. — To Cliffs, along river. It is colder than yesterday; wind strong from northwest. The mountains are still covered with snow. They have not once been bare. I go looking for meadow mice nests, but the ground is frozen so hard, except in the meadow below the banks, that I cannot come at them. That portion of the meadow next the upland, which is now thawed, has already many earthworms in it. I can dig a quantity of them, — I suspect more than in summer. Moles might already get their living there. A yellow-spotted tortoise in a still ditch, which has a little ice also. It at first glance reminds me of a bright freckled leaf, skunk-cabbage scape, perhaps. They are generally quite still at this season, or only slowly put their heads out (of their shells). I see where a skunk (apparently) has been probing the sod, though it is thawed but a few inches, and all around this spot frozen hard still. I dig up there a frozen and dead white grub, the large potato grub; this I think he was after. The skunk's nose has made small round holes such as a stick or cane would make. The river has not yet quite worn its way through Fair Haven Pond, but probably will to-morrow.

I run about these cold and blustering days, on the whole perhaps the worst to bear in the year, — partly because they disappoint expectation, — looking almost in vain for some animal or vegetable life stirring. The warmest springs hardly allow me the glimpse of a frog's heel as he settles himself in the mud, and I think I am lucky if I see one winter-defying hawk or a hardy duck or two at a distance on the water. As for the singing of birds, — the few that have come to us, — it is too cold for them to sing and for me to hear. The bluebird's warble comes feeble and frozen to my ear. We still walk on frozen ground, though in the garden I can thrust a spade in about six inches.

Over a great many acres, the meadows have been cut up into great squares and other figures by the ice of February, as if ready to be removed, sometimes separated by narrow and deep channels like muskrat-paths, but oftener the edges have been raised and apparently stretched and, settling, have not fallen into their places exactly but lodged on their neighbors.

Even yet you see cakes of ice surmounted by a shell of meadow-crust, which has preserved it, while all around is bare meadow.

**Thoreau as
Ornithologist**



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Spring: Sometime during this spring or summer, [Waldo Emerson](#) in his journal superciliously analyzed his 3 friends [Bronson Alcott](#), [Ellery Channing](#), and [Henry Thoreau](#) as small types who vainly supposed they were “the three leading men in America” but who instead “never saw a grander arch than their own eyebrow” (did this perhaps mean to Waldo “have never been to Washington DC,” or did it perhaps mean “have never lived in a mansion?”) and who “never saw the sky of a principle which made them modest & contemners of themselves”:

Washington, Adams, Quincy, Franklin, I would willingly adorn my hall with, & I will have daguerres of Alcott, Channing, Thoreau.

[Would this have been the occasion (check this) on which Emerson averred that Thoreau had inquired, in regard to Alcott, that “fairly enough, when is it that the man is to begin to provide for himself?”]

(It was during this season that [Thoreau](#)’s strange loss of muscle tone, his weak knee period, his “two years’ illness,” was at its worst. We now know, by way of research by Dr. Jerome M. Siegel of the University of California – Los Angeles, that the neural axions involved control not only motor functions but also sleep patterns. Which is to say, cataplexy is degeneratively linked with narcolepsy. Thus, the genetic mechanism of the Jones family which produced Thoreau’s sleepiness during his Staten Island period of May 1843 may have been what was involved during this period as well.)

June 13, Wednesday: *Les Vêpres siciliennes*, an opéra by Giuseppe Verdi to words of Scribe and Duveyrier, was performed for the initial time, at the Paris Opéra. Presented during the Paris Exposition, this enjoyed a good success.

L’inconsolable, an opéra comique by Fromental Halévy under the pseudonym Alberti, was performed for the initial time, at the Théâtre-Lyrique, Paris.

[Hector Berlioz](#) conducted the New Philharmonic Society at Exeter Hall, London. The room was packed with a very appreciative audience, but one member of the audience, [Richard Wagner](#) was unimpressed.

Five men reported that while boating on Silver Lake they had sighted a giant lake serpent.

[Ellery Channing](#) spotted a peewee’s [[Spotted Sandpiper](#), [Actitis macularia](#)] nest that he would want to point out to [Henry Thoreau](#).

Alicia M. Keyes was born, a daughter of [John Shepard Keyes](#) and Martha Prescott Keyes.

The birth of Alicia in the summer was the event of the household, and we got through it well and enjoyed another daughter. She was named for Aunt Alicia and has taken from the beginning after and for me.

J.S. KEYES AUTOBIOGRAPHY



June 13. C. finds a pigeon woodpecker’s nest in an apple tree, five of those pearly eggs, about six feet



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from the ground; could squeeze your hand in. Also a peewee's, with four eggs, in Hubbard's meadow beyond the old swamp oak site; and two kingbirds' nests with eggs in an apple and in a willow by riverside.

June 14, Thursday: The US Navy's new steamer *USS Arctic* along with the bark *USS Release* departed from New-York harbor in an attempt to rescue Passed Assistant Surgeon Elisha K. Kane's arctic expedition. The ships would rescue the expedition, which after a hazardous 84-day journey over pack ice and through water in open boats, had arrived off the west coast of Greenland at Disko Island in Baffin Bay, and during the Fall would return these men to civilization and safety.



June 14: Thursday. Up river.

See young red-wings ; like grizzly-black vultures, they are still so bald. See many empty red-wing nests now amid the *Cornus sericca*. The bluebird's nest high in the black willow at Sassafras Shore has five eggs. The gold robin's nest, which I could pull down within reach, just beyond, has three eggs. I have one. I told C. [Ellery Channing] to look into an old mortise-hole in Wood's Bridge for a white-bellied swallow's nest, as we were paddling under ; but he laughed, incredulous . I insisted, and when he climbed up he scared out the bird. Five eggs. "You see the feathers about, do you not?" "Yes," said he.

Kalmiana lily, several days. The little galium in meadow, say one day. A song sparrow's (?) nest in ditch bank under Clamshell, of coarse grass lined with fine, and five eggs nearly hatched and a peculiar dark end to them. Have one or more and the nest. The bird evidently deserted the nest when two eggs had been taken . Could not see her return to it, nor find her on it again after we had flushed her . A kingbird's nest with four eggs on a large horizontal stem or trunk of a black willow, four feet high, over the edge of the river, amid small shoots from the willow ; outside of mikania, roots, and knotty sedge, well lined with rootfibres and wiry weeds . *Viburnum dentatum*, apparently not long, say two days, and carrion-flower the same.

Looked at the peewee's [Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*] nest which C. found yesterday. It was very difficult to find again in the broad open meadow; no nest but a mere hollow in the dead cranberry leaves, the grass and stubble ruins, under a little alder. The old bird went off at last from under us; low in the grass at first and with wings up, making a worried sound which attracted other birds. I frequently noticed others afterward flying low over the meadow and alighting and uttering this same note of alarm. There [were] only four eggs in this nest yesterday, and to-day, to C.'s surprise, there are the two eggs which he left and a young peewee beside; a gray pinch of down with a black centre to its back, but already so old and precocious that it runs with its long legs swiftly off from squatting beside the two eggs, and hides in the grass. We have some trouble to catch it. How came it here with these eggs, which will not be hatched for some days? C. saw nothing of it yesterday. J. Farmer says that young peewees run at once like partridges and quails, and that they are the only birds he knows that do. These eggs were not added (I had opened one, C. another). Did this bird come from another nest, or did it belong to an earlier brood? Eggs white, with black spots here and there all over, dim at great end.

A cherry-bird's nest and two eggs [Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*] in an apple tree fourteen feet from ground. One egg, round black spots and a few oblong, about equally but thinly dispersed over the whole, and a dim, internal, purplish tinge about the large end. It is difficult to see anything of the bird, for she steals away early, and you may neither see nor hear anything of her while examining the nest, and so think it deserted. Approach very warily and look out for them a dozen or more rods off.

It suddenly began to rain with great violence, and we in haste drew up our boat on the Clamshell shore, upset it, and got under, sitting on the paddles, and so were quite dry while our friends thought we were being wet to our skins. But we had as good a roof as they. It was very pleasant to lie there half an hour close to the edge of the water and see and hear the great drops patter on the river, each making a great bubble ; the rain seemed much heavier for it. The swallows at once and numerously began to fly low over the water in the rain, as they had not before, and the toads' spray rang in it. After it began to hold up, the wind veered a little to the east and apparently blew back the rear of the cloud, and blew a second rain somewhat in upon us.

As soon as the rain was over I crawled out, straightened my legs, and stumbled at once upon a little patch of strawberries within a rod, — the sward red with them. These we plucked while the last drops were thinly falling. *Silene antirrhina* out on Clamshell, how long?

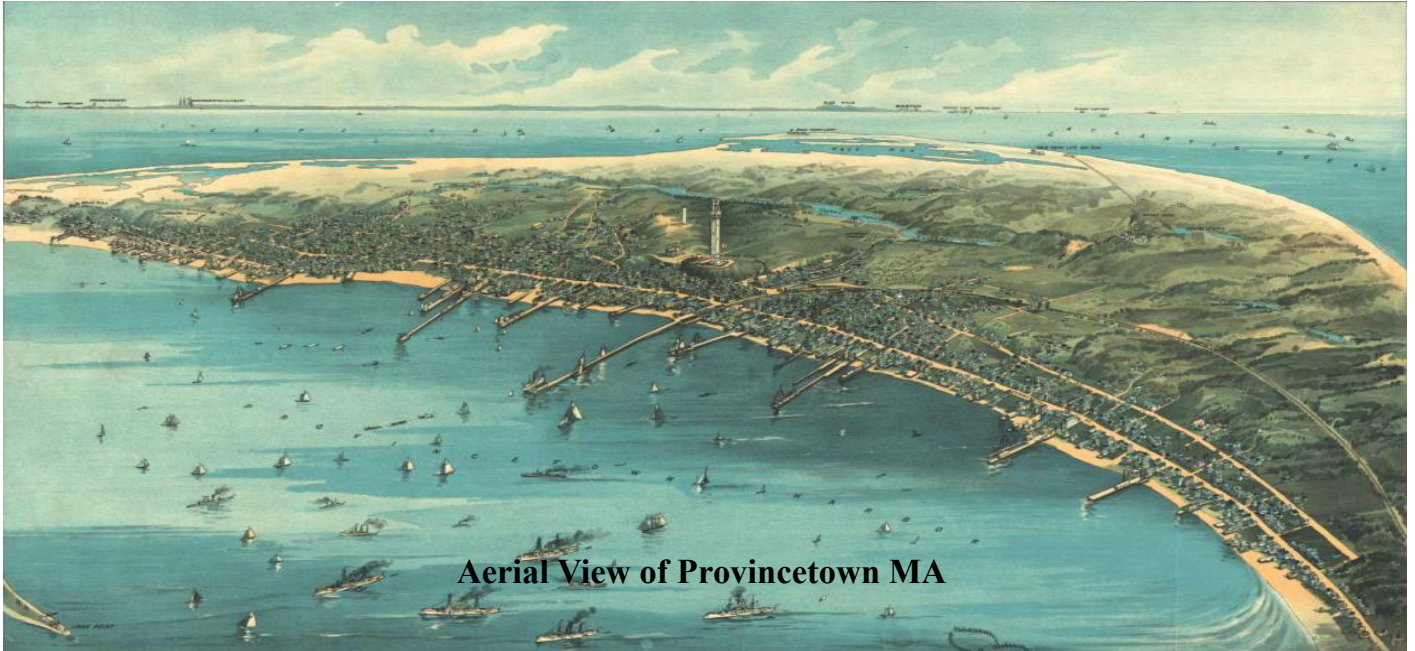
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THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

July 5, Thursday-19: [Henry Thoreau](#) made the 3d excursion of 4 to [Cape Cod](#), with [Ellery Channing](#) by schooner from Boston to Provincetown and back:

[TIMELINE OF CAPE COD](#)

Aerial View of Provincetown MA

**Cruikshank
commentary**

WISHING to get a better view than I had yet had of the ocean, which, we are told, covers more than two-thirds of the globe, but of which a man who lives a few miles inland may never see any trace, more than of another world, I made a visit to Cape Cod in October, 1849, another the succeeding June, and another to Truro in July, 1855; the first and last time with a single companion, the second time alone. I have spent, in all, about three weeks on the Cape; walked from Eastham to Provincetown twice on the Atlantic side, and once on the Bay side also, excepting four or five miles, and crossed the Cape half a dozen times on my way; but, having come so fresh to the sea, I have got but little salted. My readers must expect only so much saltiness as the land-breeze acquires from blowing over an arm of the sea, or is tasted on the windows and on the bark of trees twenty miles inland after September gales. I have been accustomed to make excursions to the ponds within ten miles of Concord, but latterly I have extended my excursions to the sea-shore.

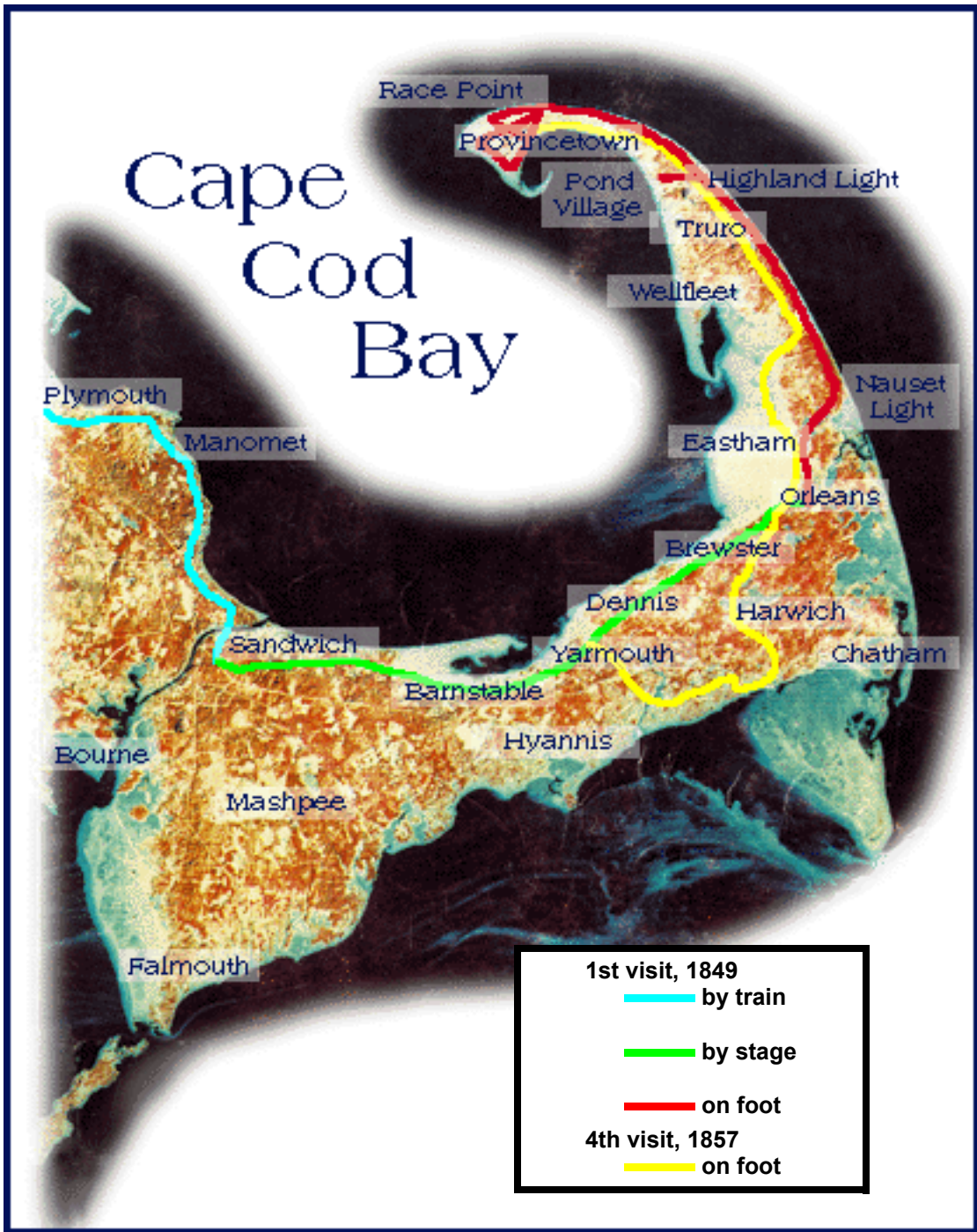
**Ross/Adams
commentary**

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THOREAU'S 3D VISIT TO CAPE COD





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July 5. In middle of the forenoon sailed in the Melrose. We hugged the Scituate shore as long as possible on account of wind. The great tupelo on the edge of Scituate is very conspicuous for many miles about Minot's Rock. Scared up a flock of young ducks on the Bay, which have been bred hereabouts. Saw the Petrel. [Cape Cod, p. 264; Riv. 320.]

Went to Gifford's Union House (the old Tailor's Inn) in Provincetown. They have built a town-house since I was here — the first object seen in making the port. Talked with Nahum Haynes, who is making fisherman's boots there. He came into the tavern in the evening. I did not know him — only that he was a Haynes. He remembered two mud turtles caught in a seine with shad on the Sudbury meadows forty years ago, which would weigh a hundred pounds each.

Asked me, "Who was that man that used to live next to Bull's, — acted as if he were crazy or out?"

Talked with a man who has the largest patch of cranberries here, — ten acres, — and there are fifteen or twenty acres in all.

The fishermen sell lobsters fresh for two cents apiece

August 10, Friday: Calvin Wheeler Philleo's novel TWICE MARRIED: A STORY OF CONNECTICUT LIFE (New York: Dix & Edwards, 10 Park Place; London: Sampson Low & Son) was reprinted from Putnam's Monthly.

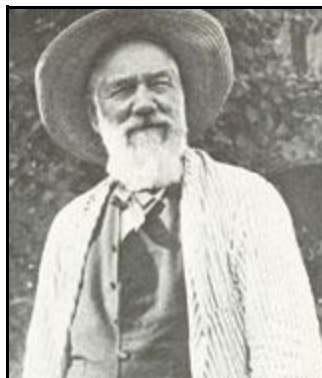
TWICE MARRIED, A NOVEL

According to the Massachusetts census of 1855 the Thoreau household consisted of "[John Thoreau](#), 69, M[ale]; [Cynthia](#), 69, F[emale]; [Henry D.](#), 38, M[ale]; [Sophia E.](#), 34, F[emale]; [Sophia Dunbar](#), 74, F[emale]; [Louisa Dunbar](#), 69, F[emale]." [Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau](#) and [Louisa Dunbar](#) were listed as born in New Hampshire, all others in Massachusetts. The father was listed as "Manufacturer," [Henry Thoreau](#) as "Gentleman," and (of course) no occupations were listed for homemakers.⁷⁵ (The census taker for [Concord](#)

DUNBAR FAMILY

SOPHIA E. THOREAU

was Sheriff Sam Staples.)



Aug. 10. P.M. — To Nagog. Middle of huckleberrying. — (then no more entries until August 19th)

75. Volume 21 in the Massachusetts State Archives in Boston. The historian [Lemuel Shattuck](#), the lawyer Moses Prichard, and the manufacturer William Monroe were also listed by census taker Sam Staples as gentlemen. [Waldo Emerson](#) was listed almost appropriately as "Writer of Books" and [Ellery Channing](#) almost appropriately as "Do Nothing" (see [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) drawing made in 1856).



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September 18, Tuesday: Despite the unanimous opposition of their advisers, [Ellen](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) reunited and went to live in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

September 23, Sunday: From [New Bedford](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) (pictured below in profile because of his problem with one eye) wrote to [Henry Thoreau](#), mentioning his use of the [pipe](#) and adding that the [tobacco](#) involved had (allegedly) not been grown by [slaves](#):

How charmingly your Channing, & I dove-tailed together— Few men such smoke pipes as we did —the real Calumet— the tobacco that we smoked was free labour produce.

ELLERY CHANNING



Brooklawn, Sunday p.m



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Sept 23d 1855.
Dear Thoreau,
Here am I at home
again seated in my shanty. My
mind is constantly reverting to the
pleasant little visit I made you &
so I thought I would sit down and write
you. I regret exceedingly that I was
so interrupted in my enjoyment while
at Concord by my "aches & pains." My
head troubled me until I had got
within about 20 mi. of home, when
the pain passed off & my spirits
began to revive. I hope that your
walks etc with me will not harm

Page 2
you and that you will soon regain your
usual health & strength, which I trust
the cooler weather will favour. I could
advise you not to doctor, but just use
your own good sense. I should have
insisted more on your coming on with
me had I not felt so ill & in such
actual pain the day I left — but I
want you to come before the weather
gets uncomfortably cool. I feel
much your debtor, for through you &
your Walden I have found my hopes
& strength in these matters which
I had before found none to sympathize
with., ~~that~~ You have more than any other
to me discovered the true secret of
living comfortably in this world & I hope
more & more to be able to put it into
practice, in the mean time you will

Page 3
be able to extend your pity and charity.
You are the only 'millionaire' among my acquaint-
ance. I have heard of people being independ-
ently rich, but you are the only one I have
ever had the honour of knowing —
How charmingly your Channing, & I



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

*dove-tailed together — Few men
such smoke pipes as we did — the real
^ Calumet — the tobacco that we
smoked was free labour produce.
I have 'nt lost sight of of Solon Hos-
mer, the wisest looking man in Concord,
and a real 'feelosopher'! I want you to
see him & tell him not to take down
the old house, where the feelosofers met.
I think I should like to have the large
chamber for an occasional sojourn
to Concord. It might be easily
tinkered up so as to be a comfortable
roost for a feelosopher — a few old*

Page 4

*chairs, a table, bed etc would
be all sufficient, then you and
I could come over in your punt
and rusticate. What think of it. In the
mean time come down to Brooklawn, and
look about with me. As you are a little
under the weather, we will make our
peregrinations with horse & waggen
(or I am so much your debter in the
real & having but little of the same
currency to offer in exchange, I have taken
[from home] bits of paper I have a scrap
which will have a marvelous effect
upon the owner of the Iron Horse whose
back I want you to straddle & gallop
down to Tarkiln Hill.)
With much regard to Channing this [Damsel]
for her [tay] & my kind remembrances to your
parents & sister I remain
Yours very truly
Dnl Ricketson
P. S.
I should like to have Channing to come with you
Please invite him from me. You can wear your
old clothes here.*

*(Horizontal along left margin of page 4)
Please come by Sat. next as the weather is getting cool.*



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

September 26, Wednesday: Fantasie und Fuge über den Choral 'Ad nos, ad salutarem undam' for organ by Franz Liszt was performed for the initial time, at the inauguration of a new organ at Merseburg Cathedral.

State Whigs and Republicans convened in Syracuse and formed a coalition under Thurlow Weed. An anti-slavery stand was stressed, rather than alcoholic prohibition. The Free Democratic and Liberty parties nominated Stephen A. Douglas for secretary of state and anti-slavery orator Lewis Tappan for comptroller.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [H.G.O. Blake](#).

*Concord Sep 26th 55
Mr Blake,
The other day I thought that
my health must be better,—that
I gave at last a sign of vitality,—
—because I experienced a slight cha-
grin. But I do not see how
strength is to be got into my legs
again. These months of feeble-
ness have yielded few if any
thoughts, though they have
not passed without serenity, such
as our sluggish Musketaquid
suggests. I hope that the harvest
is to come. I trust that you
have at least warped up
the stream a little daily, holding
fast by your anchors at
night, since I saw you—
and have kept my place
for me while I have been
absent.*

*Mr Ricketson
of New Bedford has just
made me a visit of a
day and a half, and I
have had a quite good
time with him. He and*

FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON

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*Channing have got on par-
ticularly well together. He is a
man of very simple tastes, not-*

ELLERY CHANNING

THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

withstanding his wealth, a lover of nature, but, above all, singularly frank and plain-spoken. I think that you might enjoy meeting him. Sincerity is a great but rare virtue, and we pardon to it much complaining, and the betrayal of many weaknesses[.] R. says of himself that he sometimes thinks that he has all the infirmities of genius, without a hair-pillow, &c[]expresses a great and awful uncertainty with regard to "God", "Death," his "immortality", says, "If I only knew"—&c. He loves Cowper's Task better than any thing else,—& thereafter perhaps Thompson, Gray, & even Howitt. He has evidently suffered for want of sympathising companions. He says, that he sympathises with much in my books, but much in them is nought to him— "namby-pamby",— "stuff",—

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"mystical". Why will not I having common sense, write in plain English always,—teach men in detail how to live a simpler life, &c.,—not go off into—? But I say, that I have no scheme about it,—no designs on men at all; and, if I had, my mode would be to tempt them with the fruit, and not with the manure. To what end do I lead a simple life at all, pray? That I may teach others to simplify their lives?—and so all our lives be simplified merely, like an [a]lgebraic formula?— Or not,



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*rather, that I may make
use of the ground I have
cleared—to live more worthily
and profitably? I would fain
lay the most stress forever
on that which is the most
important,—imports the most
to me,—though it were only (what
it is likely to be) a vibration
in the air. As a preacher, I
should be prompted to tell men
not so much how to get their*

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*wheat bread cheaper,—as of
[the] bread of life compared
with which that is bran. Let
a man only taste these loaves,
and he becomes a skilful econ-
omist at once. He'll not
waste much time in earning
those. Dont spend your time
in drilling soldiers who may turn
out hirelings after all, but
give to undrilled peasantry a
country to fight for. The schools
begin with what they call the
elements, and where do they
end?*

*I was glad to hear the other
day that Higginson and Brown
were gone to Ktadn; it must
be so much better to go to than
a [W]oman's [R]ight's Convention;— [better still], ^{or Abolition} ^ to the delecta-
ble primitive mounts within you, which you have
dreamed of from your youth
up,—& seen perhaps in the
horizon,—but never climbed.
But how do you do?
Is the air sweet to you?*

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*Do you find anythin[g] at
which you can work[] accomplish-*



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ing something solid from day to day? Have you put sloth & doubt behind considerably? —had one redeeming dream this summer? —I dreamed last night that I could vault over any height it pleased me. That was something, and I contemplated myself with a slight satisfaction in the morning for it.

Methinks I will write to you, methinks you will be ready to hear[—] We will stand on solid foundations to one another—I a column planted on this shore, you on that. We meet the same sun in his rising. We are built slowly, and have come to our bearing; we will not mutually fall over that we may meet, but will grandly and eternally guard the straights. Methinks I see an inscription on you, which the architect made, the stucco

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being worn off to it— The name of that ambitious worldly king is crumbling away— I see it toward sunset in favorable lights. Each must read for the other as might a sailer by. Be sure you are star-y-pointing still. How is it on your side? I will not require an answer until you think I have paid my debts to you. I have just got a letter from Ricketson urging me to come to New Bedford,—which possibly I may do. He says, I can wear my



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*old clothes there.
Let me be remembered in
your quiet house.
Henry D. Thoreau.*

WILLIAM HOWITT



"To what end do I lead a simple life at all, pray?
That I may teach others to simplify their lives?
—and so all our lives be simplified merely, like an
algebraic formula?— Or not, rather, that I may make
use of the ground I have cleared — to live more
worthily and profitably?"

— Henry Thoreau, September 26, 1855





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

A WEEK: We have heard much about the poetry of mathematics, but very little of it has yet been sung. The ancients had a juster notion of their poetic value than we. The most distinct and beautiful statement of any truth must take at last the mathematical form. We might so simplify the rules of moral philosophy, as well as of arithmetic, that one formula would express them both. All the moral laws are readily translated into natural philosophy, for often we have only to restore the primitive meaning of the words by which they are expressed, or to attend to their literal instead of their metaphorical sense. They are already **supernatural** philosophy. The whole body of what is now called moral or ethical truth existed in the golden age as abstract science. Or, if we prefer, we may say that the laws of Nature are the purest morality. The Tree of Knowledge is a Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. He is not a true man of science who does not bring some sympathy to his studies, and expect to learn something by behavior as well as by application. It is childish to rest in the discovery of mere coincidences, or of partial and extraneous laws. The study of geometry is a petty and idle exercise of the mind, if it is applied to no larger system than the starry one. Mathematics should be mixed not only with physics but with ethics, **that** is **mixed** mathematics. The fact which interests us most is the life of the naturalist. The purest science is still biographical. Nothing will dignify and elevate science while it is sundered so wholly from the moral life of its devotee, and he professes another religion than it teaches, and worships at a foreign shrine. Anciently the faith of a philosopher was identical with his system, or, in other words, his view of the universe.



Sept. 26. Went up Assabet for fuel. One old piece of oak timber looks as if it had been a brace in a bridge. I get up oak rails here and there, almost as heavy as lead, and leave them to dry somewhat on the bank.

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Stumps, partially buried, which were brought by the freshet from some newly cleared field last spring; bleached oak trees which were once lopped for a fence; alders and birches which the river ice bent and broke by its weight last spring. It is pretty hard and dirty work. It grieves me to see how rapidly some great trees which have fallen or been felled waste away when left on the ground. There was the large oak by the Assabet, which I remember to have been struck by lightning, and afterward blown over, being dead. It used to lie with its top down-hill and partly in the water and its butt far up. Now there is no trace of its limbs, and the very core of its trunk is the only solid part, concealed within a spongy covering. Soon only a richer mould will mark the spot.





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September 29, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was sent, by [Ticknor & Co.](#) in Boston, a royalty payment for the sale of 344 copies of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) in the amount of \$51.⁶⁰ along with an expression of corporate condolences:

Boston, Sept. 29, 1855

*H. D. Thoreau
In a/c with W.D. Ticknor & Co
Walden—
On hand last settlement 600 Cops.
Sold Since last a/c 344
remaining on hand—256 Cops
Sales 344 Cops @ 15¢ is \$51.60*

*Dear Sir,
We regret, for your sake as well as ours, that a larger
number of Walden has not been sold.
We enclose our check for Fifty One⁶⁰/₁₀₀ Dollars for sales
to date.*

*Ever Respy
W. D. Ticknor & Co.
Henry D. Thoreau Esq
Concord
Mass.*



**Men who regretted for Thoreau's sake as well as their own
that a larger quantity of WALDENs has not been sold.**

On this day [Thoreau](#) was studying [James Ellsworth De Kay](#)'s MOLLUSCA OF NEW YORK.

MOLLUSCA, VOLUME V



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Soon he would be reading in [George Bancroft](#)'s A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, FROM THE DISCOVERY OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT,



George Bancroft

BANCROFT'S US, I

BANCROFT'S US, II

BANCROFT'S US, III

in [Richard Hildreth](#)'s THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, FROM THE DISCOVERY OF THE CONTINENT TO THE ORGANIZATION OF GOVERNMENT UNDER THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 82, Cliff Street, 1848-1852),

HILDRETH'S US, I

HILDRETH'S US, II

HILDRETH'S US, III

in the 4th volume of the [Reverend Samuel Purchas](#)'s *HAKLUYTUS POSTHUMUS* OR PURCHAS HIS PILGRIMES, CONTAYNING A HISTORY OF THE WORLD, IN SEA VOYAGES, & LANDE TRAVELS, BY ENGLISHMEN AND

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OTHERS, or perhaps A RELATION OR JOURNALL OF THE BEGINNING AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE ENGLISH PLANTATION SETTLED AT PLIMOTH, IN NEW-ENGLAND, BY CERTAINE ... (Imprinted at London for Henry Fetherstone at ye Signe of the Rose in Pauls Churchyard, 1625), or perhaps THE PRINCIPAL NAVIGATIONS, VOYAGES, TRAFFIQUES & DISCOVERIES OF THE ENGLISH NATION: MADE BY SEA OR OVERLAND TO THE REMOTE & FARTHEST DISTANT QUARTERS OF THE EARTH AT ANY TIME WITHIN THE COMPASSE OF THESE 1600 YEARS BY [RICHARD HAKLUYT](#) VOLUME FOUR (London: J.M. Dent & Co.; New York: E.P. Dutton & Co.)

PURCHAS'S VOLUME IV

and in the 26th volume of [Sir William Jardine](#)'s edition THE NATURALIST'S LIBRARY, a volume originated in 1839 on whales and other mammals, AMPHIBIOUS CARNIVORA; INCLUDING THE WALRUS AND SEALS, AND THE HERBIVOROUS CETACEA, MERMAIDS, &c., VOL. VII BY [ROBERT HAMILTON](#), WITH PORTRAIT AND MEMOIR OF FRANÇOIS PÉRON⁷⁶ (Edinburgh: W.H. Lizars; London: Henry G. Bohn, 1852 [that edition being electronically unavailable, I am forced to render for you the previous edition, of 1843]).



THE DEDUCTOR OR CATING WHALE

MAMMALIA. WHALES, ETC.

76. Some of this material on whales would find its way into [CAPE COD](#).

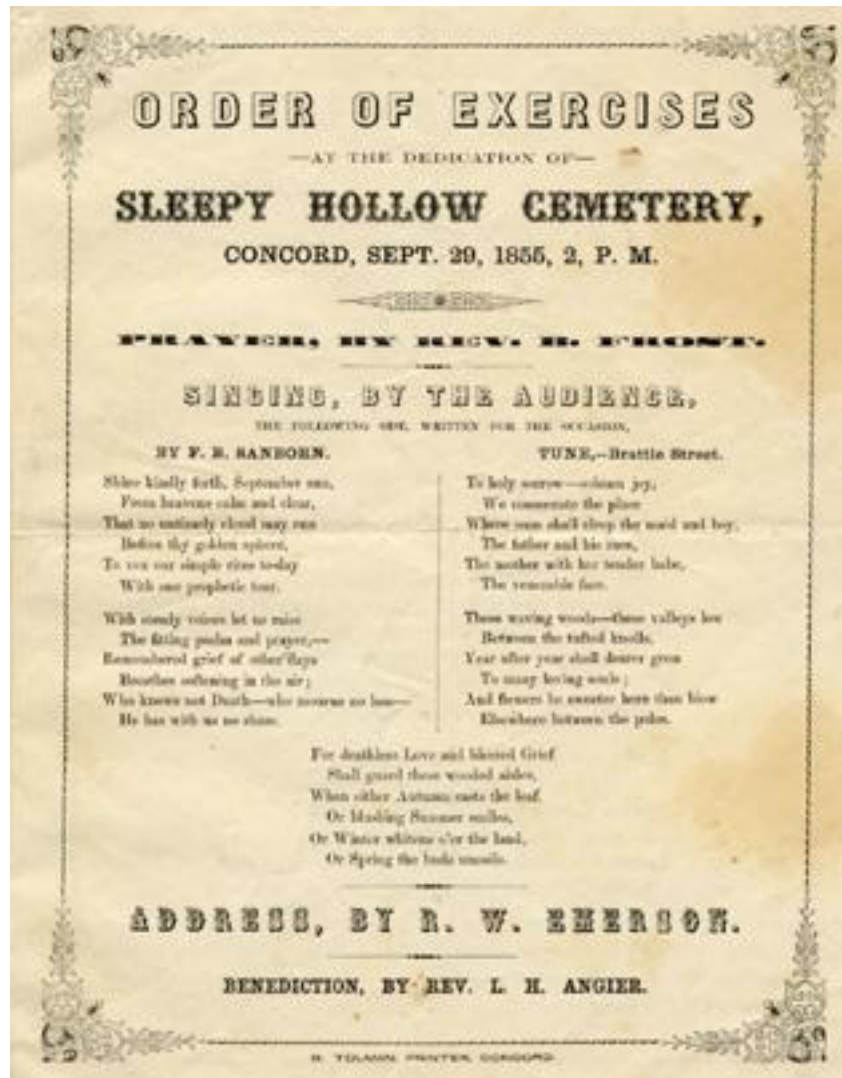


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Additional cemetery land was consecrated in “Sleepy Hollow” adjoining Concord’s New Burial Ground, the Middlesex County Courthouse, the Concord Townhouse, and the grounds of the Agricultural Society.



[Waldo Emerson](#) dedicated the new garden cemetery as “the palm of Nature’s hand.”

“Address at the Consecration of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery”

... They have thought that the taking possession of this field ought to be marked by a public meeting and religious rites: and they have requested me to say a few words which the serious and tender occasion inspires....

The life of a tree is a hundred and a thousand years; its decays ornamental; its repairs self-made: they grow when we sleep, they grew when we were unborn. Man is a moth among these longevities....

... when these acorns, that are falling at our feet, are oaks



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overshadowing our children in a remote century, this mute green bank will be full of history....

Our use will not displace the old tenants. The well-beloved birds will not sing one song less, the high-holding woodpecker, the meadow-lark, the oriole, the robin, purple finch, bluebird, thrush and red-eyed warbler, the heron, the bittern will find out the hospitality and protection from the gun of this asylum, and will seek the waters of the meadow....

We shall bring hither the body of the dead, but how shall we catch the escaped soul?

[Also (Baker, Charles, EMERSON AMONG THE ECCENTRICS, Penguin Books, New York, 1996, pp. 397-398): "I have heard that when we pronounce the name of man, we pronounce the belief in Immortality."

"The real evidence is too subtle, or is higher than we can write down in propositions... All sound minds rest on a certain preliminary conviction, namely, that if it be best that conscious personal life shall continue, it will continue; if not best, then it will not."

"In this quiet valley, as in the palm of Nature's hand, we shall sleep well when we have finished our day."]

[Thoreau](#) had measured for the new artificial pond in the cemetery, termed "Cat Pond."

[John Shepard Keyes](#) had been active in the creation of this cemetery.

During this summer and fall almost alone and unaided I laid out the cemetery according to Clevelands plan, so far as was feasible, and with my own hands drove the stakes for the lots and saved as many trees as possible from cutting. Made all the arrangements for dedication and had a memorable address from Emerson a poem from Sanborn, an ode by Channing all delivered on a lovely September day in the glen by the lot I afterwards selected. This was followed by a sale of lots the choice for the first bringing \$50. from W^m Monroe and realizing more than I expected some fifty lots sold, and the undertaking successful Thanks to me we have a 'Sleepy Hollow' cemetery I am quite content to take my long sleep in- and for my only epitaph "The Founder of This Cemetery"

J.S. KEYES AUTOBIOGRAPHY



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Friend [Daniel Ricketson](#) had been scheduled to visit Concord again and spend time with [Henry](#), but had canceled the visit when he learned that [Ellery Channing](#) had moved to Dorchester and would not be available in Concord. So [Henry](#), not standing on dignity, went off to [New Bedford](#):



Clear fine day, growing gradually cooler. Henry D. Thoreau of Concord arrived about 1¹/₂ o'clock.



September 29: Go to Daniel Ricketson's, New Bedford.

At Natural History Library saw Dr. Cabot, who says that he has heard either the hermit, or else the olivaceous, thrush sing, — very like a wood thrush, but softer. Is sure that the hermit thrush sometimes breeds hereabouts. De Kay, in the New York Reports, thus describes the blackfish— [The quotation is somewhat abridged.]

“FAMILY DELPHINIDÆ.

Genus *Globicephalus*. Lesson.

The Social Whale.

Globicephalus melas.

Delphinus melas. Trail, Nicholson's Journal.

D. globiceps. Cuvier, Mem. Mus. Vol. 19.

D. deductor. Scoresby, Arct. Regions.

D. intermedius. Harlan.

Phocena globiceps. Sampson, Am. Journal.”

“Length 15 to 20 feet;” “shining, bluish black above;” a narrow light-gray stripe beneath; “remarkable for its loud cries when excited.”

“Black Whale-fish,” “Howling Whale,” “Social Whale,” and “Bottle-head.” Often confounded with the grampus. Not known why they are stranded. In 1822 one hundred stranded in one herd at Wellfleet. First described in a History of Greenland. In the [Naturalists' Library, Jardine](#), I find *Globicephalus deductor* or *melas*, “The Deductor or Ca'ing Whale.” First *accurately* described by Trail in 1809. Sixteen to twenty-four feet long. In 1799 two hundred ran ashore on one of the Shetland Isles. In the winter of 1809-10, one thousand one hundred and ten “approached the shore of Hvalfiord, Iceland, and were captured.” In 1812 were used as food by the poor of Bretagne. They visit the neighborhood of Nice in May and June.

Got out at Tarkiln Hill or Head of the River Station, three miles this side of New Bedford. Recognized an old Dutch barn. R.'s sons, Arthur and Walton, were just returning from tautog fishing in Buzzard's Bay, and I tasted one at supper, — singularly curved from snout to tail.⁷⁷

THE SLEEPY HOLLOW CEMETERY — OLD GRAVES

([Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#))

My arrival to reside in Concord was at the time when old customs were changing for new ones. The settlement of Waldo Emerson here in 1834, after his return from Europe, and his first acquaintance with Thomas Carlyle, had something to do with these changes, especially after his friends began to gather round him here — the Thoreaus, John and Henry, in 1836; Alcott in 1840; Hawthorne in 1842; Ellery Channing in 1843; Margaret Fuller from 1836 to 1845 (though she never resided but only visited in

77. [Refer to DANIEL RICKETSON AND HIS FRIENDS, page 337.]



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Concord); and the Ripley family in 1845, inheriting the Old Manse, and receiving there Mrs. Ripley's brother, George Bradford, who had been with Hawthorne at Brook Farm, and at Plymouth with Marston Watson at his garden and nursery of "Hillside," which Thoreau surveyed and mapped for the Watsons in 1854. Mrs. Marston Watson (Mary Russell, a sister of William and Thomas Russell, Boston lawyers) had also lived in the Emerson family before her marriage, and was "The Maiden in the East" to whom Thoreau inscribed an early poem. These friends and among the Concord residents, the Hoar, Whiting and Bartlett families, and Edmund Hosmer, a sturdy farmer, with his daughters and kindred, all made up a circle especially intimate with Emerson, Alcott and Thoreau, though by no means all agreeing with the social, religious and political reformers, to which class belonged Garrison, Phillips, Theodore Parker, the Brook Farm and Fruitlands residents, and many visitors from America and Europe. Among these soon appeared Henry James, Charles Newcomb, the May family, Frederick Douglass, and other fugitive slaves, whom Mrs. Brooks, the Thoreaus, and other anti-slavery households received and cherished — helping them on their way to freedom, when pursued, as they sometimes were. My school grew in numbers during its first term, and much more in its first full year, 1855-56, near the beginning of which, in September, 1855, I was called on to make my first public appearance as a citizen — not as a voter; for I still had a voting residence in New Hampshire, where my brother and I had aided in voting down the pro-slavery Democratic party, whose leader at the time was Hawthorne's college friend, Gen. Pierce, then President of the United States. One evening, early in September, I was sitting in our Channing apartment with my sister, when Mr. Emerson called for an errand surprising to me. The Sleepy Hollow Cemetery had been purchased and was to be dedicated, and Emerson was to give the address. He was also on the Town Committee to arrange for the exercises at the grove, where the prayers, hymns and poems were read and sung; and it was in that capacity he called on me. He said, "I asked Mr. Channing for a poem on this occasion, and he has sent me a good poem, but they tell me it cannot be sung. Now will you not write for us verses that will go to some familiar tune?" He had seen some of my college verses, and others which were made to be sung, and had been sung, and he inferred from that, a capacity to do the same for Concord. I assented, and presently showed him these lines:

Ode.

Shine kindly forth, September sun,
From heavens calm and clear,
That no untimely cloud may run
Before thy golden sphere,
To vex our simple rites today
With one prophetic tear.
With steady voices let us raise
The fitting psalm and prayer;—
Remembered grief of other days
Breathes softening in the air:

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Who knows not Death — who mourns no loss,—
He has with us no share.
To holy sorrow, solemn joy,
We consecrate the place
Where soon shall sleep the maid and boy,
The father and his race,
The mother with her tender babe,
The venerable face.
These waving woods, these valleys low,
Between the tufted knolls,
Year after year shall dearer grow
To many loving souls;
And flowers be sweeter here than blow
Elsewhere between the poles.
For deathless Love and blessed Grief
Shall guard these wooded aisles,
When either Autumn casts the leaf,
Or blushing Summer smiles,
Or Winter whitens o'er the land,
Or Spring the buds uncoils.

The day proved to be that prayed for; these lines were sweetly sung to the tune of St. Martin's; and in the choir I recognized the voices of some of my new friends. Mr. Emerson liked them, and printed them afterward in his "Parnassus," as he did Channing's poem, which as poetry was much better, and which also appears in "Parnassus," and in the XIth volume of the Centenary edition of Emerson, as here:

Sleepy Hollow. (W.E. Channing)

No abbeys gloom, no dark cathedral stoops,
No winding torches paint the midnight air;
Here the green pine delights, the aspen droops
Along the modest pathways, and those fair
Pale asters of the season spread their plumes
Around this field, fit garden for our tombs.
And thou shalt pause to hear some funeral bell
Slow stealing o'er thy heart in this calm place;
Not with a throb of pain, a feverish knell,
But in its kind and supplicating grace
It says, "Go, Pilgrim, on thy march! be more
Friend to the friendless than thou wast before!"
Learn from the loved one's rest, serenity!
Tomorrow that soft bell for thee shall sound,
And thou repose beneath the whispering tree,
One tribute more to this submissive ground:—
Prison thy soul from malice, bar out pride!
Nor these pale flowers, nor this still field deride.
Rather to those accents of Being turn,
Where a ne'er-setting sun illumines the year
Eternal: and the incessant watch-fires burn
Of unspent holiness and goodness clear,—
Forget man's littleness, — deserve the best,—
God's mercy in thy thought and life confest!

Seldom has a finer poem been read on such an occasion. My own verses were favorably received, and the late Judge Keyes, whose daughter Annie had become one of my pupils, said that I was now a citizen of Concord, and, like some French poet whom he named, as rewarded with a grave at Pere la Chaise, ought to have a burial lot granted me wherever I chose. Long afterward I bought my present lot, in which my poet-son is buried with a slab of



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marble from Athens above him, inscribed with a Greek line from a Roman tomb in Boetia, of the early Christian period.

CAPE COD: In the summer and fall sometimes, hundreds of blackfish (the Social Whale, *Globicephalus melas* of De Kay; called also Black Whale-fish, Howling Whale, Bottle-head, &c.), fifteen feet or more in length, are driven ashore in a single school here. I witnessed such a scene in July, 1855. A carpenter who was working at the light-house arriving early in the morning remarked that he did not know but he had lost fifty dollars by coming to his work; for as he came along the Bay side he heard them driving a school of blackfish ashore, and he had debated with himself whether he should not go and join them and take his share, but had concluded to come to his work. After breakfast I came over to this place, about two miles distant, and near the beach met some of the fishermen returning from their chase. Looking up and down the shore, I could see about a mile south some large black masses on the sand, which I knew must be blackfish, and a man or two about them. As I walked along towards them I soon came to a huge carcass whose head was gone and whose blubber had been stripped off some weeks before; the tide was just beginning to move it, and the stench compelled me to go a long way round. When I came to Great Hollow I found a fisherman and some boys on the watch, and counted about thirty blackfish, just killed, with many lance wounds, and the water was more or less bloody around. They were partly on shore and partly in the water, held by a rope round their tails till the tide should leave them. A boat had been somewhat stove by the tail of one. They were a smooth shining black, like India-rubber, and had remarkably simple and lumpish forms for animated creatures, with a blunt round snout or head, whale-like, and simple stiff-looking flippers. The largest were about fifteen feet long, but one or two were only five feet long, and still without teeth. The fisherman slashed one with his jackknife, to show me how thick the blubber was, -about three inches; and as I passed my finger through the cut it was covered thick with oil. The blubber looked like pork, and this man said that when they were trying it the boys would sometimes come round with a piece of bread in one hand, and take a piece of blubber in the other to eat with it, preferring it to pork scraps. He also cut into the flesh beneath, which was firm and red like beef, and he said that for his part he preferred it when fresh to beef. It is stated that in 1812 blackfish were used as food by the poor of Bretagne. They were waiting for the tide to leave these fishes high and dry, that they might strip off the blubber and carry it to their try-works in their boats, where they try it on the beach. They get commonly a barrel of oil, worth fifteen or twenty dollars, to a fish. There were many lances and harpoons in the boats, - much slenderer instruments than I had expected. An old man came along the beach with a horse and wagon distributing the dinners of the fishermen, which their wives had put up in little pails and jugs, and which he had collected in the Pond Village, and for this service, I suppose, he received a share of the oil. If one could not tell his own pail, he took the first he came to.

PEOPLE OF
CAPE COD

ROBERT HAMILTON

JAMES ELLSWORTH DE KAY

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As I stood there they raised the cry of "another school," and we could see their black backs and their blowing about a mile northward, as they went leaping over the sea like horses. Some boats were already in pursuit there, driving them toward the beach. Other fishermen and boys running up began to jump into the boats and push them off from where I stood, and I might have gone too had I chosen. Soon there were twenty-five or thirty boats in pursuit, some large ones under sail, and others rowing with might and main, keeping outside of the school, those nearest to the fishes striking on the sides of their boats and blowing horns to drive them on to the beach. It was an exciting race. If they succeed in driving them ashore each boat takes one share, and then each man, but if they are compelled to strike them off shore each boat's company take what they strike. I walked rapidly along the shore toward the north, while the fishermen were rowing still more swiftly to join their companions, and a little boy who walked by my side was congratulating himself that his father's boat was beating another one. An old blind fisherman whom we met, inquired, "Where are they, I can't see. Have they got them?" In the mean while the fishes had turned and were escaping northward toward Provincetown, only occasionally the back of one being seen. So the nearest crews were compelled to strike them, and we saw several boats soon made fast, each to its fish, which, four or five rods ahead was drawing it like a race-horse straight toward the beach, leaping half out of water blowing blood and water from its hole, and leaving a streak of foam behind. But they went ashore too far north for us, though we could see the fishermen leap out and lance them on the sand. It was just like pictures of whaling which I have seen, and a fisherman told me that it was nearly as dangerous. In his first trial he had been much excited, and in his haste had used a lance with its scabbard on, but nevertheless had thrust it quite through his fish.

I learned that a few days before this one hundred and eighty blackfish had been driven ashore in one school at Eastham, a little farther south, and that the keeper of Billingsgate Point light went out one morning about the same time and cut his initials on the backs of a large school which had run ashore in the night, and sold his right to them to Provincetown for one thousand dollars, and probably Provincetown made as much more. Another fisherman told me that nineteen years ago three hundred and eighty were driven ashore in one school at Great Hollow. In the Naturalist's Library, it is said that, in the winter of 1809-10, one thousand one hundred and ten "approached the shore of Hvalfiord, Iceland, and were captured." De Kay says it is not known why they are stranded. But one fisherman declared to me that they ran ashore in pursuit of squid, and that they generally came on the coast about the last of July.

About a week afterward, when I came to this shore, it was strewn as far as I could see with a glass, with the carcasses of blackfish stripped of their blubber and their heads cut off; the latter lying higher up. Walking on the beach was out of the question on account of the stench. Between Provincetown and Truro they lay in the very path of the stage. Yet no steps were taken to abate the nuisance, and men were catching lobsters as usual just off the shore. I was told that they did sometimes tow them out and sink them; yet I wondered where they got the stones to sink them with. Of course they might be made into guano, and Cape Cod is not so fertile that her inhabitants can afford to do without this manure, -to say nothing of the diseases they may produce.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

After my return home, wishing to learn what was known about the Blackfish, I had recourse to the reports of the zoölogical surveys of the State, and I found that Storer had rightfully omitted it in his Report on the Fishes, since it is not a fish; so I turned to Emmons's Report of the Mammalia, but was surprised to find that the seals and whales were omitted by him, because he had had no opportunity to observe them. Considering how this State has risen and thriven by its fisheries, -that the legislature which authorized the Zoölogical Survey sat under the emblem of a codfish,- that Nantucket and New Bedford are within our limits, -that an early riser may find a thousand or fifteen hundred dollars' worth of blackfish on the shore in a morning, -that the Pilgrims saw the Indians cutting up a blackfish on the shore at Eastham, and called a part of that shore "Grampus Bay," from the number of blackfish they found there, before they got to Plymouth, -and that from that time to this these fishes have continued to enrich one or two counties almost annually, and that their decaying carcasses were now poisoning the air of one county for more than thirty miles, -I thought it remarkable that neither the popular nor scientific name was to be found in a report on our mammalia, - a *catalogue* of the productions of our land and water.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

December 25, Tuesday: Rather than spend [Christmas](#) at home with his pregnant wife [Ellen](#) and his 4 little children – who had recently been so graciously restored to him– feckless daddy [Ellery Channing](#) elected to visit with [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

Mary Ann Gordon Andrews, wife of [Stephen Pearl Andrews](#) died (having no idea of their names or their birth dates, we have no idea what had happened to the 4 boys to whom she had given birth in the course of her 20-year marriage to an [anarchist](#)).



[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel](#) mentioning having read about a horse in France that had died at the advanced age of 50 (horses normally live 20 to 25 years, with 44 years being about the maximum to be expected; perhaps the oldest horse, Old Billy who had succumbed in 1822, had survived for something like 62 years). He also wrote about their friend [Thomas Cholmondeley](#) adventuring off to be a British officer in the [Crimean War](#).



Concord Dec 25 '55

Friend Ricketson,

Though you have not shown your face here, I trust that you did not interpret my last note to my disadvantage. I remember that, among other things, I wished to break it to you, that, owing to engagements, I should not be able to show you so much attention as I could wish, or as you had shown to me.— How we did scour over the country! I hope your horse will live as long as one which I hear just died in the south of France at the age of 40.— Yet I had no doubt you would get quite enough of me. Do not give it up so easily— The old house is still empty—& Hosmer is easy to treat with.

Channing was here about ten days ago. I told him of my visit to you, and that he too must go and see you & your country. This may have suggested his writing to you.

That island lodge, especially for some weeks in a summer, and new explorations in your vicinity are certainly very alluring; but such are my engagements to myself that I dare not promise to wend your way – but will for the present only heartily thank you for your kind & generous offer. When my vacation comes, then look out.

My legs have grown considerably stronger, and that is all that ails me.

But I wish now above all to inform you – though I suppose you will not be particularly interested – that Cholmondeley has gone to the Crimea “a complete soldier”, with a design when he returns, if he ever returns, to buy a cottage in the South of England, and tempt me over; – but that, before going, he busied himself in buying, & has caused to be forwarded to me by Chapman, a royal gift, in the shape of 21 distinct works (one in 9 vols – 44 vols in all) almost exclusively relating to ancient Hindoo literature, and scarcely one of them to be bought in America. I am familiar with many of them & know how to



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

prize them.

I send you information of this as I might of the birth of a child.

Please remember me to all your family—

Yrs truly

Henry D. Thoreau.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1856

February: The Maine legislature forbade further funding for the [Georges River Canal](#).

This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

[Ellery Channing](#) became an assistant editor on the New Bedford [Mercury](#), presumably with the assistance of [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#). He rented a room in [New Bedford](#) and began to pay regular visits to Ricketson's home "Brooklawn" and the pretend-bachelor "shanty" in its back yard.

Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar of Concord, the candidate of the new [Republican Party](#), had lost the election. He was sent as a delegate to the 1st national convention of that party, in Pittsburgh.

[James Redpath](#) journeyed from St. Louis through Vincennes, Terre Haute, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and Columbus, to Pittsburgh, where he would be covering that convention for the St. Louis [Daily Missouri Democrat](#). He was disturbed by a modifying and limiting adjective that found its way into the new party's new platform — that although it would resist the expansion of slavery into the new territories, it would do so only by "constitutional" means. He praised the antislavery rhetoric of his old employer, Horace Greeley. He himself spoke on behalf of the Kansas emigrant aid movement that was selectively sending armed Free Staters into the territory to take part in a proxy shooting war between agents of the free North and agents of the slave South. "Constitutional" means were not for him, for the solutions he was in favor of were what we might term "Second Amendment solutions" — flowers that bloom out of the mouths of guns.



June 15, Sunday: A month premature, [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) gave birth to [Edward](#), her and [Ellery Channing](#)'s 5th child, and fell ill. As we might have expected, an extra child didn't save this marriage — soon she would again move away from this feckless husband.

While visiting [Theophilus Brown](#) in [Worcester](#), [Henry Thoreau](#) mentioned in his journal that, in a letter to Theo, [John Downes](#) had remembered "his early youth in Shrewsbury and the pout accompanied by her young."



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

June 21, Saturday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [Concord](#):



Exceedingly warm at Concord. Thermometer at 93 in the shade north side Mr. Thoreau's house, 12 M., rose to 97; spent the forenoon with Mr. Thoreau, Senr., walked down by the river and sat under the shade of the willows by the bank. I had a pleasant conversation with Miss Thoreau this P.M.; walked to Walden Pond with H.D.T. this P.M.; bathed, and crossed the pond with him in a boat we found upon the shore. Saw the Scarlet Tanager by the aid of Thoreau's glass, a bird I had never seen before. He was perched upon the topmost bough of a pine, and chanted forth his simple song with considerable earnestness for some time. R.W. Emerson called upon me this evening; talked of Channing and the Kansas affairs. Walked home with him and with Thoreau. This has been extremely warm, thermometer at 99 at 5 P.M. north side shade of Mr. T.'s house.

[ELLERY CHANNING](#)

[JOHN THOREAU, SR.](#)

[SOPHIA E. THOREAU](#)

[WALDO EMERSON](#)

A series of poems by [Louisa May Alcott](#), entitled "Beach Bubbles," began in Boston's [Saturday Evening Gazette](#).

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to Calvin H. Greene of Rochester, Michigan.

Concord Saturday

June 21st '56

Dear Sir

On the 12 ult I forwarded the two books to California, observing your directions in every particular, and I trust that Uncle Sam will discharge his duty faithfully. While in Worcester this week I obtained the accompanying daguerreotype — which my friends think is pretty good — though better looking than I.

<i>Books & postage</i>	— — —	<i>\$2.64</i>
<i>Daguerreotype</i>		<i>.50</i>
<i>Postage</i>	— — —	<i>.16</i>
		<i>3.30</i>
		<i>5.00</i>
		<i><u>3.30</u></i>

*You will accordingly
find 1.70 enclosed with my shadow.
Yrs*



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Henry D. Thoreau

June 22, Sunday: [H. Rider Haggard](#) was born.

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) spent the forenoon in [Henry Thoreau](#)'s room copying titles of books, etc. The [Reverend Convers Francis](#) was preaching in [Concord](#) that morning, and his prooftext was Colossians 1:27 and



his topic "Christ in Us the Hope of Glory." The thermometer reaching 95 at 3PM. At 4PM Ricketson and Thoreau went over to the Emerson home for tea by prior invitation, stopping by on the way to call on Mrs. Mary Merrick Brooks. Then he, Thoreau, and Emerson went with the Emerson children to [Walden Pond](#).



Thoreau walked back from the pond with [Ellen Emerson](#) and [Edith Emerson](#) while Ricketson, [Waldo Emerson](#), and 12-year-old [Edward Waldo Emerson](#) "bathed" and discussed the birds and flowers that they had met on the way. Upon return to the Emersons, Ricketson had a chance to meet Mrs. Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley with Miss Ripley, Mrs. Marston Goodwin, and the Reverend Francis. They visited until 9, and Ricketson was in bed back at the Thoreaus' at 10. He had found the day very satisfactory and mused to his journal about Concord's opportunity of becoming the famous-author [tourist trap](#) it is today:



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN



My ideas of Mr. Emerson, with whom I had my second interview last night, are that he is a kind, gentle-natured man, even loving, but not what is usually termed warm-hearted. His mind does not strike me as being so great and strong as good in quality; it appears to me also limited as to its power. I should think he could rarely surprise one with any outburst of inspiration – his genius, for what he undoubtedly has, is sui generis. He is thoughtful, original, and only Emerson, and the founder of his race. It does not appear to me that he is even indebted to Carlyle, although the latter has recognized him as a kindred spirit. Emerson's strength appears to me to lie in his honesty with himself; by his honesty he has produced a genuine article in the way of thought. He is an intelligent philosopher, a recipient of the divine cordial in doses rather homœopathic, but effectual specifics for those seeking a purer and better draught than what the schools afford. He is a blessing to the age. I am much interested in Concord, and should prefer it for a residence to almost any other place. The scenery is very picturesque in and about the village, and all appears quiet and peaceful, none of the stir and bustle of New Bedford. The Concord, or Musketaquid or grass-grown river, as my friend H.D.T. has learned its meaning from the Indians, runs along the edge of the village, which is chiefly on one street, although there are several others. It is a fine stream, and remarkable for its gentle current. With Thoreau I rowed up the river several miles, and had many pleasant views from different points. Walden Pond, by the shore where Thoreau built him a little house and there lived two years, is a small but delightful little lake, surrounded by woods. It is very deep and clear, a kind of well of nature. Concord has been for a long time the home or place of temporary abode for many of our most intellectual men and women, – commencing, so far as I am informed, with Dr. Ripley, then Emerson, Margaret Fuller for a short time as a visitor, Hawthorne, G.W. Curtis, H.D. Thoreau, the true Concord aborigine, William E. Channing, 2d, poet, Hon. Samuel Hoar, and his son, ex-Judge Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar. It is also the home of Mrs. Brooks, a true and stirring abolitionist. Concord has a large number of fine old houses, and the old parsonage, once the home of Dr. Ripley and near the battle-ground, is one of the finest old homes in this county.

WALDO EMERSON

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

ELLERY CHANNING

SAMUEL HOAR

EBENEZER ROCKWOOD HOAR

EZRA RIPLEY

MARGARET FULLER

THOMAS CARLYLE



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

July 1, Friday: Justinus Jacob Leonard van der Bruggen replaced Floris Adriaan van Hall and Dirk Donker Curtius as chief minister of the Netherlands.

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#):



A fine day, cooler than for some days. Thermometer at 75, 12 hours, noon: wind N.W. This I attribute to the heat lightning in the east last evening. Rode to town this morning with Thoreau, visited Arnold's [??] garden with him. Channing came up to tea to see Thoreau and spend the evening and night. Thoreau and Channing spent the evening in the Shanty. Retired at 10.

ELLERY CHANNING

[Professor Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “A man and still more a woman, always betrays something of his or her nationality. The women of Russia, for instance, like the lakes and rivers of their native country, seem to be subject to sudden and prolonged fits of torpor. In their movement, undulating and caressing like that of water, there is always a threat of unforeseen frost. The high latitude, the difficulty of life, the inflexibility of their autocratic régime, the heavy and mournful sky, the inexorable climate, all these harsh fatalities have left their mark upon the Muscovite race. A certain somber obstinacy, a kind of primitive ferocity, a foundation of savage harshness which, under the influence of circumstances, might become implacable and pitiless; a cold strength, an indomitable power of resolution which would rather wreck the whole world than yield, the indestructible instinct of the barbarian tribe, perceptible in the half-civilized nation, all these traits are visible to an attentive eye, even in the harmless extravagances and caprices of a young woman of this powerful race. Even in their badinage they betray something of that fierce and rigid nationality which burns its own towns and [as Napoleon said] keeps battalions of dead soldiers on their feet.

What terrible rulers the Russians would be if ever they should spread the night of their rule over the countries of the south! They would bring us a polar despotism, tyranny such as the world has never known, silent as darkness, rigid as ice, insensible as bronze, decked with an outer amiability and glittering with the cold brilliancy of snow, a slavery without compensation or relief. Probably, however, they will gradually lose both the virtues and the defects of their semi-barbarism. The centuries as they pass will ripen these sons of the north, and they will enter into the concert of peoples in some other capacity than as a menace or a dissonance. They have only to transform their hardness into strength, their cunning into grace, their Muscovitism into humanity, to win love instead of inspiring aversion or fear.”



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

July 2, Saturday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#):



ELLERY CHANNING

Clear and fine, cool this morning. Thermometer at about 50, 5 A.M. My friend H.D. Thoreau left in the early train this morning for his home at Concord, Mass. Took him to the Tarkiln Station. Channing, who spent the night with us, left about 9 to walk to town. During the visit of my friend Thoreau we have visited the [Middleborough Ponds](#) twice, [the Island Naushon](#), [Sconticut Neck](#), etc. His visit has been a very pleasant one to myself and family. He is the best educated man I know, and I value his friendship very much. His health is quite poor at present, and I fear he will hardly reach old age, which from his unconcern in regard to it the more strengthens my fears for his loss.

The 1849 report of the drowning of former officer of the 2d Life Guards George Trafford Heald had apparently been spurious, as the Cork [Examiner](#) reported the death of George Trafford Heald, Esq., formerly an officer in the 2d Life Guards and “one of the persons stated to have been married to the notorious [Lola Montes](#),” as having occurred on June 20th, 1856 in Folkstone in Kent, England.

September 19, Thursday: [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) arrived at the [Channing](#) family home in [Boston](#).

Samuel May, Jr. wrote to his cousin, the Reverend Samuel Joseph May, to declare against any compromise in matters of basic principle. It is morally wrong to make any common cause with those who are inhabited by that vile prejudice against color which we, as Abolitionists, have always held to be the handmaiden of slavery.

“God forbid” that those who opposed the institution of human slavery because it was debasing black Americans should make common cause with those who despised the African because they believed this black race to be inherently base — thus invalidating the entire ethos of antislavery agitation, which was fundamentally grounded upon an uneasy pre-war alliance between **precisely** these two attitudes!⁷⁸

US forces landed in Panama, Republic of New Grenada, to protect American interests during an insurrection (they would be ashore until the 22d).

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS



Sept. 19. Am surprised to find the Polygonum Pennsylvanicum abundant, by the roadside near the bank. First saw it the other clay at Brattleboro. This makes, as I reckon, twenty polygonums that I know, all but cilinode and V2.rgi~aia~a~.c~ca in Concord. Is not this a late kind? It grows larger than the Perskaria. Observed an Aster undulatus behind oak at foot of

78. Note that such a coalition has reappeared, in California, in 1995’s agitation for “diversity” in educational opportunity and in employment opportunity. Those citizens who believe that affirmative action programs have been subverted into an agenda of unfairness, unequal consideration, have made common cause with the white racists who fear that affirmative action might succeed.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

hill on Assabet, with lower leaves not heart-shaped,
but thus
Gathered
just half a bushel
of barberries on hill in less than two hours, or three
pecks to-day and yesterday in less than three hours.
It is singular that I have so few, if any, competitors.
I have the pleasure also of bringing them home in my
boat. They will be more valuable this year, since
apples and cranberries are scarce. These barberries
are more than the apple crop to me, for we shall have
them on the table daily all winter, while the two barrels
of apples which we lay up will not amount to so much.
Also, what is the pear crop to the huckleberry crop?
They make a great ado about their pears, those who
get any, but how many families raise or buy a barrel
of pears all told? The pear crop is insignificant compared
with the huckleberry crop. The one does not
concern me, the other does. I do not taste more than
six pears annually, and I suspect the majority fare
worse than I, but nature heaps the table with berries
for six weeks or more. Indeed the apple crop is not
so important as the huckleberry crop. Probably the
apples consumed in this town do not amount to more
than one barrel a family, but what is this to a month
or more of huckleberrying for every man, woman, and
child, and the birds into the bargain? They are not
unprofitable in a pecuniary sense. I hear that some
of the inhabitants of Ashby have sold two thousand
dollars' worth the past season.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

September 21, Friday: [Ellery Channing](#) came to his father [Doctor Walter Channing](#)'s home in Boston from New Bedford, Massachusetts to visit his ailing estranged wife [Ellen Fuller Channing](#). His sister Barbara Channing observed that he was "prepared," or preparing himself, for Ellen's eventual inevitable death.⁷⁹

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [Concord](#):



Poor sleep at hotel. Thoreau called at 8. Walked with him to Walden Pond and saw the location of the Shanty where he lived alone some two years, bathed and visited the cliff and several other hills to obtain views of the pond and surrounding country, which is very picturesque, and the Concord River constantly seen in its meandering course through the neighboring fields, &c. Dined with Thoreau at his father's house; after dinner went on the river with Thoreau and Channing; called at an old farmhouse and saw a Mr. Hosmer, a friend of my companions; visited old battleground; saw the old mansion where Hawthorne formerly lived. Took tea with R.W. Emerson, in whose family Thoreau is quite at home, having been an inmate there. Suffered from embarrassment or rather a sense of incongruity in my being at Emerson's. I spent the night with Channing, who kindly made a good bed for me, the one at the hotel being so poor.

[EDMUND HOSMER](#)

[WALDO EMERSON](#)

September 22, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Benjamin B. Wiley](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#):

*Concord Sep 22^d '56
Dear Sir
I would advi[s]e not
to take a revolver or other weapon
of defen[c]e. It will affect the in-
nocence of your enterprise. If you
chance to meet with a wolf or a
dangerous snake, you will be luckier
than I have been, or expect to be. When
I went to the White Mts I carried
a gun to kill game with, but wisely
left it at ~~the~~ Concord N.H. As
for a knapsack, I should say
wear something water-tight & com-
fortable, with two or three pockets
to keep things separate. Wear*

79. For some six months, which in Ellery's inconstant universe would be like six light years, this father had been able to hold a steady newspaper job paying a respectable income of \$500 per year, and had been actively engaged in a process of reestablishing a relationship with his children.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

*old shoes; carry no thin clothes.
Do not forget needle and thread
and pins, a compass, and the
best pocket map of the [county]
obtainable.
Yrs in haste
Henry D. Thoreau*

{written perpendicular to text at bottom of page:
Postmark: *CONCORD*
SEP
22
MASS.
Address: B. B. Wiley Esq
Providence
R.I.}



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Friend [Daniel Ricketson](#), who was often afflicted with headaches which seemed to focus upon his left eye, the one that had been injured, to his journal, while staying in [Ellery Channing](#)'s bachelor home in [Concord](#):



Rose with headache, breakfast with Channing who lives alone, having separated from his wife and children for what reason I do not know, but he appears to me to be a kind and quiet man with extreme eccentricity. Thoreau came in, we spent the forenoon in conversation; among other matters Channing suggested the plan of an independent periodical, &c. Left at 1 P.M. and arrived at Tarkiln Hill about 7 P.M. The visit, except excessive fatigue and headache, was very pleasant and will be long remembered by me. My respect for Thoreau was much increased, he is not only a man of great natural powers, but of extreme acquirements and very much of a gentleman.

That late evening, unbeknownst to Friend Daniel, in the home of her father-in-law [Doctor Walter Channing](#) on Bowdoin Street in Boston and under his care, his host's estranged wife [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) was dying of complications from her last pregnancy and childbirth. Dr. Channing and his daughter Barbara Channing ([Ellery](#)'s sister) were at the bedside:

She has seemed more feeble each day, and to-day had two faint turns wh[ich] alarmed me – but after tea revived and spoke quite brightly and said she w[ou]ld sit up till 10 – Then I helped her to bed, and she sat down on the edge, and began to struggle terribly for breath – I call'd father and we held her and gave her brandy and applied hot water to her chest but soon she sunk and died very gently at the last.

Barbara commented that everyone had “thought she might live till Jany [January] and I hoped still more.”



Sept. 22. A rainy day. Tried some pennyroyal tea, but found it too medicinal for my taste. Yet I collect these herbs, biding the time when their use shall be discovered.

September 25, Thursday: With the funeral of [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) due for noon, estranged husband and father [Ellery Channing](#) sneaked into the [Channing](#) home in Boston early in the morning, entering through the basement. His sister [Barbara Channing](#) took him up into her room, and he remained in that room with his children through the day.

He was calm – I never expected to get thro' the getting Ellery down from my room thro' the crowd, & yet it all happened easily. There were a great many here – & beautiful services fr[om] J[ames] F[reeman] C[larke] & Mr Bulfinch – Father, E[llery], the



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

children, & I rode out in the first carriage – The day glorious – among the trees – & Ellen was surrounded with lovely flowers a wreath & others.

December 24, Wednesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [Concord](#):

[WALDO EMERSON](#)

[ELLEN EMERSON](#)

[EDITH EMERSON](#)

[EDWARD EMERSON](#)

[ELLERY CHANNING](#)

[BAKER FARM](#)

Breakfasted with Mr. Emerson and his daughters Ellen and Edith, and his son Edward, fine young people. Left Mr. E.'s and walked with Thoreau in the P.M. to Walden Pond, and through the woods to "Baker Farm," immortalized by Thoreau and Channing in prose and verse. The walking hard on account of snow about eight inches deep; got back at ten. Spent evening in house. T. read Channing's poem on Baker Farm and some other of C.'s pieces which he thinks better than almost any other poet. Thoreau saw a fox before us and there were numerous traces across the road in the woods. Enjoyed the walk though quite tired out.

[JAMES BAKER](#)

[WALDEN](#): O Baker Farm!

"Landscape where the richest element
Is a little sunshine innocent." * *

"No one runs to revel
On thy rail-fenced lea." * *

"Debate with no man hast thou,
With questions art never perplexed,
As tame at the first sight as now,
In thy plain russet gabardine dressed." * *

"Come ye who love,
And ye who hate,
Children of the Holy Dove,
And Guy Faux of the state,
And hang conspiracies
From the tough rafters of the trees!"

(I don't know where exactly this material ought to be situated, but while [Eddie Emerson](#) was at age 12, he dug a tunnel in the snow about 6 feet long, got people to come out and watch, and crawled inside with a lamp so that they could see the glow through the snow. He shouted out at the people watching so they could hear how his voice was muffled. The people who assembled for this demonstration included [Henry Thoreau](#).)



[JAMES BAKER](#)

December 24: P.M. More snow in the night and to-day, making nine or ten inches. To Walden and [Baker Farm](#) with Ricketson, it still snowing a little. Turned off from the railroad and went through Wheeler or Owl Wood. The snow is very light, so that sleighs cut through it and there is but little sleighing. It is very handsome now on the trees by the main path in Wheeler Wood, where on the weeds and twigs that rise above

[DANIEL RICKETSON](#)



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

the snow, it rests just like down, light towers of down with the bare extremity of the twig peeping out above. We push through the light dust, throwing it before our legs as a husbandman grain which he is sowing. It is only in still paths in the woods that it rests on the trees much.

Am surprised to find Walden still open in the middle. When I push aside the snow with my feet the ice appears quite black by contrast. There is considerable snow on the edge of the pine woods where I used to live. It rests on the successive tiers of boughs, perhaps weighing them down so that the trees are opened into great flakes from top to bottom. The snow collects and is piled up in little columns like down about every twig and stem, and this is only seen in perfection, complete to the last flake, while it is snowing, as now.

Returned across the pond and went to [Baker Farm](#).

Noticed at E. end of westernmost Andromeda Pond the slender spikes of *Lycopus* with half a dozen distinct little spherical dark brown whorls of pungently fragrant or spicy seeds, somewhat nutmeg-like or even like flagroot when bruised. I am not sure that the seeds of any other mint are thus fragrant now. It scents your handkerchief or pocketbook finely when the crumbled whorls are sprinkled over them.

It was very pleasant walking there before the storm was over, in the soft subdued light. We are also more domesticated in nature when our vision is confined to near and familiar objects.

Did not see a track of any animal till returning near the Wells meadow field, where many foxes (?) two of whom I had a glimpse of, had been coursing back and forth in the path and near it for 3/4 of a mile; they had made quite a path.

I do not take snuff. In my winter walks I stop and bruise between my thumb and fingers the dry whorls of the *Lycopus* or water-horehound, just rising above the snow, stripping them off, and smell that. that is as near as I come to the Spice Islands. That is my smelling-bottle, my ointment.

FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1857

Spring: The settlers of Hyatt in the [Kansas Territory](#) erected a sawmill, to which in the next fall a grist mill would be attached.

With the opening of a US land office in [Lecompton](#), it became possible to file land claims in the [Kansas Territory](#).
[Luke Fisher Parsons](#) returned from Byron, Illinois to work his land claim 4 miles west of Lawrence in the [Kansas Territory](#).

[Ellery Channing](#) vacationed in Concord for at least a dozen days.

April 1, Wednesday: [Herman Melville](#)'s THE CONFIDENCE-MAN was issued. This book would fall stillborn from the press, its publishers would be forced into bankruptcy — and this particular author would not be able to publish any more novels.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

*Concord Ap. 1
1857*

*Dear Ricketson,
I got your note of welcome night before last. Channing is not here, at least I have not seen nor heard of him, but depend on meeting him in New Bedford. I expect, if the weather is favorable, to take the 4.30 train from Boston tomorrow, Thursday, [p]m—for I hear of no noon train, and shall be glad to find your wagon at Tarkiln Hill, for I see it will be rather late for going across lots.*

Alcott was here last

Page 2
week, and will probably visit New Bedford within a week or 2. I have seen all the spring signs you mention and a few more, even here. Nay I heard one frog peep nearly a week ago, methinks the very first one in all this region. I wish that there were a few more signs of spring in myself--however, I take it that there are as many within us as we think we hear without us. I am decent for a steady pace but not yet for a race. I have a little cold at present, & you speak of rheumatism about the head & shoulders. Your frost

Page 3
is not quite out. I suppose that the earth itself has a little cold &



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rheumatism about these times, but all these things together produce a very fair general result. In a concert, you know, we must sing our parts feebly sometimes that we may not injure the general effect. I shouldn't wonder if my two-year old invalidity had been a positively charming feature to some amateurs favorably located.

Why not a blasted man, as well as a blasted tree, on your lawn? If you should happen not to see me by the train named, do not go

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again, but wait at home for me, or a note from

Yrs

Henry D Thoreau

HDT

WHAT?

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[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in New Bedford with [Bronson Alcott](#):

Spent the day at home with Mr. Alcott; I find him a genial, highly gifted man. H.D. Thoreau arrived to-night from Concord; met him at Tarkiln Hill.



It was during one of the gatherings of Ricketson, [Ellery Channing](#), Alcott, etc. at Ricketson's home during this period that the famous incident occurred, in which [Thoreau](#) sang and danced in the parlor and heartily trod upon Alcott's toes. Thoreau had grown a full beard and Ricketson, who was 5'3" himself, was thinking that a long beard was inappropriate on a short man.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

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The Improvised Dance

Like the Indian dance of old,
Far within the forest shade,
Showing forth the spirit bold
That no foeman e'er dismayed;

Like the dancing of the hours,
Tripping on with merry feet,
Triumphing o'er earthly power,
Yet with footsteps all must greet;

Like the Fauns and Satyrs, too,
Nimbly leaping in the grove,
Now unseen and then in view,
As among the trees they move;

Like the leaves by whirlwind tossed
In some forest's valley wide,
Scattered by the Autumn frost,
Whirling madly, side by side;

Thus, and still mysterious more,
Our philosopher did prance,
Skipping on our parlor floor
In his wild, improvised dance.

April 3, Friday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford , Massachusetts](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#), [Bronson Alcott](#), and [Ellery Channing](#):



Spent the day at home, in the Shanty during the forenoon with Mr. Alcott and Thoreau; talked on high themes, rather religious. Alcott walked to town this P.M. Thoreau and I walked as far as Woodlee with him, parted, and we crossed to the railroad and so up to Tarkiln Hill, and through the woods thence home. Channing and Alcott walked up from town together to tea.



April 3. In Ricketson's shanty. R. has seen white-bellied swallows more than a week. I walk down the side of the river and see Walton's ice-boat left on the bank.

Hear R. describing to Alcott his bachelor uncle James Thornton. When he awakes in the morning he lights the fire in his stove (all prepared) with a match on the end of a stick, without getting up. When he gets up he first attends to his ablutions, being personally very clean, and cuts off a head of tobacco to clean his teeth with, eats a hearty breakfast, sometimes, it was said, even buttering his sausages. Then he goes to a relative's store and reads the [Tribune](#) till dinner, sitting in a corner with his back to those who enter. Goes to his boarding-house and dines, eats an apple or two, and then in the afternoon frequently goes about the solution of some mathematical problem (having once been a schoolmaster), which often employs him a week.

[FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON](#)

[NEW BEDFORD MA](#)

[WALTON RICKETSON](#)

[BRONSON ALCOTT](#)



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

April 8, Wednesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#), [Bronson Alcott](#), and [Ellery Channing](#):



Clear and fine, spent at home. Mr. Alcott dined at B. Rodman's. Thoreau made some bayberry tallow in the Shanty; walked with him to the rocky cliff beyond Acushnet. Channing came up this P.M. Fair, clear, moonlight evening.

April 10, Good Friday: In the morning [Richard Wagner](#) conceived the idea for a work *Parsifal* that would be based on Wolfram von Eschenbach's 13th-Century epic poem *Parzival* about a quest for the Holy Grail:

... on Good Friday I awoke to find the sun shining brightly for the first time in this house: the little garden was radiant with green, the birds sang, and at last I could sit on the roof and enjoy the long-yearned-for peace with its message of promise. Full of this sentiment, I suddenly remembered that the day was Good Friday, and I called to mind the significance this omen had already once assumed for me when I was reading Wolfram's *Parzival*. Since the sojourn in Marienbad [in the summer of 1845], where I had conceived [Die Meistersinger](#) and *Lohengrin*, I had never occupied myself again with that poem; now its noble possibilities struck me with overwhelming force, and out of my thoughts about Good Friday I rapidly conceived a whole drama, of which I made a rough sketch with a few dashes of the pen, dividing the whole into three acts.

(Actually, as his wife Cosima would point out to him later, this couldn't have occurred as described on this Good Friday morning, he had merely made it up. In his story he was sitting on the roof of the "cottage" Asyl on the green hill outside of Zürich, but they had not moved into this "cottage" belonging to the Wesendonck family until the 28th of the month. Had this actually happened on the 10th, then it would have needed to have happened while they were still residing at Zeltweg 13 inside the city of Zürich, where the environment couldn't have been nearly so nice.)



R. today recalled the impression which inspired his "Good Friday Music"; he laughs, saying he had thought to himself, "In fact it is all as far-fetched as my love affairs, for it was not a Good Friday at all – just a pleasant mood in Nature which made me think, 'This is how a Good Friday ought to be.'"

LISTEN TO IT NOW

[Henry Thoreau](#) noticed among the decorations in [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s shanty a wall-motto from [Horace](#)'s ODES. We note that although he jotted down several such conceits, this stands out as the only one for which it was unnecessary to also register the name of an author.



April 10: D.R.'s Shanty is about half a dozen rods S.W. of his house (which may be one hundred rods



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from the road), nearly between his house and barn, is 12 x 14 feet, with 7 feet posts, with common pent roof. In building it he directed the carpenter to use western boards and timbers, though some eastern studs (spruce?) were inserted. He had already occupied a smaller shanty at "Woodlee," about a mile S. The roof is shingled, and the sides made of matched boards, and painted a light clay color, with chocolate (?) colored blinds. Within, it is not plastered, and is open to the roof, showing the timbers and rafters, and rough boards and cross-timbers overhead, as if ready for plastering. The door is at the east end, with a small window on each side of it, a similar window on each side of the building, and one at the west end, the latter looking down the garden walk. In front of the last window is a small box stove with a funnel rising to a level with the plate, and there inserted in a small brick chimney which rests on planks. On the south side of the room, against the stove, is a rude settle with a coarse cushion and pillow; on the opposite side a large low desk with some bookshelves above it; on the same side by the window, a small table covered with books; and in the N.E. corner, behind the door, an old-fashioned secretary, its pigeonholes stuffed with papers. On the opposite side as you enter is a place for fuel, which the boy leaves each morning, a place to hang greatcoats. there were two small pieces of carpet on the floor, and R. or one of his guests swept out the Shanty each morning. There was a small kitchen clock hanging in the S.W. corner, and a map of Bristol County behind the settle. The west and N.W. side is well-nigh covered with slips of paper on which are written some sentences or paragraphs from R.'s favorite books. I noticed among the most characteristic Didbin's "Tom Tackle," a translation of Anacreon's *Cicada*, lines celebrating tobacco, Milton's "How charming is divine philosophy," &c., "*Inveni requiem; Spes et Fortuna valet: Nil mihi vobiscum est: laudite nunc alios.*" (Is it Petrarch?) this is also over the door, "*Mors pallida æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas regumque turres.*" Some lines of his own in memory of A.J. Downing, "Not to be in a hurry," over the desk, and many other quotations, celebrating retirement, country life, simplicity, humanity, sincerity, &c., &c., from Cowper and other English poets, and similar extracts from newspapers. There were also two or three advertisements of cattle-show exhibitions, and the warning not to kill birds contrary to laws, he being one of the subscribers notified to enforce the act, an advertisement of a steamboat on Lake Winnepiseogee, &c., cards of his business friends. The size of different brains, from "Hall's Journal of Health," and "Take the world Easy." A sheet of blotting paper tacked up, and of Chinese characters from a tea-chest. Also a few small pictures and pencil sketches, the latter commonly caricatures of his visitors or friends, as "The Trojan" (Channing) and Van Beest; I take the most notice of these particulars because his peculiarities are so commonly unaffected. He has long been accustomed to put these scraps on his walls, and has a basket full somewhere saved from the old Shanty, though there were some quotations which had no right there. I found all his peculiarities faithfully expressed, his humanity, his fear of death, love of retirement, simplicity, &c. The more characteristic books were Bradley's Husbandry, Drake's Indians, Barber's Hist. Coll., Zimmermann on Solitude, Bigelow's Plants of Boston, &c., Farmer's Register of the first Settlers of New England, Marshall's Gardening, Vick's Gardener, John Woolman, The Modern Horse Doctor, Downing's Fruits, &c., The Farmer's Library, Walden, Dymond's Essays, Jobb Scott's Journal, Morton's Memorial, Bailey's Dictionary, Downing's Landscape Gardening, etc., The Task, Nuttall's Ornithology, Morse's Gazetteer, The Domestic Practice of Hydropathy, John Bunclie, Dwight's Travels, Virgil, Young's Night Thoughts, History of Plymouth, and other Shanty books.

There was an old gun, hardly safe to fire, said to be loaded with an inextractable charge, and also an old sword over the door; also a tin sign, "D. Ricketson's office" (he having set up for a lawyer once), and a small crumpled horn; there I counted more than 20 rustic canes scattered about, a dozen or 15 pipes of various patterns (mostly the common), two spy-glasses, an open paper of tobacco, an Indian's jaw (dug up), a stuffed Bluejay, and Pine Grosbeak, and a rude Indian stone hatchet, &c., &c. There was a box with fifteen or twenty knives, mostly very large old-fashioned jack-knives, kept for curiosity, occasionally giving one to a boy or friend. A large book full of pencil sketches, "to be inspected by whomsomever," containing mostly sketches of his friends, &c., acquaintances, and himself, of wayfaring men whom he had met, Quakers, &c., &c., and now and then a verse under fence rail, or an old-fashioned house sketched on a peculiar pea-green paper. A pail of water stands behind the door, with a peculiar tin cup for drinking, made in France.

ANACREON

HORACE

COWPER

BARBER

BIGELOW

QUAKERS

A.J. DOWNING

A.J. DOWNING

DWIGHT

PIPE

JONATHAN DYMOND
FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT IT IS MORTALS WHO CONSUME OUR
HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS, FOR WHAT WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO DO IS



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

EVASIVE THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE HUMAN LIFESPAN. (IMMORTALS,
WITH NOTHING TO LIVE FOR, TAKE NO HEED OF OUR STORIES.)

April 13, Monday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#), [Bronson Alcott](#), and [Ellery Channing](#):



Rode to Quittacus Pond with Thoreau, also visited Long Pond, and took our dinner at the old Brady house. Channing came up to tea. Attended the third Conversation of Mr. Alcott at C.W. Morgan's this evening, the subject, "Diet and Health." Owing to some supposed disrespect to Christianity and the customs of Quakers, some of the members of the society left, although I think from what I know of Mr. Alcott if they had remained through his course they would have been better satisfied.

QUAKERS

There was evidently some discussion of what to do with the books sent to [Thoreau](#) by [Thomas Cholmondeley](#) that were in Sanskrit, because Thoreau of course did not read Sanskrit. [Waldo Emerson](#) wrote James Elliot Cabot and mentioned Thoreau's copy of the *Upanishads* as a book that might possibly be made available for the Boston Athenæum. "'Tis an inestimable little book, –good enough to make me hesitate to put it into the library."



April 13, Monday: To Middleboro Ponds. There was no boat on Little Quittacus, so we could not explore it. Set out to walk around it, but the water being high (higher than anciently, even, on account of dams), we had to go round a swamp at the south end about Joe's rocks, and R. gave it up. I went to Long Pond and waited for him. Saw a strange turtle, much like a small snapping turtle or very large *Sternotherus odoratus* (?), crawling slowly along the bottom next the shore; poked it ashore with a stick; it had a peculiarly square snout, and hinges to the sternum, and both parts moveable; was very sluggish, would not snap or bite, looked old, being mossy close on the edges, and the scales greenish and eaten beneath, the flesh slate colored. I saw it was new, and wished to bring it away, but had no paper to wrap it in; so I peeled a white birch, getting a piece of bark about ten inches long. Noticed that the birch sap was flowing. This bark at once curled back so as to present its yellow side outward. I rolled it about the turtle and folded the ends back, and tied it round with a strip of birch bark, making a very nice and airy box for the occasion, which would not be injured by moisture, far better than any paper, and so brought it home to Concord at last. As my coat hung in R.'s shanty, over a barrel of papers, the morning that I came away the turtle made a little noise, scratching the birch bark in my pocket. R. observed, "There is a mouse in that barrel; what would you do about it?" "Oh, let him alone," said I, "he'll get out directly." "They often get among my papers," he added. "I guess I'd better set the barrel outdoors." I did not explain, and perhaps he experimented in the barrel after my departure.⁸⁰



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April 24, Friday: In [India](#), the British colonel in charge of the 3d Light Cavalry ordered his riflemen to use the Enfield cartridge which they suspected had been greased with a mixture of cow fat and pig fat. When 85 of the Hindu and Muslim riflemen refused, they were convicted of disobedience to a lawful order, to serve at hard labor.



In the early morning, before daybreak, [Henry Thoreau](#) sailed down the Concord River to Ball's Hill. Then he surveyed, for his [Concord Academy](#) classmate [John Shepard Keyes](#), a pasture belonging to Dennis. At some point during the day he walked with [Ellery Channing](#).



April 29, Wednesday: Headquarters for the US Army, Division of the Pacific, was “permanently” established at the Presidio. (They're gone now, of course.)



April 29. Purple finch sings on R.W.E.'s trees.

P.M. — To Dugan Desert.

At Tarbell's watering-place, see a dandelion, its conspicuous bright-yellow disk in the midst of a green space on the moist bank. It is thus I commonly meet with the earliest dandelion set in the midst of some liquid green patch. It seems a sudden and decided progress in the season. On the pitch pines beyond John Hosmer's, I see old cones within two feet of the ground on the trunk, — sometimes a circle of them around it, — which must have been formed on the young tree some fifteen years ago. Sweet-fern at entrance of Ministerial Swamp. A partridge [[Ruffed Grouse](#) [Bonasa umbellus](#) (Partridge)] there drums incessantly. [C.](#) says it makes his heart beat with it, or he feels it in his breast.

ELLERY CHANNING



I find that that clayey-looking soil on which the bæomyees grows is a very thin crust on common sand only. I have seen that pretty little hair-cap moss (*Pogo natum brevicaulis*? [Thoreau added here: “No”]) for a fortnight

80. In an attempt to grasp why it was that their father's friend Thoreau did not explain this scratching noise, Ricketson's children Anna and Walton, later in life, when Thoreau's journal was published and they read this comment about their father, have speculated that perhaps “it was out of consideration for Father's sensitiveness regarding all dumb animals.” They would not favor the idea that it might have been merely their dad's adored friend's practical joke on their dad.



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out at least; like little pine trees; the staminate pretty, cup-shaped and shorter.

A steel-blue-black flattish beetle, which, handled, imparted a very disagreeable carrion-like scent to fingers. Miles's Pond is running off. The sweet-gale, willows, etc., which have been submerged and put back, begin to show themselves and are trying to catch up with their fellows.

I am surprised to see how some blackberry pastures and other fields are filling up with pines, trees which I thought the cows had almost killed two or three years ago; so that what was then a pasture is now a young wood-lot. A little snow still lies in the road in one place, the relic of the snow of the 21st.

May 23, Saturday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [Concord](#), to his journal:

ELLERY CHANNING

I begin to feel the loss of Channing's company, who, though a very capricious acquaintance, still possessed many tastes in common with my own. I have rarely if ever found a more companionable friend.

WALDO EMERSON

Left home at 10 A.M. for Concord, arriving there at 5 ¹/₂ P.M. Walked with Thoreau this evening, and called at Mr. Emerson's. Slept at Channing's house upon an iron bedstead. Fine warm starlight eve.

Lord [Thomas Babington Macaulay](#), distinguished English historian and former MP, responded to an American historian, Henry Stephens Randall, who had sent him a copy of his new partisan LIFE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON which had presented the American scene from the standpoint of a Jeffersonian Democrat. His response, excerpted on the following screen, illustrates the extent to which one's basal orientation toward hierarchy versus the "levelling" tendency may determine virtually everything about one's perception of the social reality, including one's perception of the direction in which safety lies:

[See the following screen]



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Holly Lodge, Kensington,
London, May 23d, 1857.

Dear Sir,

...I have long been convinced that institutions purely democratic must, sooner or later, destroy liberty, or civilization, or both. In Europe, where the population is dense, the effect of such institutions would be almost instantaneous. What happened lately in France is an example. In 1848 a pure democracy was established there. During a short time there was reason to expect a general spoliation, a national bankruptcy, a new partition of the soil, a maximum of prices, a ruinous load of taxation laid on the rich for the purpose of supporting the poor in idleness. Such a system would, in twenty years, have made France as poor and barbarous as the France of the Carolingians. Happily, the danger was averted; and now there is a despotism, a silent tribune, an enslaved press. Liberty is gone, but civilization has been saved. I have not the smallest doubt that if we had a purely democratic government here the effect would be the same. Either the poor would plunder the rich, and civilization would perish; or order and prosperity would be saved by a strong military government, and liberty would perish. You may think that your country enjoys an exemption from these evils. I will frankly own to you that I am of a very different opinion. Your fate I believe to be certain, though it is deferred by a physical cause. As long as you have a boundless extent of fertile and unoccupied land, your laboring population will be far more at ease than the laboring population of the Old World, and, while that is the case, the Jefferson politics may continue to exist without causing any fatal calamity. But the time will come when New England will be as thickly peopled as old England. Wages will be as low, and will fluctuate as much with you as with us. You will have your Manchesters and Birminghams, and in those Manchesters and Birminghams hundreds of thousands of artisans will assuredly be sometimes out of work. Then your institutions will be fairly brought to the test. Distress everywhere makes the labourer mutinous and discontented, and inclines him to listen with eagerness to agitators who tell him that it is a monstrous iniquity that one man should have a million, while another can not get a full meal. In bad years there is plenty of grumbling here, and sometimes a little rioting. But it matters little. For here the sufferers are not the rulers. The supreme power is in the hands of a class, numerous indeed, but select; of an educated class; of a class which is, and knows itself to be, deeply interested in the security of property and the maintenance of order. Accordingly, the malcontents are firmly yet gently restrained. The bad time is got over without robbing the wealthy to relieve the indigent. The springs of national prosperity soon begin to flow again: work is plentiful, wages rise, and all is tranquillity and cheerfulness. I have seen England pass three or four times through such critical seasons as I have described. Through such seasons the United States will have to pass in the course of the next century, if not of this. How will you pass through them? I heartily wish you a good deliverance. But my reason and my wishes are at war, and I can not help foreboding the worst. It is



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[Lord Macaulay's letter of May 23, 1857, concluded...]

I seriously apprehend that you will, in some such season of adversity as I have described, do things which will prevent prosperity from returning; that you will act like people who should in a year of scarcity devour all the seed-corn, and thus make the next a year not of scarcity, but of absolute famine. There will be, I fear, spoliation. The spoliation will increase the distress. The distress will produce fresh spoliation. There is nothing to stop you. Your Constitution is all sail and no anchor. As I said before, when a society has entered on this downward progress, either civilization or liberty must perish. Either some Cæsar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand, or your republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century as the Roman Empire was in the fifth; with this difference, that the Huns and Vandals who ravaged the Roman Empire came from without, and that your Huns and Vandals will have been engendered within your own country by your own institutions...

I have the honor to be, dear sir, your faithful servant,

T.B. Macaulay

H.S. Randall, Esq. etc., etc., etc.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN



May 23, Saturday: P.M. —To Holden Swamp by boat. This is the time and place to hear the new-arriving warblers, the first fine days after the May storm. When the leaves generally are just fairly expanding, and the deciduous trees are hoary with them, —a silvery hoariness,— then about the edges of the swamps in the woods, these birds are flitting about in the tree-tops like gnats, catching the insects about the expanding leaf-buds.



May 23. P. M.—To Holden Swamp by boat.
River still high *generally* over the meadows. Can sail across the Hubbard meadow. Off Staples wood-lot, hear the *ah tche tche chit-i-vet* of the redstart.
Tortoises out again abundantly. Each particularly warm and sunny day brings them out on to every floating rail and stump. I count a dozen within three or four feet on a rail. It is a tortoise day. I hear one regular bullfrog trump, and as I approach the edge of the Holden Swamp, the tree-toads. Hear the pe-pe there, and the redstarts, and the chestnut-sided warbler. It appears striped slate and black above, white beneath, yellow-crowned with black side-head, two yellow bars on wing, white side-head below the black, black bill, and long chestnut streak on side. Its song lively and rather long, about as the summer yellowbird, but not in two bars; *tse tse tse | te tsah tsah tsah | te sah yer se* is the rhythm. *Kalmia glauca* yesterday. Rhodora, on shore there, a little before it. Nemopanthes, a day or two.
This is the time and place to hear the new-arriving warblers, the first fine days after the May storm. When the leaves generally are just fairly expanding, and the deciduous trees are hoary with them,—a silvery hoariness,— then, about the edges of the swamps in the woods, these birds are flitting about in the tree-tops like gnats, catching the insects about the expanding leaf-buds.
I wade in the swamp for the kalmia, amid the water andromeda and the sphagnum, scratching my legs with the first and sinking deep in the last. The water is now gratefully cool to my legs, so far from being poisoned in the strong water of the swamp. It is a sort of baptism for which I had waited.
At Miles Swamp, the carpinus sterile catkins, apparently a day or two, but I see no fertile ones, unless that is one (pressed) at the southeast edge of swamp near grafted apple, and its catkins are effete! Hear the first veery strain. The small twigs of the carpinus are singularly tough, as I find when I try to break off the flowers. They bend without breaking. Sand cherry at Lupine Bank, possibly a day. Sassafras, a day or two. Fringed polygala, I hear of.
The first goldfinch twitters over, and at evening I hear the *spark* of a nighthawk.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

May 24, Sunday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [Concord](#), to his journal:



Sunday fine and warm — wind light. Thermometer at 86 above zero north side Mr. Thoreau's house at 2 P.M. Rowed upon the river with Thoreau this forenoon. Walked up Lee's Hill and visited the old Lee farm, the house having been lately burned. The barn and hen-houses are very complete affairs. Dined at Mr. Thoreau's; spent part of the P.M. in my room at Channing's house talking with Thoreau upon various topics. Took a long walk this P.M., leaving at four and returning at seven to the cliff with Mr. and Mrs. Emerson, their two daughters, Ellen and Edith, son Edward, and my friend Thoreau; had tea and spent the remainder of the evening with the Emersons. Much pleased with Mrs. E.'s fine sense and sensibility as well as humanity, topics relative to which were the principal part of my conversation with her on the walk this P.M.

[ELLERY CHANNING](#)

[WALDO EMERSON](#)

[LIDIAN EMERSON](#)

[ELLEN EMERSON](#)

[EDITH EMERSON](#)

[EDDIE EMERSON](#)

[Governor Robert John Walker](#) arrived in the [Kansas Territory](#), promising the impossible, fair and satisfactory dealings with all political factions.

[THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION](#)



May 24. A.M.— To Hill.

White ash, apparently yesterday, at Grape Shore but not at Conantum. What a singular appearance for some weeks its great masses of dark-purple anthers have made, fruit-like on the trees!

A very warm morning. Now the birds sing more than ever, methinks, now, when the leaves are fairly expanding, the first really warm summer days. The water on the meadows is perfectly smooth nearly all the day. At 3 P. M. the thermometer is at 88°. It soon gets to be quite hazy. Apple out. Heard one speak to-day of his sense of awe at the thought of God, and suggested to him that awe was the cause of the potato-rot. The same speaker dwelt on the sufferings of life, but my advice was to go about one's business, suggesting that no ecstasy was ever interrupted, nor its fruit blasted. As for completeness and roundness, to be sure, we are each like one of the laciniae of a lichen, a torn fragment, but not the less cheerfully we expand in a moist day and assume unexpected colors. We want no completeness but intensity of life. Hear the first cricket as I go through a warm hollow, bringing round the summer with his everlasting strain.

[IRISH POTATO FAMINE](#)

May 26, Tuesday: [Thomas Cholmondeley](#), in London, was writing to [Henry Thoreau](#) to let him know that he had received, and had read in their entirety, the copies that had been posted to him of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), [Waldo Emerson](#)'s POEMS, [Walt Whitman](#)'s LEAVES OF GRASS, and [Frederick Law Olmsted](#)'s book on the Southern states.

May 26. 1857

London.

My dear Thoreau

I have received your four books & what is more I have read them. Olmstead was the only entire stranger. His book I think might have been shortened—



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

& if he had indeed written only one word instead of ten – I should have liked it better. It is a horrid vice this wordiness– Emerson is beautiful & glorious.– Of all his poems the “Rhodora” is my favorite. I repeat it to myself over & over again. I am also delighted with “Guy” “Uriel” & “Beauty” Of your own book I will say nothing but I will ask you a question, which perhaps may be a very ignorant one. I have observed a few lines about

Now there is something here unlike anything else in these pages. Are they absolutely your own; or whose? And afterward you shall hear what I think of them. Walt Whitmans poems have only been heard of in England to be laughed at & voted offensive– Here are “Leaves” indeed which I can no more understand than the book of Enoch or the inedited Poems of Daniel! I cannot believe that such a man lives unless I actually touch him. He is further ahead of me in yonder west than Buddha is behind me in the Orient. I find reality & beauty mixed with not a little violence & coarseness, both of which are to me effeminate. I am amused at his views of sexual energy – which however are absurdly false. I believe that rudeness & excitement in the act of generation are injurious to the issue. The man appears to me not to know how to behave himself. I find the gentleman altogether left out of the book! Altogether these leaves completely puzzle me. Is there actually such a man as Whitman? Has anyone seen or handled him? His is a tongue “not understood” of the English people. It is the first book I have ever seen which I should call “a new book” & thus I would sum up the impression it makes upon me.

While I am writing, Prince Albert & Duke Constantine are reviewing the guards in a corner of St James Park. I hear the music. About two hours ago I took a turn round the Park before breakfast & saw the troops formed. The varieties of colour gleamed fully out from their uniforms– They looked like an Army of soldier butterflies just dropped from the lovely green trees under which they marched. Never saw the trees look so green before as they do this spring– Some of the oaks incredibly so– I stood before some the other day in Richmond & was obliged to pinch myself & ask “is this oak tree really growing on the earth they call so bad & wicked an earth; & itself so undeniably & astonishingly fresh & fair”.? It did not look like magic. It was magic.

I have had a thousand strange experiences lately – most of them delicious & some almost awful. I seem to do so much in my life when I am doing nothing at all. I seem to be hiving up strength all the while as a sleeping man does; who sleeps & dreams & strengthens himself unconsciously; only sometimes half-awakes with a sense of cool refreshment. Sometimes it is wonderful to me that I say so little & somehow cannot speak even to my friends! Why all the time I was at Concord I never could tell you much of all I have seen & done!– I never could somehow tell you anything! How ungrateful to my guardian genius to think any of it trivial or superfluous!

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But it always seemed already-told & long ago said – what is past & what is to come seems as it were all shut up in some very simple but very dear notes of music which I never can repeat.

Tonight I intend to hear M^r. Dow the american lecture in Exeter hall– I believe it is tonight. But I go forearmed against him – being convinced in my mind that a good man is all the better for a bottle of Port under his belt every day of his life.

...

I heard Spurgeon the Preacher the other day. He said some very good things: among others “If I can make the bells ring in one heart I shall be content.” Two young men not behaving themselves, he called them as sternly to order as if they were serving under him– Talking of Jerusalem he said that “every good man had a mansion of his own there & a crown that would fit no other head save his”. That I felt was true. It is the voice of Spurgeon that draws more than his matter. His organ is very fine – but I fear he is hurting it by preaching to too large & frequent congregations. I found this out – because he is falling into two voices the usual clerical infirmity.

...

The bells – church bells are ringing somewhere for the queens birthday they tell me– I have not a court-guide at hand to see if this is so.

...

London is cram-full. Not a bed! Not a corner! After all the finest sight is to see such numbers of beautiful girls riding about & riding well. There are certainly no women in the world like ours. The men are far, far inferior to them.

I am still searching after an abode & really my adventures have been most amusing. One Sussex farmer had a very good little cottage close to Battle – but he kept a “few horses & a score or two of Pigs” under the very windows. I remarked that his stables were very filthy. The man stared hard at me – as an english farmer only can stare: ie, as a man stares who is trying to catch a thought which is always running away from him. At last he said striking his stick on the ground– “But that is why I keep the Pigs– I want their dung for my hop-grounds” We could not arrange it after that! I received a very kind note today from Concord informing me that there was a farm to be sold on the Hill just over your river & nearly opposite your house. But it is out of the question buying land by deputy! I have however almost decided to settle finally in America– There are many reasons for it. I think of running over in the trial-trip of the Great Eastern which will be at the close of the year. She is either to be the greatest success – or else to sink altogether without more ado! She is to be something decided. I was all over her the other day. The immense creature musical with the incessant tinkling of hammers is as yet unconscious of life.– By measurement she is larger than the Ark. From the promenade of her decks you see the town & trade of

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*London; the river –(the sacred river)–; Greenwich with its park & palace;
the vast town of Southwark & the continuation of it at Deptford;
the Sydenham palace & the Surrey hills. Altogether a noble Poem.*

*...
Only think, I am losing all my teeth. All my magnificent teeth are going.
I now begin to know I have had good teeth. This comes of too many cups of
warm trash– If I had held to cold drinks – they would have lasted me out;
but the effeminacy of tea coffee chocolate & sugar has been my bane.
Miserable wretches were they who invented these comforters of exhaustion!
They could not afford wine & beef. Hence God to punish them for their
feeble hearts takes away the grinders from their representatives, one of
whom I have been induced to become. But, Thoreau, if ever I live again
I vow never so much as to touch anything warm. It is as dangerous as to take
a Pill which I am convinced is a most immoral custom. Give me ale for
breakfast & claret or Port or ale again for dinner– I should then have a
better conscience & not fear to lose my teeth any more than my tongue.
Farewell Thoreau. Success & the bounty of the gods attend you
yrs ever Thos Chol^{ley}.*



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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Cholmondeley wrote Thoreau about losing his teeth, speculating that this was due to warm drinks: “Only think, I am losing all my teeth. All my magnificent teeth are going. I now begin to know I **have** had good teeth. This comes of too many cups of warm trash— If I had held to cold drinks — they would have lasted me out; but the effeminacy of [tea](#) [coffee](#) [chocolate](#) & [sugar](#) has been my bane. Miserable wretches were they who invented these comforters of exhaustion! They could not afford [wine](#) & beef. Hence God to punish them for their feeble hearts takes away the grinders from their representatives, one of whom I have been induced to become. But, Thoreau, if ever I live again I vow never so much as to touch anything warm. It is as dangerous as to take a Pill which I am convinced is a most immoral custom. Give me [ale](#) for breakfast & claret or Port or ale again for dinner— I should then have a better conscience & not fear to lose my teeth any more than my tongue.”

The Dred Scotts became free at last. See, life isn't always totally vicious, especially when your case has gotten lots of media attention. What happened was that the surgeon/owner, John Emerson, had died while the Dred Scott lawsuit had been dragging through the courts, and Emerson's widow had remarried, and her new husband was more easily embarrassed than her old. So Dred Scott was able to go to work as a hotel porter in St. Louis.



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

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[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) leaving Concord, to his journal:

ELLEN EMERSON

LOUIS AGASSIZ



DR. WALTER CHANNING

ELLERY CHANNING

MARGARET FULLER CHANNING

CAROLINE STURGIS CHANNING

MADAM OSSOLI

ELLEN FULLER CHANNING

Left Concord at 7 ¹/₂ A.M. Had a long conversation with Miss Ellen Emerson, eldest daughter of R.W. Emerson, who attends the school of Professor Agassiz at Cambridge. She is a very sensible, open-hearted, intelligent young lady, but quite peculiar and original in her ideas upon many subjects; modest of her own qualities, but evidently a strongly marked person, one that will grow in strength and finally make a noble woman. I was on the whole quite interested and pleased with her.

In Boston called about noon at Dr. Walter Channing's, in Bowdoin St.; there saw besides the doctor the two eldest children of my friend Wm. Ellery Channing, Margaret Fuller C. and Caroline Sturgis C., daughters worthy of a poet and of whom any father might be proud: sweet sensitive girls, Margaret not 13 and Caroline about 10. How tenderly I regarded them, deprived of their lovely mother and so neglected by their talented and wayward father! Dined with Arthur B. Fuller, the brother, and Mrs. Fuller, the mother of the revered and lamented Margaret and Ellen - Madam Ossoli and Mrs. William E. Channing. After a long and instructive as well as interesting conversation, the latter part with Mrs. Fuller, I left, deeply impressed with their genuine goodness and beauty of character, about 5 P.M. In the dining-room were three engravings (saved from the wreck) of Madam Ossoli's, to wit: "Tasso's Oak," "Pine in the Colonna Gardens, Rome," Michael Angelo's "Cypresses, Rome;" also a scene in Rome, with her residence there. In Mr. Fuller's own room upstairs were several line engravings from paintings by Zampieri. In the front parlor was a raised plaster head of Margaret, and the engraving underneath the same, placed in the memoirs of her by her brother, very much like the original daguerreotype of Miss Ellen Channing with a child in her arms - a sweet motherly face, truly lovely; also a fine portrait of the deceased wife of Mr. Fuller, a sweet open face. In the dining-room was a portrait of the Hon. Timothy Fuller, the father of Margaret - reddish hair, blue eyes, and rather mild countenance - the portrait resembling in style that of Fisher Ames. Mr. F. presented me with several manuscript pieces of Margaret's, and Mrs. Fuller with a volume of poems by J.W. Randall, a friend of hers.

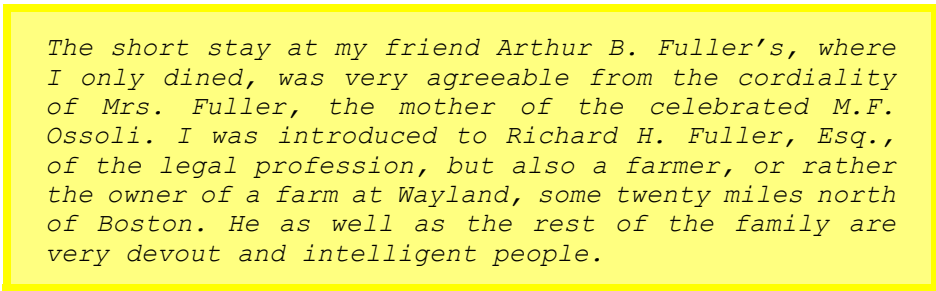


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At a later point he added the following observation to his journal, about this meal with the Fullers:



The short stay at my friend Arthur B. Fuller's, where I only dined, was very agreeable from the cordiality of Mrs. Fuller, the mother of the celebrated M.F. Ossoli. I was introduced to Richard H. Fuller, Esq., of the legal profession, but also a farmer, or rather the owner of a farm at Wayland, some twenty miles north of Boston. He as well as the rest of the family are very devout and intelligent people.



May 26. Pink azalea in garden. Mountain-ash a day; also horse-chestnut the same. Beach plum well out, several days at least. Wood pewee, and Minott heard a loon go laughing over this morning. The vireo days have fairly begun. They are now heard amid the elm-tops. Thin coats and straw hats are worn. I have noticed that notional nervous invalids, who report to the community the exact condition of their heads and stomachs every morning, as if they alone were blessed or cursed with these parts; who are old betties and quiddles, if men; who can't eat their breakfasts when they are ready, but play with their spoons, and hanker after an ice-cream at irregular hours; who go more than half-way to meet any invalidity, and go to bed to be sick on the slightest occasion, in the middle of the brightest forenoon,—improve the least opportunity to be sick;—I observe that such are self-indulgent persons, without any regular and absorbing employment. They are nice, discriminating, experienced in all that relates to bodily sensations. They come to you stroking their wens, manipulating their ulcers, and expect you to do the same for them. Their religion and humanity stick. They spend the day manipulating their bodies and doing no work; can never get their nails clean. Some of the earliest willows about warm edges of woods are gone to seed and downy. P. M.—To Saw Mill Brook. It is very hazy after a sultry morning, but the wind is getting east and cool. The oaks are in the gray, or a little more, and the silvery leaflets of the deciduous trees invest the woods like a permanent mist. At the same season with this haze of buds comes also the kindred haziness of the air. I see the common small reddish butterflies. Very interesting now are the red tents of expanding oak leaves, as you go through sprout-lands,—the crimson velvet of the black oak and the more pinkish white oak. The salmon and pinkish-red canopies or umbrellas of the white oak are particularly interesting. The very sudden expansion of the great hickory buds, umbrella-wise. Now, at last, all leaves dare unfold, and twigs begin to shoot. As I am going down the footpath from Britton's camp to the spring, I start a pair of nighthawks (they had the white on the wing) from amid the dry leaves at the base of a bush, a bunch of sprouts, and away they flitted in zigzag noiseless flight a few rods through the sprout-land, dexterously avoiding the twigs, uttering a faint hollow *what*, as if made by merely closing the bill, and one alighted flat on a stump. On those carpinus trees which have fertile flowers, the sterile are effete and drop off. The red choke-berry not in bloom, while the black is, for a day or more at least. Roadside near Britton's camp, see a grosbeak, apparently female of the rose-breasted, quite tame, as usual, brown above, with black head and a white streak over the eye, a less distinct one beneath it, two faint bars on wings, dirty-white bill, white breast, dark spotted or streaked, and from time [to time] utters a very sharp *chirp* of alarm or interrogation as it peers through the twigs at me. A lady's-slipper. At Cliffs, no doubt, before. At Abel Brooks's (or Black Snake, or Red Cherry, or Rye) Hollow, hear the wood thrush.

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In Thrush Alley, see one of those large ant-hills, recently begun, the grass and moss partly covered with sand over a circle two feet in diameter, with holes two to five inches apart, and the dry sand is dark-spotted with the fresh damp sand about each hole.

My mother was telling to-night of the sounds which she used to hear summer nights when she was young and lived on the Virginia Road,—the lowing of cows, or cackling of geese, or the beating of a drum [this is a reference to the drumming of the male **Ruffed Grouse**, *Bonasa umbellus* in the woods] as far off as Hildreth's, but above all Joe Merriam whistling to his team, for he was an admirable whistler. Says she used to get up at midnight and go and sit on the door-step when all in the house were asleep, and she could hear nothing in the world but the ticking of the clock in the house behind her.





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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

July 27, Monday: [Waldo Emerson](#) reported in his journal that [Ellery Channing](#) was complaining of a “new pedantry in T” and characterizing this as “a dry rot.”



July 27, Monday, Morning: ... Having rapidly loaded the canoe, which the Indian always carefully attended to, that it might be well trimmed, and each having taken a look, as usual, to see that nothing was left, we set out again, descending the Caucomgomoc, and turning northeasterly up the *Umbazookskus* ... the next opening in the sky was over *Umbazookskus* Lake, which we suddenly entered about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. It stretches northwesterly four or five miles, with what the Indian called the Caucomgomoc Mountain seen far beyond it. It was an agreeable change. ... We crossed the southeast end of the lake to the carry into Mud Pond. ... After a long while my companion came back, and the Indian with him. We had taken the wrong road, and the Indian had lost us. He had very wisely gone back to the Canadian's camp, and asked him which way we had probably gone, since he could better understand the ways of white men, and he told him correctly that we had undoubtedly taken the supply road to Chamberlain Lake (slender supplies they would get over such a road at this season). The Indian was greatly surprised that we should have taken what he called a “tow” (i. e. tote or toting or supply) road, instead of a carry path, — that we had not followed his tracks, — said it was “strange,” and evidently thought little of our woodcraft. ... We had come out on a point extending into *Apmoojenegamook*, or Chamberlain Lake, west of the outlet of Mud Pond, where there was a broad, gravelly, and rocky shore, encumbered with bleached logs and trees. We were rejoiced to see such dry things in that part of the world. But at first we did not attend to dryness so much as to mud and wetness. We all three walked into the lake up to our middle to wash our clothes....

[EDWARD HOAR](#)



July 27, Monday, Evening: ... After putting on such dry clothes as we had, and hanging the others to dry on the pole which the Indian arranged over the fire, we ate our supper, and lay down on the pebbly shore with our feet to the fire, without pitching our tent, making a thin bed of grass to cover the stones. ... I was awakened at midnight by some heavy, low-flying bird, probably a loon, flapping by close over my head, along the shore. So, turning the other side of my half-clad body to the fire, I sought slumber again.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

July 28, Tuesday: In Concord, [Waldo Emerson](#) recorded in his journal his experiences of the preceding day, with [Ellery Channing](#) on the river behind the home of Cyrus Hubbard, as musings in regard to consolations of nature far superior to those of art:

Yesterday the best day of the year we spent in the afternoon on the river. A sky of Calcutta, light, air, clouds, water, banks, birds, grass, pads, lilies, were in perfection, and it was delicious to live. Ellery & I went up the South Branch, & took a bath from the bank behind Cyrus Hubbard, where the river makes a bend. Blackbirds in hundreds; swallows in tens sitting on the telegraph lines; & one heron (ardea minor) assisted. In these perfect pictures, one thinks what weary nonsense is all this painful collection of rubbish -pictures of rubbish masters- in the total neglect of this & every lovely river valley, where the multitudinous life & beauty makes these pictures ridiculous cold chalk & ochre.

[Sojourner Truth](#) bought a house lot in Harmonia, a community of [Hicksite](#) integrationists, Quakers-becoming-Spiritualists, which was close to Bedford, about five miles from Battle Creek, Michigan.

SPIRITUALISM



The Battle Creek MI meeting had a very interesting history in the 19th Century. The meeting was begun in the 1830s by Quakers from central and western New York who were then migrating to Michigan. The Battle Creek meeting was Hicksite and part of Genesee Yearly Meeting. In the 1840s, Michigan Quarterly Meeting (Hicksite) wanted to "lay down" the meetings of ministers and elders on the belief that the authority of the ministers and elders over the spiritual life of the meeting was retarding spiritual growth of the members. That issue is tied up with the desire of many Friends to become more actively involved with abolitionist organizations. Other Friends considered these abolitionist organizations too worldly - participation would involve Quakers in non-Quakerly activities like working with hireling ministers, engaging in politics. Other Quakers, coming from the universal Quaker belief in the evil of slavery, embraced the abolitionist organizations and resented being "elderly" about such matters. Anyway, Michigan Quarter wanted to abolish the meetings of ministers and elders, but the action was not approved by the Yearly Meeting and in 1848, Michigan Quarter itself was laid down and the meetings and members attached to the presumably more conventional Pelham Quarterly Meeting - which at that time consisted of the Hicksite meetings in nearby Canada.

The radicals resented the yearly meeting's action, and formed a new organization called the Michigan Yearly Meeting of Congregational Friends. They were also known as Progressive Friends and later Friends of Human Progress. The Yearly Meeting



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-Genesee that is- dithered for a few years about what to do about those Friends who had "set up meetings contrary to discipline" first saying that they could come back without any acknowledgment of error and apparently never disowning anyone. Like the anti-slavery schism in Indiana Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) about this same time, it appears that the old yearly meeting regretted the split and therefore found it difficult to take any action against their erring members.

Anyway, Battle Creek Monthly Meeting (Hicksite) continued as part of Pelham Quarter of Genesee Yearly Meeting for the remainder of the century. The Congregational or Progressive Friends initially intended to set up meetings on the Quaker model, but liberated of what they saw as too much hierarchy and sectarianism. In some places these meetings operated, but it isn't clear for how long. In Michigan and New York such groups were nearly identical with the Garrisonian abolitionists and seems to have been absorbed into the general reform movement and quickly lost their specifically Quaker identity. To make matters more confused, Spiritualism which was arising at this time seemed to many both scientific and reformist, and some of the Progressive Friends seem to have allied with Spiritualists. The Harmonial Society near Battle Creek in the 1850s seems to have been the product of ex-Quaker Progressive Friends, Spiritualists, abolitionists, etc.

Quite probably some Battle Creek Quakers considered themselves both Progressive Friends and members of Battle Creek MM (Hicksite). The categories were not mutually exclusive.

Sojourner Truth was close to both groups. She attended Battle Creek Meeting (Hicksite) and lived for a time in the Harmonial Society. She was present at the dedication of the new Battle Creek Meeting house and at that time sang a hymn -something otherwise not done in Hicksite meetings at the time- and claimed that she would have become a Quaker if Quakers had allowed music. Another local Quaker -though I believe she was Orthodox- was Elizabeth Margaret Chandler - who wrote anti-slavery poems and a column for the GENIUS OF UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION and is credited with being the first important female voice in the abolitionist movement.



July 28, Tuesday. As I remember, [Hodge](#) mistakes when he says [of Chamberlain Lake] that "it is erroneously represented on the charts, for it extends in a north-northeasterly, south-southwesterly direction about twelve miles." He appears to be thinking of the easterly part.⁸¹ On the north side there is quite a clearing, and we had been advised to ascend the bare hill there for the sake of the prospect.... Great trunks of trees stood dead and bare far out in the lake, making the impression of ruined piers of a city that had been, while behind, the timber lay criss-a- cross for half a dozen rods or more over the water.... We were glad to find on this carry some raspberries, and a few of the *Vaccinium Canadense* berries, which had begun to be ripe here.

81. [James Thacher Hodge](#)'s SECOND ANNUAL REPORT ON THE [GEOLOGY](#) ... OF MAINE AND MASSACHUSETTS (Augusta, Maine: Severance, 1838).

JAMES THACHER HODGE

"Having determined to visit Moosehead Lake, before proceeding to the St. John waters, I continued up the west branch to the lower carry into that lake.... The upper carry is about eight miles above the lower, and between them are rapids and falls."



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

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July 28, Tuesday, Morning: ... When we awoke we found a heavy dew on our blankets. I lay awake very early, and listened to the clear, shrill *ah-tette-tette-te*, of the white-throated sparrow, repeated at short intervals, without the least variation, for half an hour, as if it could not enough express its happiness. Whether my companions heard it or not, I know not, but it was a kind of matins to me, and the event of that forenoon.

EDWARD HOAR

It was a pleasant sunrise, and we had a view of the mountains in the southeast. Ktaadn appeared about southeast by south. A double-topped mountain, about southeast by east, and another portion of the same, east-southeast. The last the Indian called *Nerlumskeechticook*, and said that it was at the head of the East Branch, and we should pass near it on our return that way.

We did some more washing in the lake this morning, and with our clothes hung about on the dead trees and rocks, the shore looked like washing-day at home. The Indian, taking the hint, borrowed the soap, and walking into the lake, washed his only cotton shirt on his person, then put on his pants and let it dry on him. ...



July 28, Tuesday, Mid-day: ... We were now fairly on the Allegash River, which name our Indian said meant hemlock bark. These waters flow northward about 100 miles, at first very feebly, then southeasterly 250 more to the Bay of Fundy. After perhaps two miles of river, we entered Heron Lake, called on the map *Pongokwahem*, scaring up forty or fifty young *shecorways*, sheldrakes, at the entrance, which ran over the water with great rapidity, as usual in a long line....



July 28, Tuesday, Late Afternoon: ... We landed on the southeast side of the island, which was rather elevated, and densely wooded, with a rocky shore, in season for an early dinner. Somebody had camped there not long before, and left the frame on which they stretched a moose-hide, which our Indian criticised severely, thinking it showed but little woodcraft. Here were plenty of the shells of crayfish, or fresh-water lobsters, which had been washed ashore, such as have given a name to some ponds and streams. They are commonly four or five inches long. The Indian proceeded at once to cut a canoe-birch, slanted it up against another tree on the shore, tying it with a withe, and lay down to sleep in its shade.... We had for some time seen a thunder-shower coming up from the west over the woods of the island, and heard the muttering of the thunder, though we were in doubt whether it would reach us; but now the darkness rapidly increasing, and a fresh breeze rustling the forest, we hastily put up the plants which we had been drying, and with one consent made a rush for the tent material and set about pitching it. A place was selected and stakes and pins cut in the shortest possible time, and we were pinning it down lest it should be blown away, when the storm suddenly burst over us....



July 28, Tuesday, Evening: ... At length, just before sunset, we set out again. It was a wild evening when we coasted up the north side of this Apmoojenegamook Lake. One thunder-storm was just over, and the waves which it had raised still running with violence, and another storm was now seen coming up in the southwest, far over the lake; but it might be worse in the morning, and we wished to get as far as possible on our way up the lake while we might. ... It was twilight, too, and that stormy cloud was advancing rapidly in our rear. It was a pleasant excitement, yet we were glad to reach, at length, in the dusk, the cleared shore of the Chamberlain Farm. We landed on a low and thinly wooded point there, and while my companions were pitching the tent, I ran up to the house to get some sugar, our six pounds being gone; — it was no wonder they were, for Polis had a sweet tooth. He would first fill his dipper nearly a third full of sugar, and then add the coffee to it. Here was a clearing extending back from the lake to a hill-top, with some dark-colored log buildings and a storehouse in it, and half a dozen men standing in front of the principal hut, greedy for news. Among them was the man who tended the dam on the Allegash and tossed the bullet. He having charge of the dams, and learning that we were going to Webster Stream the next day, told me that some of their men, who were haying at Telos Lake, had shut the dam at the canal there in order to catch trout, and if we wanted more water to take us through the canal we might raise the gate, for he would like to have it raised. The Chamberlain Farm is no doubt a cheerful opening in the woods, but such was the lateness of the hour that it has left but a dusky impression on my mind. As I have said, the influx of light merely is civilizing, yet I fancied that they walked about on Sundays in their clearing somewhat as in a prison-yard. ... When I returned to the shore it was quite dark, but we had a rousing fire to warm and dry us by, and a snug apartment behind it. ... Invariably our best nights were those when it rained, for then we were not troubled with mosquitoes.... Some who have leaky roofs in the towns may have been kept awake, but we were soon lulled asleep by a steady, soaking rain, which lasted all night. To-night, the rain not coming at once with violence, the twigs were soon dried by the reflected heat.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Amy and Isaac Post's long journey from Quakerism into spiritualism began decades earlier [than the 1850s]. They had left orthodox Quakerism along with Elias Hicks, who was Amy's cousin. Hicks had separated from orthodox Quakers in 1827 in a spirit of holiness reminiscent of his contemporary, James Latourette, who at the same time was leaving Methodism. Hicksite Quakers sought a return to the primitive simplicity and freedom of conscience of the 17th-Century Quakerism of George Fox and William Penn. Between 1827 and the late 1840s, however, Hicksite Quakers, like orthodox Quakers, grew conservative and intolerant of the abolitionists in their midst. The Hicksite leadership tried to censor antislavery talk and quash any combination in reform with non-Quakers. In response, antislavery Quakers withdrew to form their own free meetings, open to all, Quaker and non-Quaker. They called their new Meetings "Progressive Friends," or "Congregational Friends," or "Friends of Human Progress," and exchanged visits, speakers, and letters. Progressive Friends advocated freedom of conscience, speech, and action. They believed in non-violence (a Garrisonian as well as a Quaker tenet), and they supported the abolition of slavery and the equality of women. They also communicated with spirits, a practice they explained in the imagery of a force only recently discovered: electricity. Spiritualism in its various guises fascinated hundreds of thousands of reform-minded Americans in the 1850s, Harriet Beecher Stowe among them. Its most sensational aspects—séances and spirit visitations—appeared in 1848, with the spirit rappings of the Fox sisters in Hydesville NY, not far from Rochester. But spiritualism also had a more rational side, one inspired by the thought of the 18th-Century Swedish scholar, Emanuel Swedenborg. Swedenborg taught that the spirit of God and the spirits of people could not be separated; he united nature and spirituality. His philosophy also blurred boundaries between the living and the dead, the physical and the supernatural. Doing away with original sin, Swedenborg put the responsibility for salvation in the hands of people, a responsibility that appealed to reformers. Perhaps what attracted adherents most was Swedenborgianism's synthesis of liberal religion and science. Giles [B.] Stebbins, [Sojourner] Truth's friend from Northampton and one who would remain close for the rest of her life, said that "[m]odern spiritualism makes the future life real and near, binding it to this by the strong ties of eternal law and undying human love, and gives us a natural religion and a spiritual philosophy, rational, inspiring, and enlarging." Stebbins also revealed a side of spiritualism akin to Truth's pentecostalism. Spiritualism, he said, duplicated primitive Christianity in manifestations that pentecostals called the gifts of the Holy Spirit: healing through the laying on of hands, prophecy, and speaking in tongues. In a certain sense, spiritualism was comfortable for Truth, for the Holy Spirit had figured prominently in her religion—as in the religion of Quakers—for



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thirty years. But what characterized spiritualism was less its pentecostal strains than its Quaker pacifism. An optimistic and tolerant faith of individualism and autonomy, spiritualism turned its followers more toward the spirits of the dead than toward Jesus the savior; this was perfectionism in a way new to [Sojourner Truth](#). American spiritualism's leading intellectual, Andrew Jackson Davis, had his own brand of millennialism, 180 degrees from the baleful warnings of Father Miller and his followers. Millerites cried, "Wo! Wo! Wo!" and warned Americans to repent before it was too late. Davis's "Harmonial Philosophy" predicted the end of the era of ignorance, superstition, fanaticism, and intolerance, and the dawning of a new and golden age. All sorts of slavery were dying, Davis said, for "spiritual intercourse" proved that "all men shall ultimately be joined into one Brotherhood, their interests shall be pure and reciprocal; their customs shall be just and harmonious; they shall be as one Body, animated by Universal Love and governed by pure Wisdom. Man's future is glowing with a beautiful radiance." Many spiritualists were intent on hearing from the dead. According to spiritualist authors such as Isaac Post and Andrew Jackson Davis, the dead inspired their writings.



August 22, Saturday: The New-York [Tablet](#) animadverted about some Irish female emigrants brought by *The City of Mobile*, "innocent country girls of unquestioned character in their own neighborhoods, which after a voyage of a few weeks contributed at least half a dozen souls to sailors' boarding-house brothels, belched several on the streets, and sent other in-land with their maidenly robes tarnished forever, and all because ... libidinous captains and brutal sailors were forging arguments for our enemies out of the very innocence or thoughtlessness of Irish females."



August 22, Saturday, 1857: Channing has brought me from Plymouth and Watson *Drosera filiformis*, just out of bloom, from Great South Pond, *Solidago tenuifolia* in bloom, *Sabbatia chloroides*, and *Coreopsis rosea*. Edward Hoar shows me *Lobelia Kalmii*, which he gathered in flower in Hopkinton about the 18th of July. (I found the same on the East Branch and the Penobscot); *staphylea* (in fruit) from Northampton, plucked within a week or so (Bigelow says it grows in Weston); also the leaves of a tree growing in Windsor, Vt., which they call the pepperidge, quite unlike our tupelo. Is it not the *Celtis crassifolia*? He says he found the *Uvularia perfoliata* on the Stow road, he thinks within Concord bounds.

ELLERY CHANNING

BIGELOW

NORTHAMPTON MA



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

December 19, Saturday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in Concord, to his journal:



WALDO EMERSON

ABBA ALCOTT

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

ELIZABETH ALCOTT

MAY ALCOTT

ELLERY CHANNING

Clear and colder; accompanied Thoreau on a survey of woodland near Walden Pond this forenoon, dined with him at his father's, afternoon at my lodgings with Thoreau and Parker Pillsbury. R.W. Emerson also joined us at the close of the P.M. Took tea with Mr. Emerson, called on Mrs. Alcott and her daughters, whom I found very agreeable and intelligent people; one daughter I did not see, being quite ill, probably not to recover. Mr. Sanborn called there, with whom I returned to my room, he occupied with a sister Channing's house.




THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1858

June 5, Saturday: The Reverend [Grindall Reynolds](#) purchased the plot which [Henry Thoreau](#) had surveyed on May 25, 1852  for J. Barnard McKay (T. Bernard MacKay?) on Main Street in Concord, between the property of [Ellery Channing](#) and the property of Frances Monroe.

View this particular survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/collect/Thoreau_surveys/86.htm

Thoreau surveyed a Lincoln woodlot for Thomas Brooks, on land that had been burned over in the previous year, and was paid \$4.⁰⁰ by George Brooks. See also Samuel Barrett's woodlot, and Bedford Road survey for George Brooks.

The USS *Constellation* returned from its cruise of the Caribbean to the New-York Navy Yard.

[Thoreau](#) surveyed a Lincoln woodlot for Thomas Brooks and was paid \$4.⁰⁰ by George Brooks of Concord. This woodland had burned in 1857.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

July 2, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#), [Ellery Channing](#), and [Edward Sherman Hoar](#) left for the White Mountains.

They took a carriage to New Hampshire, and traveled while there in a hired wagon, eating in inns and sleeping in hotels. Thoreau would sprain his ankle while climbing Mount Washington⁸² and be laid up in tent for several days.



July 2: A.M.—Start for White Mountains in a private carriage with [Edward Hoar](#).

Notice in a shallow pool on a rock on a hilltop, in road in North Chelmsford, a rather peculiar-looking *Alisma Plantago*, with long reddish petioles, just budded.

Spent the noon close by the old Dunstable graveyard, by a small stream north of it. Red lilies were abundantly in bloom in the burying-ground and by the river. Mr. Weld's monument is a large, thick, naturally flat rock, lying flat over the grave. Noticed the monument of Josiah Willard, Esq., "Captain of Fort Dummer." Died 1750, aged 58.

Walked to and along the river and bathed in it. There were harebells, well out, and much *Apocynum cannabinum*, well out, apparently like ours, prevailing along the steep sandy and stony shore. A marked peculiarity in this species is that the upper branches rise above the lowers. Also get the *A. andro-nifolium*, quite downy beneath. The *Smilacina stellata* going to seed, quite common in the copse on top of the bank. What a relief and expansion of my thoughts when I come out from that inland position by the graveyard to this broad river's shore! This vista was incredible there. Suddenly I see a broad reach of blue beneath, with its curves and headlands, liberating me from the more terrene earth. What a difference it makes whether I spend my four

⁸².*Agiocochook*, that he and his brother John had first climbed in 1839.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

hours' nooning between the hills by yonder roadside, or on the brink of this fair river, within a quarter of a mile of that! Here the earth is fluid to my thought, the sky is reflected from beneath, and around yonder cape is the highway to other continents. This current allies me to all the world. Be careful to sit in an elevating and inspiring place. There my thoughts were confined and trivial, and I hid myself from the gaze of travellers. Here they are expanded and elevated, and I am charmed by the beautiful river-reach. It is equal to a different season and country and creates a different mood. As you travel northward from Concord, probably the reaches of the Merrimack River, looking up or down them from the bank, will be the first inspiring sight. There is something in the scenery of a broad river equivalent to culture and civilization. Its channel conducts our thoughts as well as bodies to classic and famous ports, and allies us to all that is fair and great. I like to remember that at the end of half a day's walk I can stand on the bank of the Merrimack. It is just wide enough to interrupt the land and lead my eye and thoughts down its channel to the sea. A river is superior to a lake in its liberating influence. It has motion and indefinite length. A river touching the back of a town is like a wing, it may be unused as yet, but ready to waft it over the world. With its rapid current it is a slightly fluttering wing. River towns are winged towns.

I returned through the grass up the winding channel of our little brook to the camp again. Along the brook, in the rank grass and weeds, grew abundantly a slender umbelliferous plant mostly just out of bloom, one and a half to four feet high. Either *Thaspium aureum* or *Cryptotaenia Canadensis* (Sison). I saw also the scouring-rush, apparently just beginning to bloom!

In the southern part of Merrimack, passed a singular "Horseshoe Pond" between the road and the river on the interval. Belknap says in his History, speaking of the changes in river-courses, "In some places these ancient channels are converted into ponds, which, from their curved form, are called horseshoe ponds."

Put up at tavern in Merrimack, some miles after passing over a pretty high, flat-topped hill in road, whence we saw the mountains (with a steep descent to the interval on right).

7 P.M.—I walked by a path through the wood northeast to the Merrimack, crossing two branches of Babboosuck Brook, on which were handsome rocky falls in the woods.

The wood thrush sings almost wherever I go, eternally reconsecrating the world, morning and evening, for us. And again it seems habitable and more than habitable to us.

BELKNAP



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

November 29, Monday: After visiting the “Hill,” [Henry Thoreau](#) went with [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) to one of [Bronson Alcott](#)’s “Conversations,” held at the Emerson home. The topic of this particular conversation was “Private Life.” Also attending were Henry James, Sr., [Ellery Channing](#), Mrs. [Lidian Emerson](#) and Miss [Mary Moody Emerson](#), the Pratts (John Bridge Pratt, his sister Caroline Pratt, and their mother?), Miss Ripley, [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), [Albert Stacy](#), and Samuel Gray Ward. After a number of confrontations and



verbal exchanges one-to-one, the Concord people finally ganged up on James. The *coup de grace* was administered as a monologue by Miss [Mary](#), and is unrecorded except for her peroration “Let me confront the monster.” James made a record that “The old lady had the flavour to me of primitive woods wherein the wolf howls, and the owl has never been dislodged; and I enjoyed the novelty of her apparition in these days too much to mind the scratches I got in making her better acquaintance.” Indeed. However unrecorded in detail, we know the monologue was effective, for [Bronson](#), who earlier that evening had been reduced to silence by Henry James, Sr.’s gibes, recorded in his journal that her “gifts of speech and mode of handling poor James, win the admiration of the party and the thanks of everyone present.”

Here is biographer Phyllis Cole’s account of the Alcott reading in the Emerson parlor, with the famous encounter between Henry James, Sr. and Mary Moody Emerson. Note that she considers Bronson Alcott and Miss Mary Moody Emerson as “two [Platonists](#)”:



Only the immediacy of conversation now brought out Mary’s fullest verbal power. Bronson Alcott, who had won enough of Mary’s confidence to attract her to his public conversations, offered dinner and an afternoon’s talk in early September. She appeared witty and incisive, regaling the company with stories about Waldo’s childhood and forbears. The two Platonists finally pursued their common ground as well: Alcott declared her “metaphysical in her tendencies and a match for any theologian,” favoring Dr. Price and his school.

Their reconciliation came just in time for Mary to make her



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justly famous last stand in Concord a defense of Bronson Alcott. Waldo was out of town lecturing the evening of Alcott's conversation on "Private Life" in the Emersons' parlor; but those present, in addition to Mary, included Henry Thoreau and his sister Sophia, Ellery Channing, Franklin Sanborn, Lidian Emerson, Mary Brooks and her son George, Sarah Ripley's daughter Elizabeth, "others of our townfolk," and from out of town Sam Ward and Henry James Sr. Alcott's list of guests amounts to a group photograph of a Concord cultural event, rather easily blending genders and generations, writers and their neighbors. But Sanborn's report of the evening brings the photograph to life. James did not understand Alcottian conversation and took charge, so that neither Alcott nor Thoreau could "check the flow of the semi-Hibernian rhetoric." Even worse, James's point was to exonerate criminals from their crimes and charge society instead. Such moral relativism appealed to no Concordian. But Mary, amidst the men's consternation, grappled with the enemy directly. When James "spoke repeatedly and scornfully of the Moral Law," she burst forth to the whole group.

Rising from her chair at the west side of the room, and turning her oddly-garnished head toward the south side, where the offender smilingly sat, she clasped her little wrinkled hands and raised them toward the black band over her left temple (a habit she had when deeply moved), and began her answer to these doctrines of Satan, as she thought them. She expressed her amazement that any man should denounce the Moral Law, — the only tie of society, except religion, to which, she saw, the speaker made no claim. She referred him to the Bible and to Dr. Adam Clark (one of her great authorities from childhood) and she denounced him personally in the most racy terms. She did not cross the room and shake him, as some author, not an eye-witness, has fancied, — but she retained her position, sat down quietly when she had finished, and was complemented by the smiling James, who then perhaps for the first time had felt the force of her untaught rhetoric.



Sanborn's account of Mary's gestures and style of speech is unparalleled among all her chroniclers, but he did not fully grasp the issues at stake in this encounter. Mistaken in the name of Mary's philosopher (it was Dr. **Samuel** Clarke), he knew even less about the eighteenth-century school to which Clarke, along with Price, belonged. In fact, moral law was the center of the Enlightenment ethics, allowing for an affirmation at once of the mind's intuition and of God's universal truths. The "fitness" between these two realities had been the formative discovery of Mary's youth and the basis of her first argument with Alcott in 1834. Now it was her bond to the Transcendentalists, despite their replacement of Clarke with Kant: Waldo had written in 1841 that he and Mary could meet across generations "where truly we are one in our perception of



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one Law in our adoration of the Moral Sentiment." All of the inhabitants and visitors at the Emerson house except James wanted to affirm the individual's intuition of moral right as one with a "higher law."

Sanborn seriously underestimated Mary as well in calling the speech a piece of "untaught rhetoric," as though it were the natural effusion of her soul rather than the result of long and difficult self-education. James himself was guilty of much greater condescension in his description of Mary several years later. He had not really been upset at "that confabulation at Mr Emerson's," James recalled, when "'shamefully treated' by the old Lady from Maine." "The old lady had the flavour to me of primitive woods wherein the wolf howls, and the owl has never been dislodged; and I enjoyed the novelty of her apparition in those days too much to mind the few scratches I got in making her better acquaintance." Leaving Clarke and the issues of universal ethics wholly behind, he jovially dismissed his critic by lowering her to a backwoods animality beneath mental life.



In truth her response to James was a triumphant ending to Mary's years of intellectual exchange in Concord, at once a recollection of her reading as a young woman at the Manse and a major defense of her vexatious allies the Transcendentalists. Alcott recorded that she won "the admiration of the party and thanks of everyone present." Then, after a Thanksgiving including all the Emersons and Ripleys, she was gone, finally assenting to Hannah Parsons's request that she come live in Williamsburg. Lidian and Ellen put in several hours packing her worldly goods and papers at the Brown house (she had either gotten them from Maine or collected more); Waldo accompanied her by train through Hartford, where they stayed in a hotel that was an "old lady's paradise"; William and his wife welcomed her for dinner at their Manhattan townhouse on December 15. At the age of eighty-four, Mary became a New Yorker.



November 29: P.M.— To Hill.

About three inches of snow fell last evening, and a few cows on the hillside have wandered about in vain to come at the grass. They have at length found that place high on the south side where the snow is thinnest.

How bright and light the day now! Methinks it is as good as half an hour added to the day. White houses no longer stand out and stare in the landscape. The pine woods snowed up look more like the bare oak woods with their gray boughs. The river meadows show now far off a dull straw-color or pale brown amid the general white, where the coarse sedge rises above the snow; and distant oak woods are now more distinctly reddish. It is a clear and pleasant winter day. The snow has taken all the November out of the sky. Now blue shadows, green rivers, — both which I see, — and still winter life.

I see partridge and mice tracks and fox tracks, and crows sit silent on a bare oak-top. I see a living shrike caught to-day in the barn of the Middlesex House.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

December 8, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#), [Thomas Cholmondeley](#), and [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) spent the forenoon in the Shanty on the Ricketson estate in [New Bedford, Massachusetts](#), according to Friend Daniel's journal, "talking about mankind and his relationships here and hereafter." After dinner Friend Daniel and [Ellery Channing](#) smoked while Henry and [Walton Ricketson](#) examined the daughter [Anna Ricketson](#)'s collection of plants, and then Henry and Cholmondeley went for a walk. They spent the evening in the sitting-room, according to Friend Daniel's journal, "talking of old writers, Chaucer, &c."

[Erie Canal](#) mule and horse driver Tom Kilroy was born in West Troy, New York.

In [Concord](#), Barzillai Frost died:

"For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away."
"He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down."



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1859

November 20, Sunday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal:

BRONSON ALCOTT

ELLERY CHANNING

EDMUND HOSMER

Clear and cold. Spent the forenoon in the library with Mr. Alcott, looking after and examining his old books. I walked this P.M. with Thoreau to Walden Pond and the woods around. Took tea with T. and called upon Channing and smoked a pipe with him; returned to Thoreau's, met Edmund Hosmer, an intelligent farmer, there. Talked on religious faith, &c., returned to Mr. Alcott's late in the evening.

Reiseabenteuer op.227, a waltz by Johann Strauss, was performed for the first time, in the Volksgarten of Vienna.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 20th]



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1860

January 11, Wednesday: [Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) sailed off across the Pacific Ocean, bound for the Orient.

AND NOW, FOR SOMETHING ENTIRELY DIFFERENT, A REPORT FROM OUR SAILOR:

On the morning of the 11th January, 1860, I passed, for the eighth time, through the Golden Gate, on my way across the delightful Pacific to the Oriental world, with its civilization three thousand years older than that I was leaving behind. As the shores of California faded in the distance, and the summits of the Coast Range sank under the blue horizon, I bade farewell— yes, I do not doubt, forever— to those scenes which, however changed or unchanged, must always possess an ineffable interest for me.



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

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in the evening, at private houses.

WALDO EMERSON

HENRY THOREAU

ELLERY CHANNING

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR JANUARY 11th]

June 15, Friday: At the end of 3 months of dicey attempts to interrogate key witnesses behind [John Brown](#)'s raid on the federal arsenal at [Harpers Ferry](#), Virginia, the special Senate investigative committee dissolved and [Thaddeus Hyatt](#) was released from his jail cell in the Old Capitol Prison of [Washington DC](#).

[Ellery Channing](#) wrote Mrs. Benjamin Marston Watson (Mary Russell Watson) about [Henry Thoreau](#), condescendingly echoing a typical [Emerson](#) condescension (With friends like this had Thoreau any need of enemies?):

H.T. has been reading [Aristotle](#) and found that it is good, a fact which [Mr. E](#) says, has been the property of every schoolboy for two thousand years. – [Henry](#) you know thought he had discovered [Aristotle](#), the good creature (I mean [H.](#)).



“What a gump!...On the whole, he is but little better than an idiot. He should have been whipt often and soundly in his boyhood; and as he escaped such wholesome discipline then, it might be well to bestow it now.”

– [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), about [Ellery Channing](#)





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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

August: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

[Louisa May Alcott](#) put in a solid month's work on a 1st draft of her novel MOODS,

"Moods." Genius burned so fiercely that for four weeks I wrote all day and planned nearly all night, being quite possessed by my work. I was perfectly happy, and seemed to have no wants. Finished my book, or a rough draft of it, and put it away to settle. Mr. Emerson offered to read it when Mother told him it was "moods" and had one of his sayings for motto.¹ Daresay nothing will ever come of it; but it had to be done, and I'm the richer for a new experience.

1. Alcott's epigraph in MOODS: "Life is a train of moods like a string of beads; and as we pass through them they prove to be many colored lenses, which paint the world their own hue, and each shows us only what lies in its own focus. — Emerson"
What Emerson had written in the essay "Experience" published in ESSAYS, 2D SERIES: "Dream delivers us to dream, and there is no end to illusion. Life is a train of moods like a string of beads, and, as we pass through them, they prove to be many-colored lenses which paint the world their own hue, and each shows only what lies in its focus. From the mountain you see the mountain. We animate what we can, and we see only what we animate. Nature and books belong to the eyes that see them. It depends on the mood of the man, whether he shall see the sunset or the fine poem. There are always sunsets, and there is always genius; but only a few hours so serene that we can relish nature or criticism. The more or less depends on structure or temperament. Temperament is the iron wire on which the beads are strung. Of what use is fortune or talent to a cold and defective nature? Who cares what sensibility or discrimination a man has at some time shown, if he falls asleep in his chair? or if he laugh and giggle? or if he apologize? or is affected with egotism? or thinks of his dollar? or cannot go by food? or has gotten a child in his boyhood? ..."

which her biographer refers to as "a love story about [Henry Thoreau](#)" and as "a stormy, triangular love story based on her long-term, secret infatuation with Henry Thoreau."⁸³ It was a story from the heart, lingering over passionate possibilities and displaying [Louisa](#)'s unrequited desire for an absorbing, erotic love."⁸⁴

83. The novel would need to be cut almost in half so it could be published as a saleable single volume rather than as an unsalable double volume on October 8, 1864, Abba's 64th birthday. The sanctimonious publisher, A.K. Loring, insisted that a reference to a character as perusing [Walt Whitman](#)'s LEAVES OF GRASS volume be elided.



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84. In an undated letter to [Louisa](#), this Loring unashamedly exposed the American businessman's poverty of mind and arrogance:

I judge a book by the impression it makes and leaves in my mind, by the feelings solely as I am no scholar. -A story that touches and moves me, I can make others read and believe in. -What I like is conciseness in introducing the characters, getting them upon the stage and into action as quickly as possible. -Then I like a story of constant action, bustle and motion, -Conversations and descriptive scenes are delightful reading when well drawn but are too often skipped by the reader who is anxious to see what they will do next, and it's folly to write what will be skipped in reading.... I like a story that starts to teach some lesson of life (and) goes steadily on increasing in interest till it culminates with the closing chapter leaving you spell bound, enchanted and exhausted with the intensity with which it is written, the lesson forcibly told, and a yearning desire to turn right back to the beginning and enjoy it over again....



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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN



MOODS presents an American Rochester modeled on Henry David Thoreau, in the character of Adam Warwick. He is a very tempting mate to Sylvia. Warwick has no house to keep but rather claims the world at large and nature in particular as his domain. Moreover, he offers to share nature with Sylvia and to teach her its secrets. Somewhat like Rochester, he does have a sexual secret as well in the first *MOODS*; he is betrothed to Ottila. Thoreau's influence on the character of Warwick is twofold: both natural and sexual. Thoreau's "prejudice for Adamhood" became well known, establishing a direct relationship with nature as one American model of manhood. He was the Alcott girls' favorite companion on cross-country nature rambles. Charming birds and chipmunks, telling stories of Indian history and natural geography, he attracted Louisa May Alcott as well. She recalled trailing behind Thoreau and her father as they discussed Thoreau's essays. In addition Thoreau provides a possible source for the fictional rivalry between Warwick and Moor; there were rumors of an attraction between Lidian Emerson and Thoreau. Even though critics found the triangles in *MOODS* "impossible," Alcott confided to her *JOURNALS*, in a postscript to the 1865 pages, that

a case of the sort exists in Concord and the woman came and asked me how I knew it. I did not know or guess, but perhaps felt it without any other guide, and unconsciously put the thing into my book, for I changed the ending about that time. It was meant to show a life affected by Moods, not a discussion of marriage which I knew so little about, except to observe that very few were happy ones.

...[Warwick is] "restless, brilliant and violently virtuous." Like Thoreau, who supported John Brown's Harper Ferry raid, denounced the Mexican War, and defended the cause of American Indians, Warwick is

a masterful soul, bent on living out his beliefs and aspirations at any cost, much given to denunciation of wrong-doing everywhere, and eager to execute justice upon all offenders high or low.

Meanwhile, the love object was taking a train to Troy, New Hampshire and walking to Mt. Monadnock with [Ellery Channing](#), camping out for five nights. The love object was working on his natural history materials.

[SEE "MOODS" ON NEXT SCREEN]

Needless to say, if this character "Mr. Adam Warwick" in *MOODS* was indeed modeled by [Louisa](#) upon her "impressions of Thoreau," then the author's creation informs us far more about her own soul and the impressions which it insisted upon manufacturing than about the soul of the person to whom she was seeming



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Little notice was taken of her stories, but they found a market; and encouraged by this fact, she resolved to make a bold stroke for fame and fortune. Having copied her novel for the fourth time, read it to all her confidential friends, and submitted it with fear and trembling to three publishers, she at last disposed of it, on condition that she would cut it down one-third, and omit all the parts which she particularly admired.

“Now I must either bundle it back in to my tin-kitchen to mold, pay for printing it myself, or chop it up to suit purchasers and get what I can for it. Fame is a very good thing to have in the house, but cash is more convenient; so I wish to take the sense of the meeting on this important subject,” said Jo, calling a family council.

“Don’t spoil your book, my girl, for there is more in it than you know, and the idea is well worked out. Let it wait and ripen,” was her father’s advice; and he practiced what he preached, having waited patiently thirty years for fruit of his own to ripen, and being in no haste to gather it even now when it was sweet and mellow.

“It seems to me that Jo will profit more by taking the trial than by waiting,” said Mrs. March. “Criticism is the best test of such work, for it will show her both unsuspected merits and faults, and help her to do better next time. We are too partial, but the praise and blame of outsiders will prove useful, even if she gets but little money.”

“Yes,” said Jo, knitting her brows, “that’s just it. I’ve been fussing over the thing so long, I really don’t know whether it’s good, bad, or indifferent. It will be a great help to have cool, impartial persons take a look at it, and tell me what they think of it.”

“I wouldn’t leave a word out of it. You’ll spoil it if you do, for the interest of the story is more in the minds than in the actions of the people, and it will be all a muddle if you don’t explain as you go on,” said Meg, who firmly believed that this book was the most remarkable novel ever written.

“But Mr. Allen says, ‘Leave out the explanations, make it brief and dramatic, and let the characters tell the story,’” interrupted Jo, turning to the publisher’s note.

“Do as he tells you. He knows what will sale, and we don’t. Make a good, popular book, and get as much money as you can. By and by, when you’ve got a name, you can afford to digress, and have philosophical and metaphysical people in your novels,” said Amy, who took a strictly practical view of the subject.

“Well,” said Jo, laughing, “if my people **are** ‘philosophical and metaphysical,’ it isn’t my fault, for I know nothing about such things, except what I hear father say, sometimes. If I’ve got some of his wise ideas jumbled up with my romance, so much the better for me. Now, Beth, what do you say?”

“I should so like to see it printed **soon**,” was all Beth said, and smiled in saying it. But there was an unconscious emphasis on the last word, and a wistful look in the eyes that never lost their childlike candor, which chilled Jo’s heart for a minute with a forboding fear, and decided her to make her little venture ‘soon.’

So, with Spartan firmness, the young authoress laid her firstborn on her table, and chopped it up as ruthlessly as any ogre. In the hope of pleasing every one, she took every one’s advice, and like the old man and his donkey in the fable, suited nobody.

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to relate. But perhaps these easy identifiers (the analysts quoted above) were quite mistaken. Perhaps this character “Mr. Adam Warwick” was indeed modeled upon a historical person, but not upon anyone so famous as Thoreau with whom we are so well acquainted. Please note that Louisa May Alcott was a little girl growing up with three other little girls in a family which attracted adult males to reside with it, at Fruitlands and elsewhere, drifting characters of means such as the English metaphysical chap [Charles Lane](#).



For the remainder of this exceedingly nasty suggestion, I will decline to carry the freight myself but instead will allow Henry James, Sr., who personally had an opportunity to observe this situation in [the Alcott household](#) over a period of years, to carry that freight for me. What he had to say in the period in which this novel first saw the light of day was as follows — and it strikes me that for 1865, the year in which it was



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written, this is **strong meat indeed**:

... Mr. Adam Warwick, is one of our oldest and most inveterate foes. he is the inevitable cavaliere servente of the precocious little girl; the laconical, satirical, dogmatical lover, of about thirty-five, with the "brown mane," the "quiet smile," the "masterful soul," and the "commanding eye." Do not all novel-readers remember a figure, a hundred figures, analogous to this? Can they not, one of his properties being given, — the "quiet smile" for instance, — reconstruct the whole monstrous shape? When the "quiet smile" is suggested, we know what is coming: we foresee the cynical bachelor or widower, the amateur of human nature, "Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the part," who has travelled all over the world, lives on a mysterious patrimony, and spends his time in breaking the hearts and the wills of demure little school-girls, who answer him with "Yes, sir," and "No, sir." Mr. Warwick is plainly a great favorite with the author. She has for him that affection which writers entertain, not for those figures whom they have well known, but for such as they have much pondered....

I take it that this "whole monstrous shape" who "spends his time in breaking the hearts and wills of demure little school-girls" amounts to about as close as one might come in the literary world of the 19th Century to a suggestion that there had been pederasts, either active or latent, in the vicinity during the childhood formation of the author (if you have some easier interpretation of his concern, please do share this easier interpretation with us).



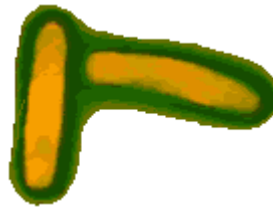
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1861

Spring: Due to persistent pulmonary distress, [Henry Thoreau](#)'s doctor would recommend that he go on an excursion to the Bahamas.⁸⁵



TB

Thoreau had been in 1850 to see one of the traveling “panorama” shows made up of painted canvas rolls then being exhibited behind lecturers on theater stages, of the Rhine, and had been intrigued enough by it, and by the idea of himself as a “younger son” who would, at least traditionally, need to venture and adventure for his inheritance, to go see another panorama, one of travel up the Mississippi. This from his JOURNAL was written after January 10 and before February 9, 1851:



JOHN BANVARD

I went some months ago to see a panorama of the Rhine It was like a dream of the Middle ages— I floated down its historic stream in something more than imagination under bridges built by the Romans and repaired by later heroes past cities & castles whose very names were music to me made my ears tingle — & each of which was the subject of a legend. There seemed to come up from its waters & its vine-clad hills & vallys a hushed music as of crusaders departing for the Holy Land— There were Ehrenbreitstein & Rolandseck & Coblentz which I knew only in history. I floated along through the moonlight of history under the spell of enchantment It was as if I remembered a glorious dream as if I had been transported to a heroic age & breathed an atmospher of chivalry Those times appeared far more poetic & heroic than these Soon after I went to see the panorama of the Mississippi and as I fitly worked my way upward in the light of today —& saw the steamboats wooding up —& looked up the Ohio & the Missouri & saw its unpeopled cliffs —& counted the rising cities —& saw the Indians removing west across the stream & heard the legends of Dubuque & of Wenona’s Cliff—still thinking more of the future than of the past or present—I saw that this was a Rhine stream of a dif kind that the foundations *{One leaf missing}* all this West—which our thoughts traverse so often & so freely. We have never doubted that their prosperity was our prosperity— It is the home of the younger-sons As among the Scandinavians the younger sons took to the seas for their inheritance and became the Vikings or Kings of the Bays & colonized Ice land & Greenland & probably discovered the continent of America

85. [Waldo Emerson](#) also had planned an excursion up the Mississippi that had never come off: he had wanted to take a steamboat up to the falls of St. Anthony, the highest point reachable without portage, and there witness an Indian assembly. —But he would not venture that far west until 1867, and by then there were iron rails all the way from Concord to St. Anthony, which had been renamed “Minnehapolis.”



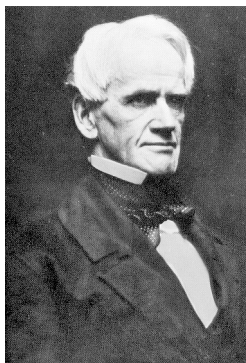


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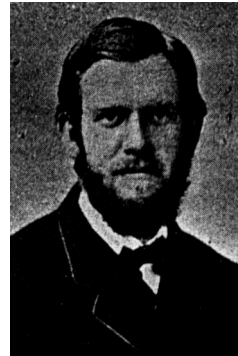
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[Ellery Channing](#), who had at one time attempted to homestead in Illinois, proposed that the two of them go visit “the great American desert,”⁸⁶ for this was then being advertised as a good place to recover from lung problems. The *phthisis* theory of the day was that it had something to do with chill, moist Atlantic winds from the north-east, to the point at which it was said to be “no less than manslaughter” to ask someone to sleep in a bedroom on the north-east side of a house. Minnesota, in competition with Florida for the sickie trade, was advertising nationally that its winds came from the north-west and did not cross any large bodies of water. But then Channing couldn’t go, and 17-year-old Horace Mann, Jr., son of the famous “father of American



Mann Senior



Mann Junior

public education” who had died several years before, wanted to go along.⁸⁷

Actually, I don’t think that the reason why [Thoreau](#) went to Minnesota rather than to the Bahamas is to be found in his finances. I think it was a matter of his psychic landscape of symbols, in which he associated the west with wildness, and the wild native American crabapple tree with the tree of life in Paradise. Let us review some of the thoughts he had entered into his Journal:



After February 9-before February 12, 1851: I believe that adam in paradise was not so favorably situated on the whole as is the backwoodsman in America- You all know how miserably the former turned out -or was turned out -but there is some consolation at least in the fact that it yet remains to be seen how the western Adam Adam in the wilderness will turn out -

In Adams fall
We sinned all.
In the new Adam’s rise
We shall all reach the skies.

Infusion of hemlock in our tea, if we must drink tea -not the poison hemlock -but the hemlock spruce I mean -or perchance the Arbor Vitae -the tree of life is what we want.

86. Current name for Great Plains area.

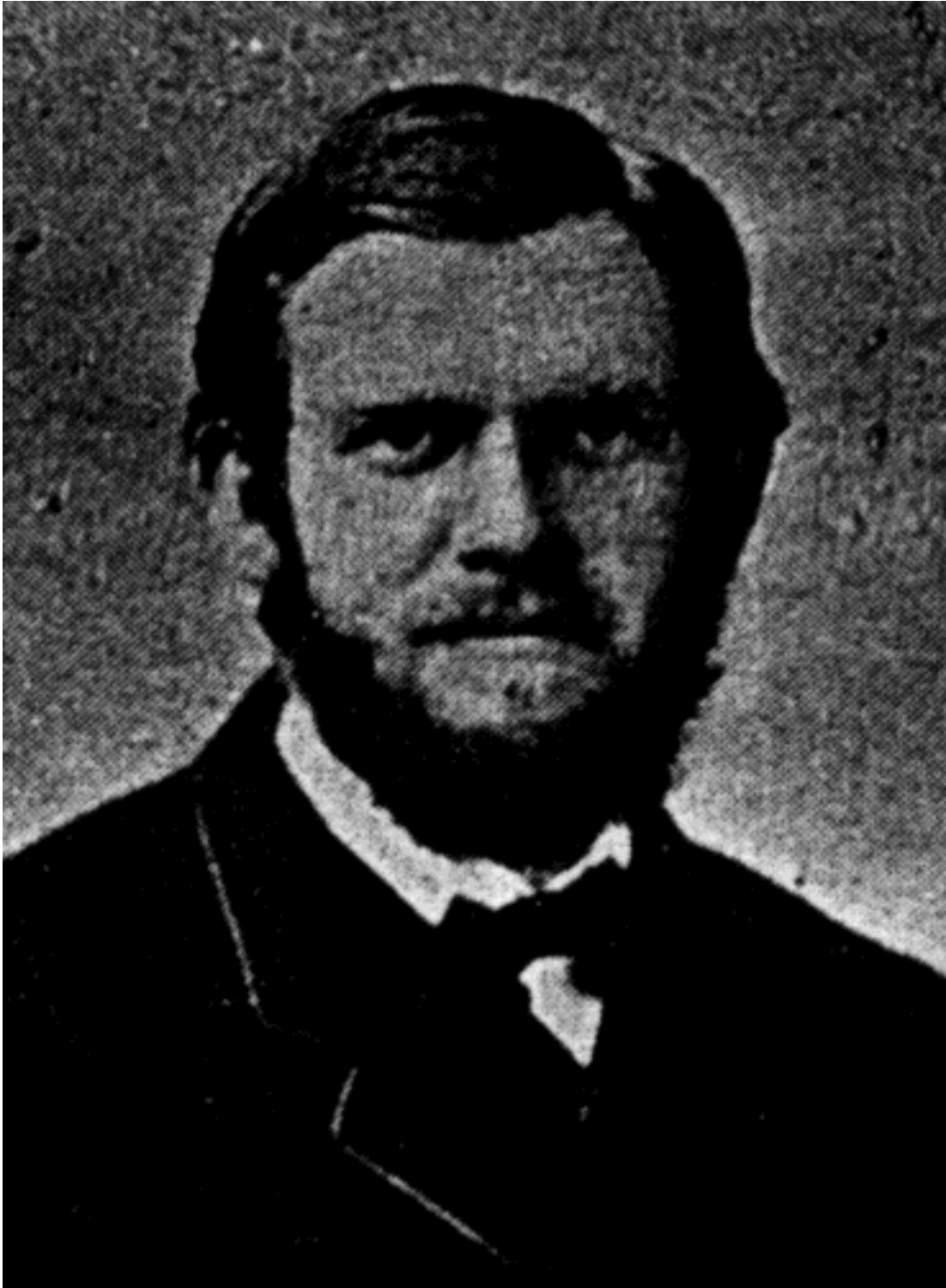
87. It is possible that Horace Mann, Jr. was already suffering from respiratory problems, and that he was going for the same reason as [Thoreau](#), or it is possible that he was going back to visit scenes of his childhood such as Mackinac Island between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan.



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Horace Mann, Jr. (shortly before his death at age 24)

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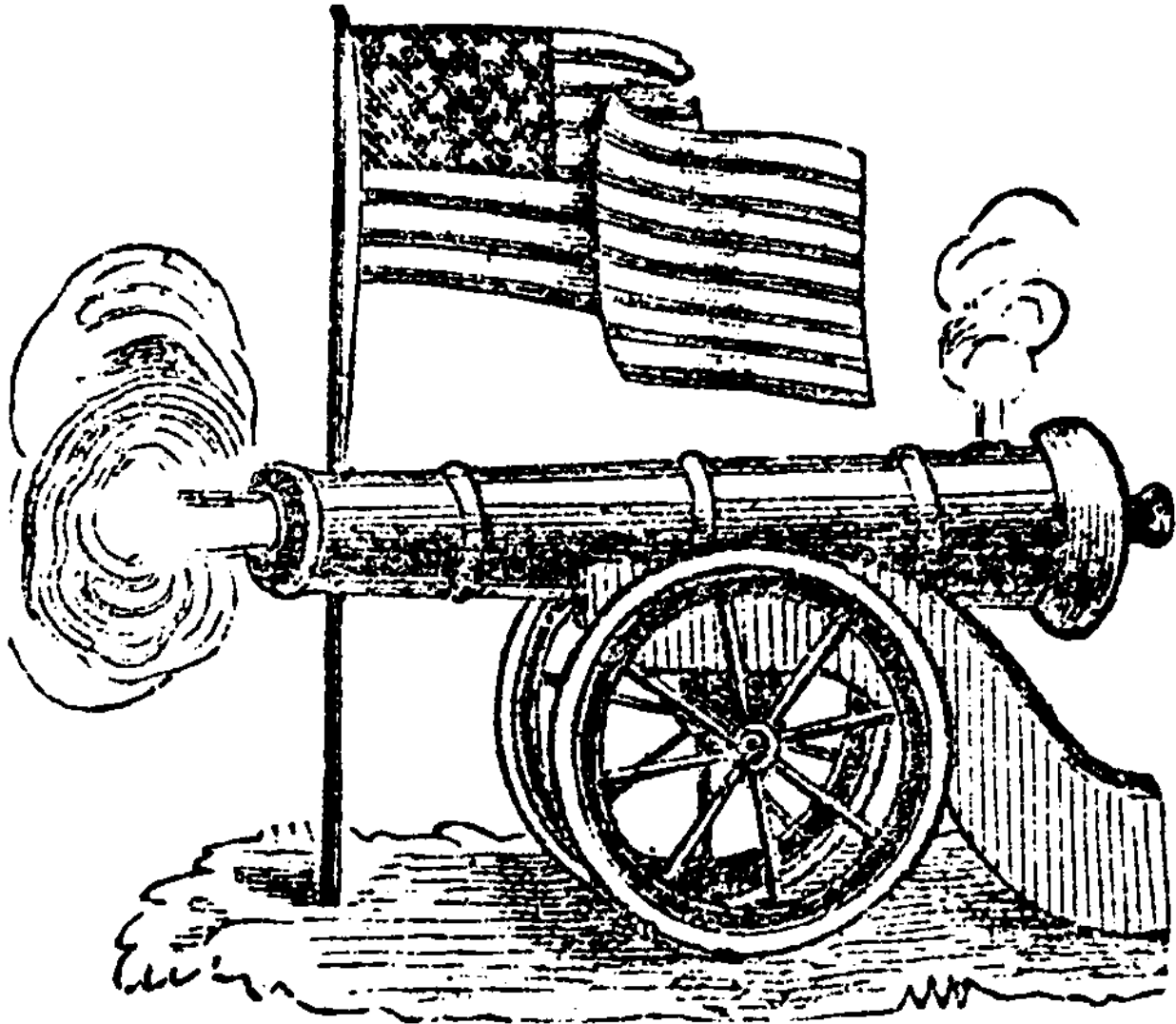
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May 20, Monday: The [Confederate States of America](#) again to some degree expanded its [Confederate Corps of Marines](#).

Large plantations such as Hardscrabble, Cameron, and Leigh had been established in the region surrounding [Durham, North Carolina](#). By this decade, Stagville Plantation lay at the center of one of the largest plantation holdings in the South. Black slaves from Africa labored on the farms and plantations. Due to a disagreement between the plantation owners and the farmers, [North Carolina](#) would make itself the last state to secede from the Union. However, on this day the sovereign state of [North Carolina](#), whose plantation masters were unable to sustain the thought that all men were created equal, did actually vote to “undo” the act that had brought it into the federal union centered in [Washington DC](#). White Durhamite sons would fight in several North Carolina regiments. Seventeen days after Lee would surrender his army at Appomattox, it would be at Bennett Place in Durham that General Sherman and General Johnston would negotiate the largest surrender and the end of civil strife. While in Durham, Yankee troops would become users of Brightleaf tobacco — and this would be what would spawn the commercial success of Washington Duke and his family and the firms known as American Tobacco, Liggett & Meyers, R.J. Reynolds, and P. Lorillard. The first mill to produce denim and the world’s largest hosiery maker would eventually establish themselves in Durham.

Well, the above remark about being unable to sustain the thought that all men were created equal is a cold joke, really, a cold joke based on the reputation that North Carolina has acquired — as a state whose chief claim to fame is that at least it is not South Carolina. In fact none of the Southern tier of states were breaking away in order to protect their peculiar institution of human enslavement. That’s merely a modern misapprehension! The president-elect, Abraham Lincoln, had given them assurances that interfering with human enslavement was not an item to be found anywhere on his agenda. None of the Southern politicians had any reason at all to suspect that Lincoln had any affection for people of color, for in fact, as was well understood, he had no such affection. The man was a master of the nigger joke (if you hadn’t known that, it is merely that our historians have been sparing you the agony of hearing them). The primary reason for the breaking away was that the election had indicated to the states of the Southern agricultural tier very clearly that the Northern industrial sector of the nation was increasing in relative influence over the Southern. During the first century of the existence of our nation, the most important political fact was that the primary political division in the federal government was sectional, between the Northern sector and the Southern sector of the country. The Constitution had been drafted in such a manner that the powers of these two sectors were about on a par with one another — it was to achieve this rough parity between the industrial North and the agricultural South that slavemasters had been granted an extra 3/5ths of a vote for every human being they owned. Year after year, shifts in the relative power of the two regions had been being carefully monitored and struggled over. This was a sectional issue, a geographical one, an economic one, Northern sector versus Southern sector, and so, you see, any and all debates as to the morality of race enslavement pro and con amount to a mere “stalking horse.” All of American national politics had for all of the existence of the federal union been a delicate balancing act. When Florida had become available, from Spain, Florida could not be brought into the union as an addition to the Southern sector until the federal politicians had come up with the idea of offering something equivalent to the Northern sector, so that the relative influences of the two sectors could be kept in balance within the corridors of power in [Washington DC](#) (so, Massachusetts was split into two states, Massachusetts and Maine, with the addition of Maine to the Northern sector balancing the addition of Florida to the Southern sector). When Texas came in, the whole chunk of territory had been brought in as one humongous state rather than breaking it apart into four reasonably sized new states, simply because the relative power of the two regions, north versus south, was being so carefully monitored and struggled for. For similar reasons, Canada is now an independent nation: Canada retained its independence because nobody could figure out how to add Canada to the Northern sector without adding Mexico to the Southern sector (and nobody wanted the Mexicans because they were thought of as half-breeds). National politics went on and on like this, and it wasn’t ever a struggle



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over freeing the negroes, but was instead a struggle between two groups of white men over which group of white men was going to achieve dominance over the federal establishment in [Washington](#). Now hear me, the black people were just a pawn, being moved around the white man's chessboard. So, in the 1860 election, when a northern candidate won rather than the candidate that was in the pocket of the Southern sector, they became fearful that the big bad wolf was knocking on the door, that the Northern sector had finally won out in this long-term contest for dominance over the federal establishment in [Washington](#). It didn't matter how much Lincoln protested that freeing the slaves was the furthest thing from his mind ("Who, lil' ol' me?").

Thus, at our present juncture, the states of the Southern sector were seceding not because the [Republican](#) election victory posed a threat to enslavement practices — such a threat was not presented by the new [Republican party](#) platform— but because with the growing industrial power of the North, the agricultural South sensed a permanent diminution of its relative influence. It was willing to be part of a 50% versus 50% nation but feared having to suck hind tit in a 60% versus 40% nation. It had been all right when Franklin Pierce, a Northerner, had been president, because they had all understood that Pierce was a true blue Southerner at heart (besides, he was an ineffectual drunkard with the charisma of a door stop). This time, with a Northerner rather than a Southerner in control of the White House, the Northern bloc was going to start adding a bunch of free states out west, with each free state having two senators to make the Senate ever more and more lopsided — and this long stalemate would be irrevocably shattered.

[Ellery Channing](#) had hinted that he might join [Henry Thoreau](#) and Horace Mann, Jr. at [Niagara Falls](#). He did not show up, which disappointed Thoreau. After having spent 5 days waiting in the Niagara Falls area, Thoreau and Mann took the train across lower Ontario and spent a night in Detroit.



May 20. Niagara Falls to Detroit... Wild fowl east of Lake St. Clair; of which a long and fine view on each side of the Thames. Crossing, saw about Thamesville a small plump bird, —red head and blackish or bluish back and wings, but with broad white on the rounded wing and tail. Probably the red-headed woodpecker [Red-headed Woodpecker [Melanerpes erythrocephalus](#)].
The one dollar houses in Detroit are the Garrison & the Franklin H.

July 10, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) and Horace Mann, Jr., age 17, returned home from the [Minnesota](#) trip in time for [Edward Waldo Emerson](#)'s birthday party. Their fare on the Fitchburg RR from Boston to Concord for the last leg of their long trip was \$1.¹⁰. The trip cost Thoreau the entire \$150.⁰⁰ he had taken with him but he was not in any better condition than before:

"I have been sick so long that I have almost forgotten what it is to be well."

There are indications that Mann had gone on this adventure among other reasons also for his health, and a few years later he also would die — of tuberculosis.

Since [Waldo Emerson](#) was giving a commencement address "Celebration of Intellect" in Ballou Hall at Tufts College in Medford, at a distance of 14 map miles on the Concord Turnpike, it seems possible that he was able



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to return by a 2-to-3-hour carriage ride and be present for his son's birthday party in Concord:

When you say the times, the persons are prosaic; where is the feudal, or the Saracenic, or the Egyptian architecture? where the romantic manners? where the Romish or the Calvinistic religion, which made a kind of poetry in the air for Milton, or Byron, or [Belzoni](#)? but to us it is barren as a dry goods shop; – you expose your atheism.

However, [Thoreau](#) filled in for [Waldo](#) by offering [Eddie](#) a memorable piece of fatherly reassurance:

On my birthday, in the early summer, just before I went to take my examination for Harvard, my father and mother invited Thoreau and Channing, both, but especially Thoreau, friends from my babyhood, to dine with us. When we left the table and were passing into the parlour, Thoreau asked me to come with him to our East door – our more homelike door, facing the orchard. It was an act of affectionate courtesy, for he had divined my suppressed state of mind and remembered that first crisis in his own life, and the wrench that it seemed in advance, as a gate leading out into an untried world. With serious face, but with a very quiet, friendly tone of voice, he reassured me, told me that I should be really close to home; very likely should pass my life in Concord. It was a great relief.

The likely story, and the official story, is that [Fanny Appleton Longfellow](#), as the result of the skin burns she had sustained on her body the previous day (her face was unmarked), went into a coma and died. In any event, for the rest of his life [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) would need to wear a full beard in order to conceal the facial scars he sustained as he rolled her in the carpet. And he would write his wife a memorial poem titled "Cross of Snow," remembering that her white soul had been as pure as snow and equating being hurt with being martyred: "soul more white never through martyrdom of fire was led to its repose." I must confess, however, that there seems to me to be a more likely story. Of course no-one will ever know for sure, but I feel it to be plausible that Fanny was taking an elixir because of the heat, that summer day in sweltering Cambridge, and that when her dress caught fire she was in no condition to do anything but sit and stare at the pretty flames, and that after she realized how seriously burned she was she went right back to the bottle of elixir and took what turned out to be an overdose. We must bear in mind that in those days there was a discreet and friendly

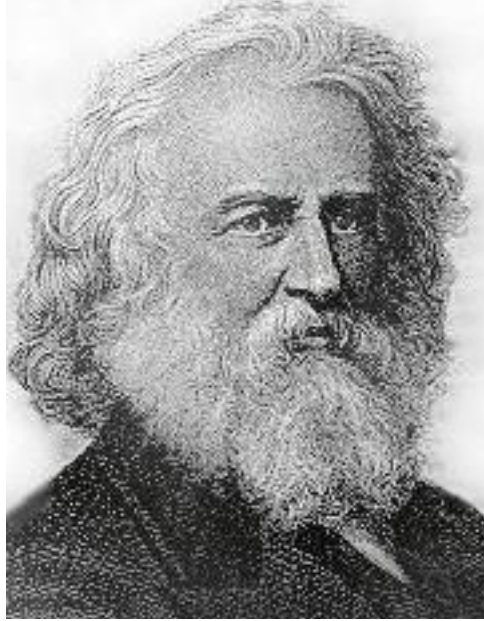
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dope pusher in every neighborhood, and his name was “chemist” and his place of business was “apothecary shop” and his main stock in trade was opium — and this tradesman kept no records and told none of the neighbors what decent people needed to do in order to get the most out of their day. Like so many things —like everything sexual— it wasn’t a problem and yet just wasn’t talked about.



The grieving husband/poet would write her, evidently on the anniversary date July 10, 1879, a memorial poem titled “Cross of Snow,” remembering not that before his second wife had gotten herself burned all black, she had been a white lady, but rather that her white soul had been as pure as snow: “soul more white never through martyrdom of fire was led to its repose.” Note that in such a frame of reference just about any sort of extreme pain (incurable cancer for instance) can get you termed not a mere sufferer but a martyr, and you don’t even need to display extreme fortitude — if your husband be a poet.⁸⁸

THE CROSS OF SNOW

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 benedict.
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.

88. But, as we understand, if not, unfortunately, not. Incidentally, if you go on a guided tour of the mansion, which is a National Historical Landmark, please don’t ask the guide about the fire. She won’t say anything about it in front of the tourists and you shouldn’t either.



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September 4, Wednesday: The infant Annie Langdon Alger died. [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal:

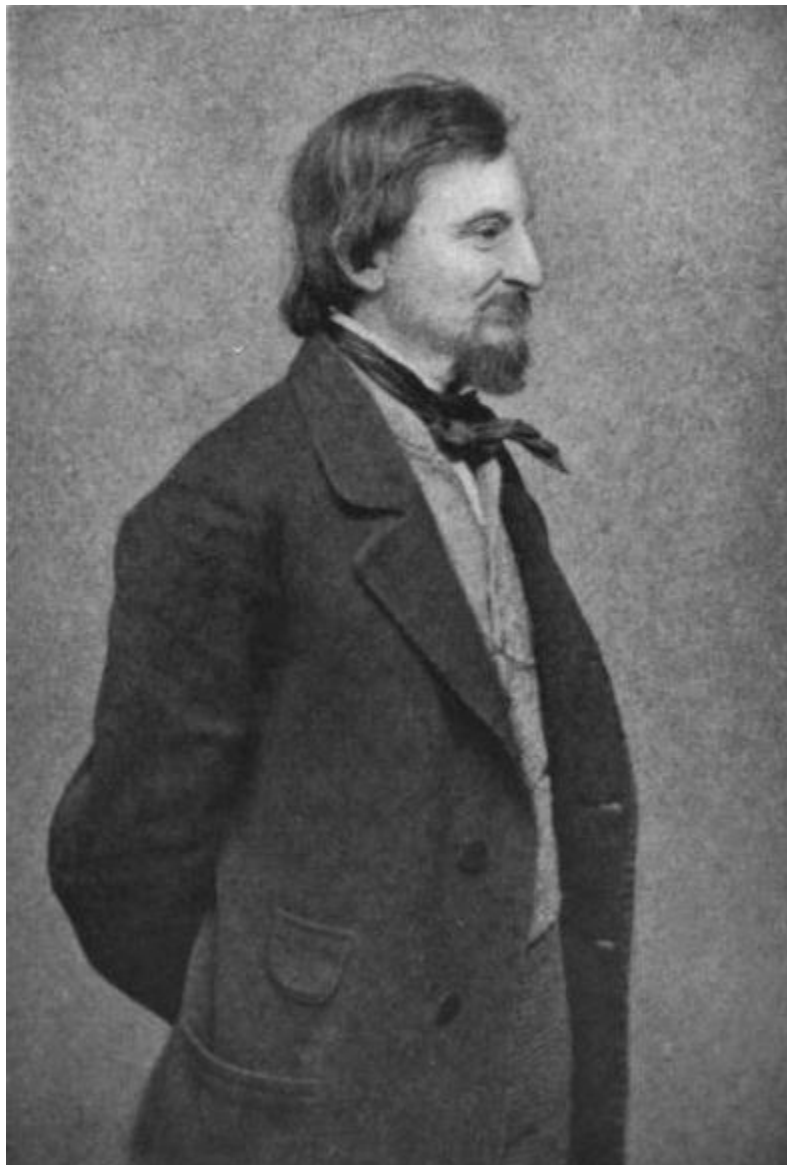
HENRY THOREAU

WALDO EMERSON

EDMUND HOSMER

ELLERY CHANNING

Clear and fine, walked to Walden Pond with Mr. Thoreau, bathed; on our way called on Mr. Emerson; walked this P.M. with T. to Mr. Edmund Hosmer's farm, Mr. H. with us from the post-office. Saw Channing in the street, but no word between us, I not knowing how he would meet me if I addressed him. Took tea at Mrs. Brooke's, returned to Mr. T.'s at 7 1/2, walked alone on the hill beyond the bridge by the Wheeler farm, talked with T. till 9 1/2. Clear, fine evening.



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1862

At some point that Spring: At some point during this spring, shortly before his death, [Henry Thoreau](#) gave to [Edmund Hosmer](#) his personal copy of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#), pointing out the lock of John's hair pasted into the front and the poem that accompanied it, and said:

*You know how a pregnant woman has to eat for two.
I have felt that I needed to live for John.*

According to Raymond R. Borst, this happened on May 5th: "At Thoreau's request, his friend Edmund Hosmer spends the night with him" and "In appreciation for this kindness, Thoreau asks his sister to give Hosmer his memorial copy of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) with a lock of his brother John's hair taped in it." Borst's reference is to the [Concord Saunterer](#), 11, Number 4 for Winter 1976, page 16.

Thoreau was then in the process of revising [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) for [Ticknor & Fields](#) to reissue it.

At some point, also, [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) presented Henry with a handwritten list of people to whom, she suggested, he might want to leave some special gift. Her list included in no particular sequence [Bronson Alcott](#), [H.G.O. Blake](#), [Theophilus Brown](#), [Ellery Channing](#), [Aunt Louisa Dunbar](#), [Edith Emerson](#), [Edward Waldo Emerson](#), [Edmund Hosmer](#), Judge Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar, [Elizabeth Sherman Hoar](#), [Horace Mann, Jr.](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), Mrs. Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley, [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), the [Concord Town Library](#), and the [Boston Society of Natural History](#). Thoreau worked at this list, jotting down alongside the names various small gifts (such as his two-volume edition of [Froissart's](#) CHRONICLES for Ellery),

FROISSART'S CHRONICLES, I

FROISSART'S CHRONICLES, II

until he got down to the entry for [Ellen Emerson](#). Evidently at this point he was unable to proceed, for the bequest to her (of his volume on the mineralogy of Maine and Massachusetts, evidently because it was by her uncle [Charles T. Jackson](#)), and all the remainder, are not in his handwriting but instead in [Sophia's](#).





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

May 12, Monday: The following notice of the funeral of [Henry D. Thoreau](#) appeared in the Lowell Daily Citizen & News:

The funeral of Henry D. Thoreau, which took place in Concord on Friday, was attended by a large company of citizens of that and neighboring towns, and services are described as unusually impressive. Selections of Scripture were read, and a brief ode, prepared for the occasion by [W.E. Channing](#), was sung, when [Mr. Emerson](#) read an address, marked, says the Transcript, by all his felicity of conception and diction — an exquisite appreciation of the salient and subtle traits of his friend's genius.

The following notice of that funeral appeared in the Boston Post:

The funeral of Henry D. Thoreau took place in the meeting house in Concord on Friday and [Ralph Waldo Emerson](#) delivered a feeling and characteristic address. Men of note from Boston and elsewhere were present. Mr Thoreau was 44 years old. He is said to have been engaged, at the time of his death, on several literary works, some of which were so nearly finished as to enable survivors to publish them. Mr Emerson will doubtless undertake this friendly work.

The following notice of that funeral appeared on the 2d page of the New-York Journal of Commerce:

Henry D. Thoreau, the eccentric author of "A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers," and "Walden, or, Life in the Woods," died at Concord, Mass., on Tuesday, aged forty-four years.

[Perry Davis](#) died. His son Edmund Davis would continue dealing drugs at 43 Pond Street, [Providence, Rhode Island](#) in the manner which his father had initiated. During the Civil War this patent compound of [opiates](#) with [ethanol](#) would be marketed as "good for man or beast" — since a horse on painkillers would be able to haul



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heavy loads until it dropped in its traces and was shot.





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1863

[John Shepard Keyes](#) purchased the Bullet Hole House on Monument Street in [Concord](#).

Out for a walk on the Old Carlisle Road (now Estabrook Road), [Ellery Channing](#) was hiking past what remained of [Whelan's \(Emerson's, Thoreau's\) shanty](#) out standing in the field where the Clarks had neglected it after their son James had gone insane and then died — and noted that the [windows](#) of that structure were missing.





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September 6, Sunday: In Charleston Harbor, the Union forces were putting pressure on Fort Wagner and Battery Gregg by means of advancing siegeworks.

[US CIVIL WAR](#)

Calvin H. Greene went with [Ellery Channing](#) to the “Eastabrook [Estabrook] Country” to take a look at what was left of “the Thoreau Hut, where it had been moved to, yrs before this. Took a memento — a broken shingle, as a fitting emblem.”

[EMERSON'S SHANTY](#)

That evening he went with [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) to the home of [Mrs. Mary Peabody Mann](#), where he met Miss [Elizabeth Palmer Peabody](#) and [Horace Mann, Jr.](#) The lad showed Calvin “his \$175.00 microscope & something of its power.”

That night, Confederate forces evacuated Fort Wagner and Battery Gregg in Charleston Harbor.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

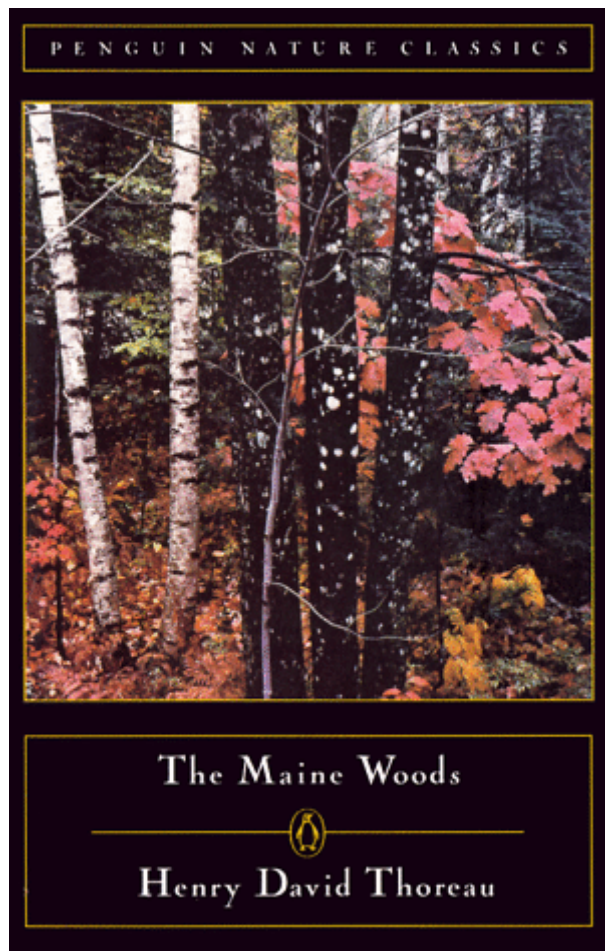
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1864

In this year [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) were jointly editing [Henry Thoreau](#)'s several magazine articles about Maine travels into an edition entitled THE MAINE WOODS. Their effort was reviewed by the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) in [The Atlantic Monthly](#), saying of Thoreau that "the world repaid him with lifelong obscurity and will yet repay him with permanent renown."⁸⁹

[TIMELINE OF THE MAINE WOODS](#)



89. Earlier typographical errors were corrected, and some material was added from Thoreau's reading after 1848.

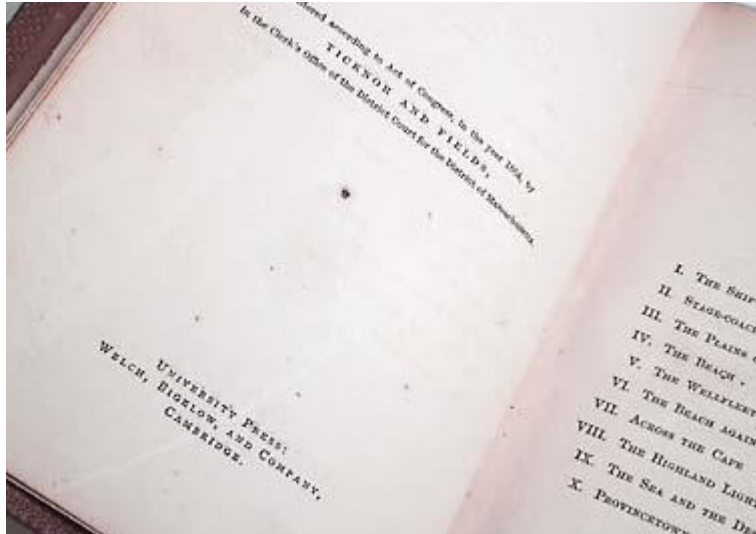




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CAPE COD also was being posthumously edited by Ellery Channing and Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau, and would be published by Ticknor & Fields.



Fields would publish two more of those chapters in The Atlantic Monthly during October and December, omitting (perhaps out of concern for the genteel sensibilities of that mag's readers) only the passage from Chapter 5  on the breakfast foods that were sustaining "detriment from the old man's shots." Thoreau had added the second paragraph of Chapter 1  (although parts of this were in his February 1850 lecture), the paragraph on Greenland (60-61), two historical footnotes (15, 38), and a half dozen minor pieces of a sentence or two. These additions supplement rather than alter what was already in the published articles in Putnam's.



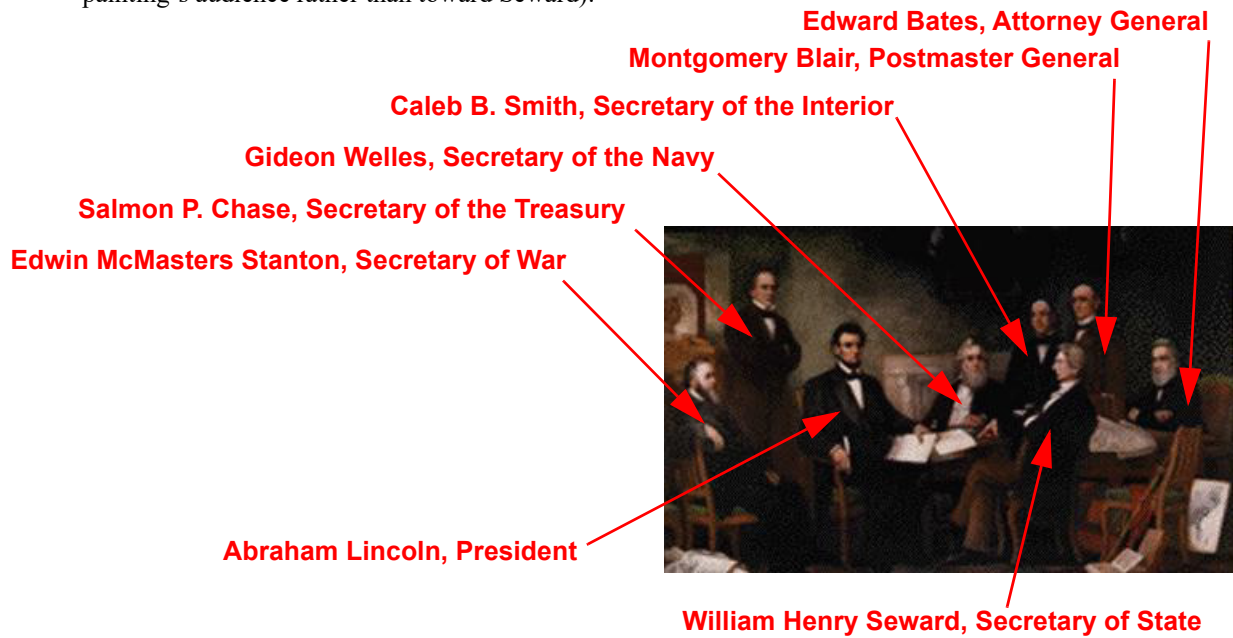
The 1st reading of the Emancipation Proclamation, as fantasized by Francis Bicknell Carpenter during this year (and then subsequently modified by 1878 so that the pen was put in Abraham Lincoln's right hand, the document in his left hand, the area behind his head lightened as in a halo, and his figure turned toward the

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painting's audience rather than toward Seward):



In accordance with the rule of thumb “Don’t bunch up, guys, one grenade’ll getcha all!” that scene has more

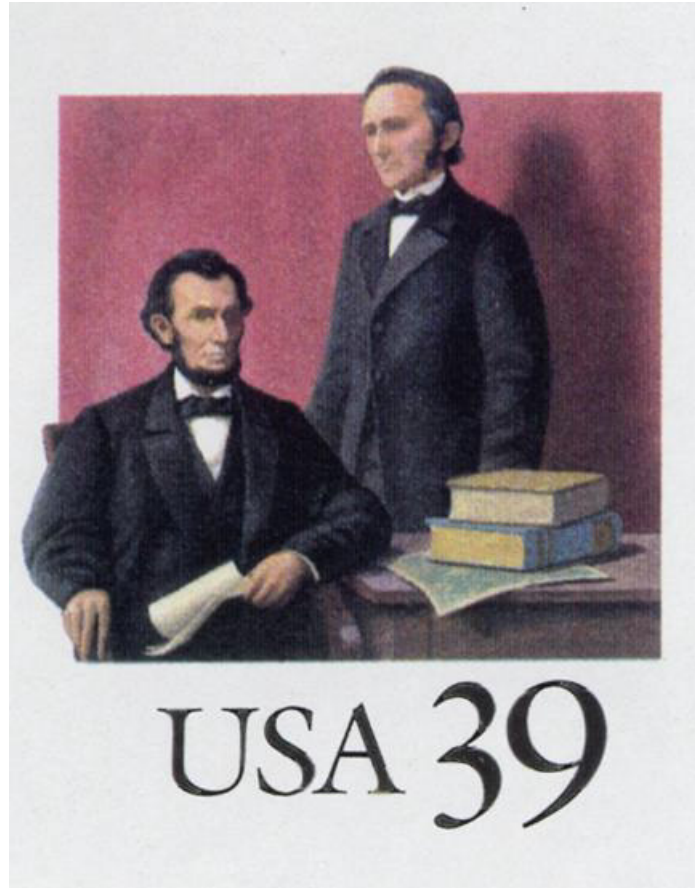


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recently been reimagined:



In the famous painting, the guy standing behind [Lincoln](#) was Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Portland Chase, but is that supposed to be Chase above, standing behind the President, or is it merely some amorphous unnamed supporting character, maybe a Secret Service agent, or his personal attorney? Anyway, in this year “In God We Trust” was being printed on the paper currency for the 1st time by order of Chase, who since his face was gracing the \$1 bill and since the bills had plain green backs would come to be known to the public as “Old Mr. Greenbacks.”⁹⁰

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

I can't show you what Chase looked like on this [Civil-War](#) one-dollar greenback — but I can show you what

90. No high American public official would dare protest against this breach of the barrier between religion and government — until Theodore Roosevelt would take it upon himself to attempt a removal — and would be overridden by a pious Congress.

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Old Mr. Greenbacks looked like on a subsequent denomination:



Disagreements between Salmon Portland Chase and [Lincoln](#) had been common occurrences, and when such a matter of disagreement arose it had been Chase's habit to tender his resignation. The 4th time he played this card, to Chase's great surprise [Lincoln](#) accepted the resignation as Secretary of the Treasury.

"....I will tell you how it is with Chase. Chase has fallen into two bad habits. He thinks he has become indispensable to the country.... He also thinks he ought to be President. He has no doubts whatever about that. It is inconceivable to him why people have not found it out, why they don't as one man rise up and say so.... He is either determined to annoy me, or that I shall pat him on the shoulder and coax him to stay. I don't think I ought do it. I will not do it. I will take him at his word.... And yet there is not a man in the Union who would make as good a Chief Justice as Chase, and if I have the opportunity I will make him Chief Justice of the United States."

[Lincoln](#)'s only concern about his subsequent appointment of Chase to the US Supreme Court during this year was that black robes of the court might not cloak Chase's persistent ambition to be president. [Lincoln](#) thought about asking Chase to agree not to seek the presidency but Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner, Chase's friend, advised [Lincoln](#) against asking for such a pledge. A few days later, [Lincoln](#)'s secretary, Mr. Nicolay, brought in a letter from Chase. [Lincoln](#) asked what it was about and Nicolay responded "Simply a kind and friendly letter." Instead of reading it, [Lincoln](#) went "File it with his other recommendations."

In the following decade, Chief Justice Chase would involve himself in five significant opinions:

In 1866 he would deliver a separate opinion in *Ex parte Milligan*, 71 U.S. 2

In 1866 he would present the opinion of the court in *Mississippi v. Johnson*, 71 U.S. 475

In 1868 he would present the opinion of the court in *Ex parte McCardle*, 74 U.S. 506

In 1868 he would present the opinion of the court in *Texas v. White*, 74 U.S. 700

In 1871 he would present the opinion of the court in *United States v. Klein*, 80 U.S. 128



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1865

At some point during this year [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#), with perhaps some assistance from [Ellery Channing](#), saw the first complete book edition of [Thoreau's CAPE COD](#) through to publication:

The title-page date of the first edition is 1865. But Horace E. Scudder, literary advisor for Houghton, Mifflin and Company and editor of the Riverside Edition of Thoreau's Writings, asserts in his brief introduction to volume four, [CAPE COD](#), that the first edition was released as a Christmas book in 1864. Scudder may have reached this conclusion from the book's copyright notice, dated 1864, or from the December 1864 date on the twenty-four pages of Ticknor and Fields advertising bound into most copies of the first edition. The explicit cost-book entry for publication on March 25, 1865 is supported by notices and advertisements in trade journals, general magazines, and newspapers and by early reviews of [CAPE COD](#). No announcements of the title appeared in late-1864 issues of the American Literary Gazette and Publishers' Circular; Ticknor and Fields's holiday gift book was an illustrated edition of Tennyson's ENOCH ARDEN. The first mention of [CAPE COD](#) occurred in the February 15, 1865, issue, where it was advertised as forthcoming in the present season. A similar publisher's announcement appeared in the March 1 issue of the Literary Gazette and in the March Atlantic Monthly. On April 1, the Literary Gazette included [CAPE COD](#) in its List of Books Recently Published in the United States. In this issue of the fortnightly Literary Gazette Ticknor and Fields advertised [CAPE COD](#) as one of several New Books Just Published by the firm: Readers of "Walden" and "Maine Woods" will welcome this last work of the gifted Thoreau. "Cape Cod" has been pronounced the best of his productions. On March 25 the Boston Advertiser had noted the publication of the book that same day. Advertising [CAPE COD](#) and its other Thoreau titles in the April 15 Literary Gazette and in the May issue of the Atlantic, Ticknor and Fields quoted from appraisals of Thoreau's work in the Boston Evening Traveller, the Hartford Press, and the Boston Recorder. On May 15 and June 1, advertisements in the Literary Gazette named [CAPE COD](#) among Recent Publications; and on August 1 and 15 [LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS](#) and [CAPE COD](#) were offered as two of the Choice New Books Lately Published by Ticknor and Fields.

[Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) alleged that in this year and the next he had permission to go through the papers of the [Reverend Ezra Ripley](#) stored in an attic of the Old Manse, and that among these papers, written on the



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back of a pious meditation from 1818, he discovered the following document:

Understanding that Mr. John Thoreau, now of Chelmsford, is going into business at that place, and is about to apply for license to retail ardent spirits, I hereby certify that I have been long acquainted with him, that he has sustained a good character, and now view him as a man of integrity, accustomed to storekeeping, and of correct morals.

Clearly, at some point during the year 1818, after the Thoreaus had moved to Chelmsford, [John Thoreau, Sr.](#) had solicited his former pastor, the Reverend Ripley, for the sort of letter of recommendation which he needed in order to be able to offer, to his favored customers, while he “kept shop” there,⁹¹ drinks of hard liquor.

91. It was customary in those heavy-drinking times for a storekeeper to pour a glass for a favored customer.




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1866



Posthumous publication by Ticknor & Fields of Boston of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s "A YANKEE IN CANADA" in A YANKEE IN CANADA, WITH ANTI-SLAVERY AND REFORM PAPERS, presumably edited by [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) (and [Ellery Channing?](#)) because the "THOMAS CARLYLE" essay had been shortened by some 4,000 words:

And still older, in Thomas Morton's "New English Canaan," published in 1637, it is said, on page 97, "From this Lake [Erocoise] Northwards is derived the famous River Canada, so named, of Monsier de Cane, a French Lord, who first planted a Colony of French in America."

– [Thoreau](#), at start of "A YANKEE IN CANADA"

TIMELINE OF CANADA
TIMELINE OF ESSAYS

A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN...

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

LAST DAYS OF CAPT....

LIFE WITHOUT PRINC...

PARADISE (TO BE) R...

PRAYERS

SLAVERY IN MASSAC...

THOMAS CARLISLE

WENDELL PHILLIPS

A YANKEE IN CANADA



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A student from Indiana, named Harrington, visited [Concord](#) and told [Ellery Channing](#) that [Henry Thoreau](#)'s death had grieved him more, though a stranger, than that of any one he had known.



The Italians went to war against Austria. Venice was incorporated into [Italy](#).



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1868



At this point the roof of [Whelan's \(Emerson's, Thoreau's\) shanty](#) was removed whole by the Clarks, to cover their pig yard. [Ellery Channing](#), a not always reliable source, claimed he saw the hut itself in ruins, the structure just having been pulled down — yet we would have a report, in 1876, strangely, of the structure as still standing. It would be reported to have been reconstructed, receiving a new roof, for use as a stable. The floor and some timbers would also be reported to have been used around 1885 to make a shed on the side of the barn. Eventually, the barn's shed would collapse and its wood would be used to repair the barn itself. The front door of the shanty was used over time in a variety of spots. Most sources agree that the boards somehow were used in barn repair on the Brooks Clark Farm. This has not been substantiated by any other source, but Edward Bacon would allege that the hut was demolished and the boards used to enlarge the farmhouse.



count on Ellery to be Ellery

In his prime, while [John B. Smith](#) was 45 years of age and perhaps not yet bald, people would venture to his [hermitage](#) under the overhang of his south-facing cliff face near [Erving, Massachusetts](#) to hear tales of his earlier existence as a peddler in the Highlands of Scotland and of the roles he performed on the stages of Glasgow and London. He wrote to newspaper editors in Boston, Massachusetts and Hartford, Connecticut to advertise himself and his solitary existence and attract tourists. George Warren Barber (1835-1886) of

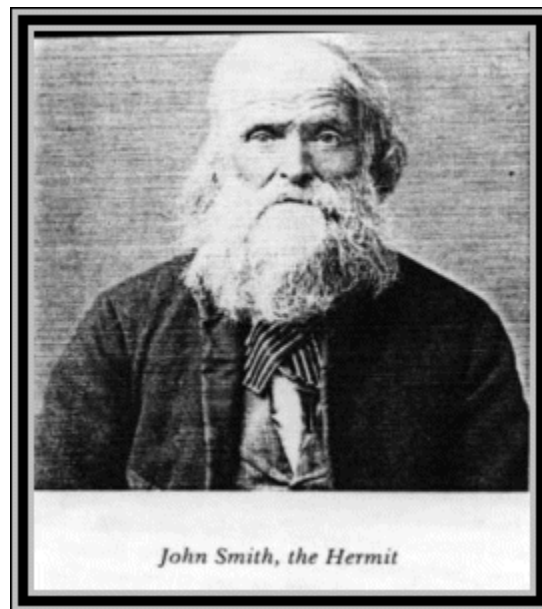


THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Warwick or Medfield, Massachusetts, while a student at Andover Theological Seminary, wrote out his narrative so he would be able to sell copies of this [HISTORY OF THE HERMIT OF ERVING CASTLE](#) (Andover: printed by Warren F. Draper). The book indicates that the hermit's food consisted largely of Indian pudding, which he referred to as "stirabout" and consumed without milk or sauce. Sometimes he would purchase a few herrings, or obtain a little wild meat, and of course he did purchase and consume tea and coffee. He grew hollyhocks, sedum, and ferns along with his crops of potatoes, corn, and onions, picking berries and collecting nuts in season, and knitting cordage rugs and stockings. [John](#) wrote of the Americans, "I often wonder America should be so void of the sense of [hermits](#)." To visitors who didn't harass him he would sell copies of his book for 25 cents, and stockings that he had knitted, and wreaths he'd woven of mountain laurel. He was decidedly a hermit in residence, with a stock of wares.



ERVING, MASSACHUSETTS

THE TASK OF THE HISTORIAN IS TO CREATE HINDSIGHT WHILE INTERCEPTING ANY ILLUSION OF FORESIGHT. NOTHING A HUMAN CAN SEE CAN EVER BE SEEN AS IF THROUGH THE EYE OF GOD.

IN A BOOK THAT IS SUPPOSED TO BE ABOUT HISTORY, ISSUED BY RANDOM HOUSE IN 2016, I FIND THE PHRASE "LOOKED UPON FROM THE BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF HISTORY," ONLY A MERE STORYTELLER, NEVER A HISTORIAN, COULD HAVE PENNED SUCH A PHRASE —



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BECAUSE NO BIRD HAS EVER FLOWN OVER HISTORY.

[Ellery Channing](#) and the Ricketson children, [Anna Ricketson](#) and [Walton Ricketson](#), went to the Clarke farm on the Estabrook Road to look at the remains of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s famed literary shanty — so similar to and yet so different from their own daddy's non-famed literary backyard shanty.⁹²



EMERSON'S SHANTY

92. Would this "Clarke farm on the Estabrook Road" have to do with Sarah Freeman Clarke, the Reverend James Freeman Clarke, the Clarke in Chicago who was a friend of the Mann family, or with Manlius Stimson Clarke with whom Thoreau gave that graduation exercise at Harvard??

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1871

Summer: John Muir invited [Waldo Emerson](#) on a 2-week excursion in Yosemite Valley.⁹³



Upon his return from this excursion, according to Muir's friend John Swett, Emerson commented about Muir: "He is more wonderful than Thoreau."

Emerson, Muir, James Thayer, and others rode 25 miles on horseback to Mariposa to view a grove of giant sequoias. Thayer would describe Emerson as having been "always accessible, cheerful, sympathetic, considerate, tolerant and showing respectful interest in those with whom he talked." When they reached the grove, Emerson strolled around quoting from Genesis. Muir would describe their departure: "Emerson lingered in the rear ... and when he reached the top of the ridge, after all the rest of the party were over and out of sight, he turned his horse, took off his hat and waved me a last good-bye." That evening Muir would sit alone by his campfire, musing that, as he would record later, "Emerson was with me in spirit, though I never again saw him in the flesh."

93. Refer to:

- Thayer, James Bradley. *A WESTERN JOURNEY WITH MR. EMERSON*. Boston MA: Little, Brown, 1884
- McAleer, John. *RALPH WALDO EMERSON: DAYS OF ENCOUNTER*. Boston MA: Little, Brown, 1984, pages 601-08
- Muir, John. "The Forests of Yosemite Park," in *OUR NATIONAL PARKS*. Boston MA: Houghton, Mifflin, 1901, pages 131-36
- Wolfe, Linnie Marsh. *SON OF THE WILDERNESS: THE LIFE OF JOHN MUIR*. NY: Knopf, 1945, pages 145-51



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[Emerson](#) subsidized publication of THE WANDERER, A COLLOQUIAL POEM, a blank-verse pastoral poem written by [Ellery Channing](#) and edited by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) with a preface by Emerson. [Henry Thoreau](#) was a character in this poem in which “still he heard that drumming in his dreams, / And schemed reforms to agitate the earth / With penny wisdom, and insure the peace.” The book sold well until the remaining copies were consumed by fire — probably the great Boston fire of 1872.

How vain to praise our literature, when its really superior minds are quite omitted, & utterly unknown to the public.... Thoreau quite unappreciated, though his books have been opened & superficially read.



Another poet of the period, Emma Lazarus, did not find Ellery Channing quite so inspiring. She would describe him as “a pathetic, impossible creature, whose cranks and oddities were submitted to on account of an innate nobility of character.”

[Emerson](#) to his journal:

[T]he splendors of this age outshine all other recorded ages. In my lifetime have been wrought five miracles, — namely,

- 1, the Steamboat;
- 2, the railroad;
- 3, the Electric telegraph;
- 4, the application of the Spectroscope to astronomy;
- 5, the Photograph;

— five miracles which have altered the relations of nations to each other.



At the end of the journal entries for this year, [Emerson](#) listed his recent readings in Oriental materials: “Iamblichus; Max Müller.”



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1873

[Ellery Channing](#)'s THOREAU: THE POET-NATURALIST / WITH MEMORIAL VERSES (Boston: Roberts Brothers) characterized [Thoreau](#) as having "the deepest-set blue eyes that could be seen, in certain lights, and in others grey."

READ CHANNING'S TEXT

This book would cause considerable anguish to Henry's sister [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#). In regard to those grey-blue eyes, we can inspect a recent colorized image of Thoreau prepared by Ron Koster:

<http://www.psymon.com/art/#new>

(Real-World Information: There is no blue pigment in any human eyes. The eyes we describe as "blue," such as my own eyes, are merely reflecting the blue of the sky. Any and all human eyes, even the darkest jet ones, can therefore be said, if there is any good reason to say such a thing, in certain lights to have a tint of blue in them. However, a hard and fast rule would be that any eyes which can in any lights be seen as grey ones are indeed grey ones and are in fact not blue ones.)

(More Real-World Information: When we want to be able to respect someone's life and ideas, one of the standard tricks we white racists pull is to pretend that this person had been a Nordic hero. This ain't nice, but it's us.)

The edition sold out.⁹⁴

- Page 2: Henry retained a peculiar pronunciation of the letter *r*, with a decided French accent. He says, "September is the first month with a *burr* in it;" and his speech always had an emphasis, a *burr* in it.
- Page 3: Once when a follower was done up with a headache and incapable of motion, hoping his associate would comfort him and perhaps afford him a sip of tea, he said, "There are people who are sick in that way every morning, and go about their affairs," and then marched off about his.
- Page 11: He also had the firmness of the Indian, and could repress his pathos; as when he carried (about the age of ten) his pet chickens to an innkeeper for sale in a basket, who thereupon told him "to stop," and for convenience' sake took them out one by one and wrung their several pretty necks before the poor boy's eyes, who did not budge. He had such a seriousness at the same age that he was called "judge."
- Page 11: A pleasing trait of his warm feeling is remembered, when he asked his mother, before leaving college, what profession to choose, and she replied pleasantly, "You can buckle on your knapsack, and roam abroad to seek your fortune." The tears came in his eyes and rolled down his cheeks, when his sister Helen, who was standing by, tenderly put her arm around him and kissed him, saying, "No, Henry, you shall not go: you shall stay at home and live with us."
- Page 12: Being complained of for taking a knife belonging to another boy, Henry said, "I did not take it," — and was believed. In a few days the culprit was found, and Henry then said, "I knew all the time who it was, and the day it was taken I went to Newton with father." "Well, then," of course, was the question, "why did you not say so at the time?" "I did not take it," was his reply.
- Page 12: A school-fellow complained of him because he would not make him a bow and arrow, his skill at whittling being superior. It seems he refused, but it came out after that he had no knife.

94. When [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) would have a chance to inspect this effort, the experience would be painful, presumably because of its inaccuracies and animadversions, it having more of Ellery in it than of Henry.



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- Pages 12-13: An early anecdote remains of his being told at three years that he must die, as well as the men in the catechism. He said he did not want to die, but was reconciled; yet, coming in from coasting, he said he “did not want to die and go to heaven, because he could not carry his sled with him; for the boys said, as it was not shod with iron, it was not worth a cent.”
- Page 24: Another school experience was the town school in Concord, which he took after leaving college, announcing that he should not flog, but would talk morals as a punishment instead. A fortnight sped glibly along, when a knowing deacon, one of the School Committee, walked in and told Mr. Thoreau that he must flog and use the ferule, or the school would spoil. So he did, by feruling six of his pupils after school, one of whom was the maid-servant in his own house. But it did not suit well with his conscience, and he reported to the committee that he should no longer keep their school, as they interfered with his arrangements; and they could keep it.
- Page 25: In height, he was about the average; in his build, spare, with limbs that were rather longer than usual, or of which he made a longer use. His face, once seen, could not be forgotten. The features were quite marked: the nose aquiline or very Roman, like one of the portraits of Caesar (more like a beak, as was said); large, overhanging brows above the deepest set blue eyes that could be seen, in certain lights, and in others gray — eyes expressive of all shades of feeling, but never weak or near-sighted; the forehead not unusually broad or high, full of concentrated energy and purpose; the mouth with prominent lips, pursed up with meaning and thought when silent, and giving out when open a stream of the most varied and unusual and instructive sayings. His hair was a dark brown, exceedingly abundant, fine and soft; and for several years he wore a comely beard. His whole figure had an active earnestness, as if he had no moment to waste. The clenched hand betokened purpose. In walking, he made a short cut if he could, and when sitting in the shade or by the wall-side seemed merely the clearer to look forward into the next piece of activity. Even in the boat he had a wary, transitory air, his eyes on the outlook — perhaps there might be ducks, or the Blondin turtle, or an otter, or sparrow.
- Pages 26-27: Once walking in old Dunstable, he much desired the town history by C.J. Fox; and, knocking as usual at the best house, went in and asked a young lady who made her appearance whether she had the book in question: she had — it was produced. After consulting it somewhat, Thoreau in his sincere way inquired very modestly whether she “would not sell it to him.” I think the plan surprised her, and have heard that she smiled; but he produced his wallet, gave her the pistareen, and went his way rejoicing with the book.
- Pages 249-50: If he needed a box on his walk, he would strip a piece of birch-bark off the tree, fold it when cut straightly together, and put his tender lichen or brittle creature therein. In those irritable thunderclaps which come, he says, “with tender, graceful violence,” he sometimes erected a transitory house by means of his pocketknife, rapidly paring away the white-pine and oak, taking the lower limbs of a large tree and pitching on the cut brush for a roof. Here he sat, pleased with the minute drops from off the eaves, not questioning the love of electricity for trees. If out on the river, haul up your boat, turn it upside-down, and yourself under it. Once he was thus doubled up, when Jove let drop a pattern thunderbolt in the river in front of his boat, while he whistled a lively air as accompaniment. This is noted, as he was much distressed by storms when young, and used to go whining to his father’s room, and say, “I don’t feel well,” and then take shelter in the paternal arms, when his health improved.
- Page 258: When Thoreau laughed, like Shelley, the operation was sufficient to split a pitcher.
- Page 263: As an honorary member, Thoreau appertained to the Boston Society of Natural History, adding to its reports, besides comparing notes with the care-takers or curators of the *mise en scène*. To this body he left his collections of plants, Indian tools, and the like. His latest traffic with it refers to the number of bars or fins upon a pike, which had more or less than was decent. He sat upon his eggs with theirs. His city visit was to their books, and there he made his call, not upon the swift ladies of



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING II

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Spruce Street, and more than once he entered by the window before the janitor had digested his omelet.

- Page 311: When asked whether he knew a young miss, celebrated for her beauty, he inquired, “Is she the one with the goggles?”
- Page 311: As long [*sic*] he could possibly sit up, he insisted on his chair at the family-table, and said, “It would not be social to take my meals alone.” And on hearing an organ in the streets, playing some old tune of his childhood he should never hear again, the tears fell from his eyes, and he said, “Give him some money! give him some money!”

TIMELINE OF JOURNAL

October: In Louisville, Kentucky [Jefferson Davis](#) was ill for most of the month.

Appleton’s Journal of Literature, Science, and Art offered in “Literary Notes” a review of [Ellery Channing’s THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#): “Assuming almost too much general knowledge of the retired, withdrawing poet-naturalist, it studies the lessons and the traits of his life from the point of view of a most appreciative friendship; and, in a style almost too fragmentary, it sketches episodes from his mental as from his actual career. The book was probably written for a circle comparatively small; but, to those whose interest in that circle and its life is very deep, it will prove a most valuable memorial, and will bear the evidence of an intimate knowledge few were permitted to share.”



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1874

July 8, Wednesday: [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) wrote from Bangor, Maine to her cousin Marianne or Mary Anne Mitchell Dunbar of Bridgewater, Massachusetts, telling of a recent visit to [Concord](#):

"Wonder if you have seen 'Thoreau The Poet Naturalist' by W.E. Channing. The book has pained me very much."

[HENRY THOREAU](#)
[ELLERY CHANNING](#)



READ CHANNING'S TEXT



"What a gump!...On the whole, he is but little better than an idiot. He should have been whipt often and soundly in his boyhood; and as he escaped such wholesome discipline then, it might be well to bestow it now."

— [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), about [Ellery Channing](#)



August 31, Monday: Calvin H. Greene noted that the grove of trees that [Henry Thoreau](#) had planted in his [beanfield](#) "looked quite sorry from a heartless fire that had run through them a short time ago." [Ellery Channing](#) presented him with something [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) had presented to him, a paper-folder made from one of the shingles to [Thoreau's \(Emerson's\) shanty](#).

[José Martí](#) enrolled in all subjects at the Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities at Central University.

HDT

WHAT?

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1878

October 29, Tuesday: String Quartet no.1 op.27 by Edvard Grieg was performed for the initial time, in the concert hall of the Cologne Conservatory. The composer was present, participating in other sections of the program. This was a great success.

At a "Club" meeting at the Emerson home attended by [Ellery Channing](#), [the Franklin Benjamin Sanborns](#), and [Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson](#), [Waldo Emerson](#) read from his journals on the topic of [Henry Thoreau](#).

EMERSON TO HIS JOURNAL



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1882

April 27, Thursday: [James Elliot Cabot](#), [Bronson Alcott](#), [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), [Ellery Channing](#), Judge Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar, and Sheriff Sam Staples were sent for, “to bid him good-bye,” and Sam thoughtfully brought along a bottle of brandy. [Waldo Emerson](#) spoke lovingly with Lydian, although mostly unintelligibly. Again and again he made reference to “the beautiful boy” and they supposed him to have been recollecting his first son Wallie who had died in 1842. He was able to make himself understood to Sam and to Judge Hoar. He greeted James Elliot Cabot, his literary executor, by name but by the time Sanborn and Channing saw him, he was dull. According to THE LETTERS OF ELLEN TUCKER EMERSON (Kent OH: Kent State UP, 1982, Volume I, page 690, Volume II, page 676), [Emerson](#) had Sanborn dismissed from the room, and presumably this would have been because after urging fighting on other young men he had not himself participated in the [Civil War](#). Dr. James Putnam of Boston was in attendance. We may note that there was a “Confucius say” quote he had liked so much as to have used it twice:

“I will say with Confucius, ‘If in the morning I hear of the right way,
and in the evening die, I can be happy.’”

EMERSON AND CHINA

When “a sharp pain came upon him,” his son Dr. Emerson administered sulphurous ether, “which soon relieved him, & kept the ether near his face until near the end” at about 8:30 in the evening.



ETHER

The bell on the Unitarian Church was tolled, 79 strokes.

Dr. Garnett, Emerson’s biographer, would write:

Seldom had “the reaper whose name is Death” gathered such illustrious harvest as between December 1880 and April 1882. In the first month of this period George Eliot passed away, in the ensuing February Carlyle followed; in April Lord Beaconsfield died, deplored by his party, nor unregretted by his country; in February of the following year Longfellow was carried to the tomb; in April Rossetti was laid to rest by the sea, and the pavement of Westminster Abbey was disturbed to receive the dust of Darwin. And now Emerson lay down in death



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beside the painter of man and the searcher of nature, the English-Oriental statesman, the poet of the plain man and the poet of the artist, and the prophet whose name is indissolubly linked with his own. All these men passed into eternity laden with the spoils of Time, but of none of them could it be said, as of Emerson, that the most shining intellectual glory and the most potent intellectual force of a continent had departed along with him.



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1890

[H.G.O. Blake](#)'s [THOREAU'S THOUGHTS](#) (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company; The Riverside Press, Cambridge).

[Henry S. Salt](#) brought forward the 1st edition of his THE LIFE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU (London: Bentley).⁹⁵

H.D. THOREAU PAPERS



This biography included on its page 118 a defensive and perceptive comment by [Edward Sherman Hoar](#):

If he had any affectation in his sincere and aspiring nature, it was a sort of inherited petulance, that covered a sensitive and affectionate nature, easily wounded by the scornful criticism which his new departure sometimes brought upon him.



On pages 144-6, some memories were supplied by [H.G.O. Blake](#):

I was introduced to him first by Mr. Emerson more than forty years ago, though I had known him by sight before at college. I recall nothing of that first interview unless it be some remarks upon astronomy, and his want of interest in the study as compared with studies relating more directly to this world – remarks such as he made here and there in his writings. My first real

95. 2d Edition London: Walter Scott, 1896; reprinted by Kessinger Publishing, ISBN 1-4179-7028-6



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introduction was from the reading of an article of his in the Dial on "Aulus Persius Flaccus" which appears now in the WEEK. That led to my first writing to him, and to his reply, which is published in the volume of letters. Our correspondence continued for more than twelve years, and we visited each other at times, he coming here to Worcester, commonly to read something in public, or being on his way to read somewhere else. As to the outward incidents of our intercourse, I think of little or nothing that it seems worth while to write. Our conversation, or rather his talking, when we were together, was in the strain of his letters and of his books. Our relation, as I look back on it, seems almost an impersonal one, and illustrates well his remark that "our thoughts are the epochs in our lives: all else is but as a journal of the winds that blew while we were here"; His personal appearance did not interest me particularly, except as the associate of his spirit, though I felt no discord between them. When together, we had little inclination to talk of personal matters. His aim was directed so steadily and earnestly towards what is essential in our experience, that beyond all others of whom I have known, he made but a single impression on me. Geniality, versatility, personal familiarity are, of course, agreeable in those about us, and seem necessary in human intercourse, but I did not miss them in Thoreau, who was, while living, and is still in my recollection and in what he has left to us, such an effectual witness to what is highest and most precious in life. As I re-read his letters from time to time, which I never tire of doing, I am apt to find new significance in them, am still warned and instructed by them, with more force occasionally than ever before; so that in a sense they are still in the mail, have not altogether reached me yet, and will not probably before I die. They may well be regarded as addressed to those who can read them best.



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This biography also included some memories supplied by [Ellery Channing](#):



Page 344: He said to me once, standing at the window,— “I cannot see on the outside at all. We thought ourselves great philosophers in those wet days when we used to go out and sit down by the wall-sides.” This was absolutely all he was ever heard to say of that outward world during his illness; neither could a stranger in the least infer that he had ever a friend in wood or field.

Page 353: Henry was fond of making an ado, a wonder, a surprise, of all facts that took place out of doors; but a picture, a piece of music, a novel, did not affect him in that fashion. This trait of exaggeration was as pleasing as possible to his companions. Nothing was more delightful than the enormous curiosity, the effervescing wonder, of this child of Nature — glad of everything its mother said or did. This joy in Nature is something we can get over, like love. And yet love,— that is a hard toy to smash and fling under the grate, for good. But Henry made no account at all of love, apparently; he had notions about friendship.

AMENDED 2D EDITION

He also edited a volume of [Thoreau](#)'s ANTI-SLAVERY AND REFORM PAPERS.

ANTI-SLAVERY, REFORM



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1898

November 29, Tuesday: [Clive Staples Lewis](#) was born.

The Malolos Congress approved a constitution for the First Philippine Republic.

Thanks to the amply published derogations of such as [Waldo Emerson](#), [Ellery Channing](#), [James Russell Lowell](#), [Robert Louis Stevenson](#), and Oliver Wendell Holmes, by the end of the 19th Century it would be possible for any number of people who had never known [Henry Thoreau](#) to praise his writing while waxing wise, and simultaneously expressing considerable contempt for him as a human being. For instance, Thoreau had been the apostle of the idea that books and gaslight and conventionality and sometimes even companionship are mistakes, shutting one out from a communion with nature which is higher and better — of such thoughts he was the apostle. He never questioned that he was a god Apollo. He told the story of Nature in undress as only one who had hidden in her bedroom could have told it. Personal traits that [Emerson](#) considered had been in one way a strength, in another way could be considered a weakness: for instance, he was always self-conscious and friendship was to him only a means of developing himself. He was dry, priggish, and selfish, and imitated many things about [Emerson](#) such as his manner of speech but never imitated the sweetness of Emerson's character. It was profit to himself that he was after in his intimacies with others, moral profit certainly but still profit to himself. He was not in fact a man of principle, as is shown by his obtaining release from prison by allowing someone else to pay his tax: note by way of radical contrast, that [Emerson](#) would have died in that Concord jail cell had it been with him a matter of principle which conscience compelled. Thoreau's contribution to mankind is great not because of his oddity but in spite of it, and except for it would have been much greater. His friends he treated as if they were mere dictionaries, rather than human beings who needed pleasure or laughter or kisses or any quality of flesh and blood! As for taking his arm, one might as soon think of taking the arm of an elm tree. He cared little for manners, describing a person of manners as an insect in a tumbler. It cost him nothing to say no; indeed he found this much easier than to say yes. He could be as rude to friends as to strangers, and when he was polite to someone who invited him to visit, that was unusual for him. Not a particle of respect had he for the opinions of any man or body of men, and he declared at 30 that he had yet to hear the 1st syllable of valuable advice from his seniors. He found savage pleasure in defacing the traditional idols of our religion, declaring he would sooner worship the parings of his own nails. Good works meant nothing to him and he very rarely indeed, if ever, felt any itching to make himself useful to his fellow-man. Naturally he despised clergymen, who speak of God as though they enjoy a monopoly of the subject. His curse was his self-confidence: he believed in neither idols nor demons, but put his sole trust in his own strength of body and soul. He was in person small and inferior looking, so homely that he was usually assumed by strangers to be a peddler, and in result he was consistently unmindful of his personal appearance; in fact when someone robbed a local bank while he was walking on Cape Cod, he fell under suspicion. His greatest weakness was what he probably considered his greatest strength, the habit of glancing off from the fact to moralizing. He stated everything as a paradox. A certain habit of antagonism defaced his earlier writings, a trick of rhetoric not quite outgrown in his later, of substituting for the obvious word or thought its diametrical opposite. His poems were often rude and defective. Much of what he deemed sincerity was a morbid desire to be different from other people. In matters religious he showed a warped judgment. When he built up a theory of friendship and of love based on intellectual estimate and excluding the affections, he was singular but he deprived himself of the most needed help his kind can give. By supposing the rest of mankind to be fools, he was able to suppose himself by contrast to be wise. His attitude toward the



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world was superficial, as is revealed by his abundant inconsistencies. Habitually prodigal of his own health, through under-feeding and overwork he broke down his constitution. His lungs became severely affected and so of course at his own fault for not being more careful he reaped a premature death at 45. Shame, that.

A case in point, for this sort of easy personal derogation, would be [AUTHORS' BIRTHDAYS](#): CONTAINING THE EXERCISES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTHDAYS OF BAYARD TAYLOR, [LOWELL](#), HOWELLS, MOTLEY, [EMERSON](#), SAXE, [THOREAU](#), E.S. PHELPS-WARD, PARKMAN, CABLE, ALDRICH, J.C. HARRIS (2d series. Standard Teachers' Library), which on this day [Charles William Bardeen](#) was presenting for the higher education of America's vulnerable children, schoolchildren who might be seduced by Thoreau's crafted sentences into betraying their own lives:

I

Who has not felt as he gazed upon the starlit sky, or reached the summit of a mountain, or saw the sun rise over an Adirondack lake, that books and gaslight and conventionality and sometimes even companionship were mistakes, shutting him out from a communion with nature which was higher and better? Of this thought [Thoreau](#) was the apostle. He declared that a day passed in the society of those Greek sages, as described in the banquet of Xenophon, would not be comparable with the dry wit of decayed cranberry vines, and the fresh Attic salt of the moss-beds;⁹⁶ that in the sunset are all the qualities that can adorn a household, and that sometimes in a fluttering leaf one may hear all Christianity preached.⁹⁷

II



He was born July 12, 1817, in Concord, the only one of the group that made Concord such a noted literary centre who was a native of the village, and of all of them much the most exclusively a resident of Concord. He said he had a real genius for staying at home;⁹⁸ that "cars sound like cares"⁹⁹ and that it was not worth while to go round the world to count the cats in Zanzibar.¹⁰⁰

"Better fifty fifty [*sic*] years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay. Then fifty years of Europe better one New England ray!"¹⁰¹

"What a fool he must be who thinks that his El Dorado is anywhere but where he lives!"¹⁰² he exclaims; and he declares that nothing is to be hoped for you if the bit of mould under your feet is not sweeter than any other in the world.¹⁰³

"Henry talks about nature," said Margaret Fuller, "just as if

96. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).

97. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

98. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).

99. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

100. [WALDEN: OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

101. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).

102. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

103. Biographical Sketch by [R.W. Emerson](#), in MISCELLANIES, BY HENRY DAVID THOREAU (Boston, 1894).



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she'd been born and brought up in Concord."¹⁰⁴

III

He was graduated from Harvard in 1837, without particular distinction; characteristically refusing the diploma because it cost five dollars and was not worth it.

In his sophomore year he had kept a school of 70 pupils at Canton, where he was examined by the Rev. O.A. Brownson, and boarded with him;¹⁰⁵ and upon graduation he went to Maine seeking a school there. Being unsuccessful, he took the town school at Concord. Here he announced that he should not flog, but would talk morals as a punishment instead. After a fortnight a knowing deacon, one of the school committee, walked in and told [Mr. Thoreau](#) that he must flog and use the ferule, or the school would spoil.

So he did, feruling six of his pupils after school, one of whom was the maid-servant in his own house. But it did not suit well with his conscience, and he reported to the committee that he should no longer keep their school.¹⁰⁶ In 1843 he was for two months tutor in Mr. Wm. Emerson's family; but he afterward declined the same place in Horace Greeley's home at Chappaqua. He wrote: "I have thoroughly tried schoolkeeping, and found that my expenses were out of proportion to my income, for I was obliged to dress and train, not to say think and believe accordingly, and I lost my time into the bargain. As I did not teach for the good of my fellowmen, but simply for a livelihood this was a failure.

Probably I should not consciously and deliberately forsake my particular calling to do the good which society demands of me to save the universe from annihilation."¹⁰⁷

IV

Until 1847 he relied for support principally upon hand labor. Both he and his father were ingenious persons, the latter a pencil-maker. After his father's death he carried on the pencil and plumbago business, and showed the punctuality and prudence which always distinguished him.¹⁰⁸ For several years he supplied fine ground plumbago for electrotyping to publishers, among others to the Harpers.¹⁰⁹ He also did occasional surveying.

V

But he worked as little as possible. He says he found he could meet the expenses of living by working six weeks a year;¹¹⁰ and

104. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).

105. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

106. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

107. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

108. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

109. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).



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he thought the seventh day should be man's day of toil, -the other six his Sabbath of the affections and the soul, in which to range this widespread garden, and drink in the soft influences and sublime revelations of Nature.¹¹¹ Let not to get a living be thy trade but thy sport.¹¹² If you would live simply and wisely, life would be not a hardship but a pastime, as the pursuits of simpler nations are still the sports of the more artificial.¹¹³¹¹⁴ He wrote: "I am as unfit for any practical purpose, -! mean for the furtherance of the world's ends, -as gossamer for ship timber; and I, who am going to be a pencil-maker to-morrow, can sympathise with god Apollo, who served King Ametus for awhile on earth. But I believe he found it for his advantage at last, and I am sure I shall, though I shall hold the nobler part at least out of the service."

This comparison is frequent in his writings. He never questions that he is a god Apollo.

VI

He was naturally deft in the handling of tools. He boasts: "A man once applied to me to go into a factory, stating conditions and wages, observing that I succeeded in shutting a window of a railroad car in which we were travelling, when the other passengers had failed."¹¹⁵ In a thunder-storm he sometimes erected a transitory house by means of his pocket-knife, rapidly paring away the white-pine and oak, taking the lower limbs of a large tree and pitching on the cut brush for a roof! Wanting to measure a bank, he says: "I borrowed the plane and square, level and dividers, of a carpenter who was shingling a barn near by, and, using one of those shingles made of a mast, contrived a rude sort of quadrant, with pins for sights and pivots, and got the angle of elevation of the Bank opposite the lighthouse, and with a couple of cod lines the length of its slope, and so measured its height on the shingle."¹¹⁶

VII

This deftness was of great advantage to him, combined as it was with the habit of immediate and accurate record. He had gauges for the height of the river, noted the temperature of the springs and ponds, the tints of the morning and evening sky, the flowering and fruit of plants, all the habits of birds and animals, every aspect of nature from the smallest to the greatest.¹¹⁷

110. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

111. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).

112. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

113. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

114. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

115. Biographical Sketch by [R.W. Emerson](#), in MISCELLANIES, BY HENRY DAVID THOREAU (Boston, 1894).

116. [CAPE COD.](#)

117. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).



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This gives his writings veracity. When he says that the blueberry on Cape Cod was but an inch or two high,¹¹⁸ and that an apple tree which had been set ten years, was on an average 18 inches high, and spread 9 feet, with a flat top, and had borne one bushel of apples two years before,¹¹⁹ we take these figures for facts and not for guesses; and when he tells of catching a pickerel which has swallowed a brother pickerel half as large as itself, with the tail still visible in its mouth, while the head was already digested in its stomach,¹²⁰ we accept it not for a fish-story but for a fact.

VIII

His senses were unusually keen. Alcott says they seemed double, giving him access: to secrets not easily read by others; in sagacity resembling that of the bee, the dog, the deer; an instinct for seeing and judging, as by some other, or seventh sense.¹²¹¹²² One day walking with a stranger who inquired where Indian arrow-heads could be found he replied "Everywhere," and stooping forward, picked one on the instant from the ground.¹²³ He was continually picking them up on Cape Cod.

His hearing was very acute. He says: "At a sufficient distance over the woods this sound [of bells] acquires a certain vibratory hum, as if the pine needles in the horizon were the strings of a harp which it swept."¹²⁴ He delighted in echoes, and said they were almost the only kind of kindred voices that he heard.¹²⁵

He thought the scent a more oracular inquisition than the sight, more oracular and trustworthy, revealing what is concealed from the other senses. By it he detected earthiness.¹²⁶ He says he was frequently notified of the passage of a traveller among the highway sixty rods off by the scent of his pipe;¹²⁷ and he writes: "As I climbed the cliffs, when I jarred the foliage I perceived an exquisite perfume which I could not trace to its source. Ah, those fugacious, universal fragrances of the meadows and woods! odors rightly mingled!"¹²⁸

IX

Holmes says [Thoreau](#) told the story of Nature in undress as only one who had hidden in her bedroom could have told it.¹²⁹ [Thoreau](#)

118. [CAPE COD](#).

119. [CAPE COD](#).

120. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).

121. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

122. [LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU](#). With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

123. Biographical Sketch by [R.W. Emerson](#), in [MISCELLANIES](#), BY HENRY DAVID THOREAU (Boston, 1894).

124. [WALDEN: OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

125. Biographical Sketch by [R.W. Emerson](#), in [MISCELLANIES](#), BY HENRY DAVID THOREAU (Boston, 1894).

126. [EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON](#).

127. [WALDEN: OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

128. [SUMMER](#), with a map of Concord.

129. [AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS. RALPH WALDO EMERSON](#), by Oliver Wendell Holmes. Boston, 1885.



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tells of his life at Walden: "There were times when I could not afford to sacrifice the bloom of the present moment to any work, whether of the head or hand. I love a broad margin to my life. Sometimes in a summer morning after taking my accustomed bath I sat in my sunny doorway from sunrise till noon, wrapped in a reverie, amidst the pines and hickories and sumach, in undisturbed solitude and stillness, while the birds sang round, or flitted noiselessly through the house, until by the sun falling in at my west window, or by some traveller's wagon on a distant highway I was reminded of the lapse of time. I grew in those seasons like corn in the night, and they were far better than any work of the hands could have been. They were not times subtracted from my life, but so much over and above my usual allowance. I realized what the Orientals mean by contemplation and the forsaking of works. This was sheer idleness to my fellow-townsmen, no doubt; but if the birds and flowers had tried me by their standard, I should not have been found wanting."¹³⁰

X

Certainly he drank in the true spirit of nature.

Alcott says: "One seldom meets with thoughts like his, coming so scented of mountain and field breezes and rippling spring, so like a luxuriant clod from under forest leaves, moist and mossy with earth spirits. His presence was tonic, like ice-water in dog-days to the parched citizen pent in chambers and under brazen ceilings. Welcome as the gurgle of brooks and dipping of pitchers, — then drink and be cool."¹³¹

[Emerson](#) says [Thoreau](#) would draw out his diary and read the names of all the plants which should bloom on this day, whereof he kept account as the banker of when his notes fall due. He thought if waked up from a trance in a swamp he could tell by the plants what time of year it was.¹³² Four books have been made from his journals by selecting the extracts for successive years on each date, showing the observations he made; and these have been appropriately named "Spring," "Summer," "Autumn," "Winter."

XI

His observations show how intimately he entered into the life about him. "Every little pine needle expanded and swelled with sympathy,"¹³³ he declares; and again: "Sympathy with the fluttering alder: and poplar leaves almost takes away my breath, yet like the lake, my serenity is rippled but not ruffled."¹³⁴ He was as thoughtful of the wild forest as an old maid of her garden. "I have watered the red huckleberry," he says, "the sand cherry and the nettle tree, the red pine and the black ash, the white grape and the yellow violet, which might have withered else in dry seasons."¹³⁵

130. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

131. CONCORD DAYS. by A. Bronson Alcott. Boston, 1872

132. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

133. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

134. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)



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Here is an extract: "The sumach (*rhus glabra*) grew luxuriantly about the house, pushing up through the embankment which I had made, and growing five or six feet the first season. Its broad pinnate, tropical leaf was pleasant though strange to look on. The large buds suddenly pushing out late in the spring from dry sticks which had seemed to be dead, developed themselves as if by magic into graceful green and tender boughs, an inch in diameter; and sometimes, as I sat at my window, so heedlessly did they grow and tax their weak joints, I heard a fresh and tender bough suddenly fall like a fan to the ground when there was not a "breath of air stirring, broken off by its own weight."¹³⁶

XII

Equally keen and sympathetic was his observation of animals. The twelfth chapter, "Brute Neighbors," is by far the most interesting in "Walden." He speaks of the bittern carrying its precious eggs away to deposit them in a place of safety,¹³⁷ and his description of a partridge, and of the battle of the ants, and his frequent pictures of squirrels are extremely felicitous. "For all the motions of the squirrels," he says, "in the most solitary recesses of the forest, imply spectators as much as those of the dancing girl."¹³⁸

Read this account of the owl: "When other birds are still the screech owls take up the strain, like mourning women their ancient *u-lu-lu*. Their dismal scream is truly Ben Jonsonian. Wise midnight hags! It is no honest and blunt *tu-whit tu-who* of the poets, but, without jesting, a most solemn graveyard ditty, the mutual consolations of suicide lovers remembering the pangs and the delights of supernal love in the infernal groves. Yet I love to hear their wailing, their doleful responses, trilled along the woodside; reminding me sometimes of music and singing birds; as if it were the dark and tearful side of music, the regrets and sighs that would fain be sung. They are the spirits, the low spirits and melancholy forebodings, of fallen souls that once in human shape night-walked the earth and did the deeds of darkness, now expiating their sins with their wailing hymns or threnodies in the scenery of their transgressions. They give me a new sense of the variety and capacity of that nature which is our common dwelling. *Oh-o-o-o-o that I had never been bor-r-r-r-n!* sighs one on this side of the pond, and circles with the restlessness of despair to some new perch on the gray oaks. Then — *That I had never had been bor-r-r-r-n!* echoes another on the farther side with tremulous sincerity, and *bor-r-r-r-n!* comes

135. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

136. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

137. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

138. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)



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faintly from far in the Lincoln woods."¹³⁹

XIII

He gained unusual familiarity with animals, and was in this respect the original of Hawthorne's Donatello in "The Marble Faun." He says, "You only need sit still long enough in some attractive spot in the wood, that all its inhabitants may exhibit themselves to you by turns."¹⁴⁰ Of a mouse at Walden he tells: "It probably had never seen a man before, but it soon became quite familiar, and would soon run over my shoes and up my clothes. When at last I held still a piece of cheese between my thumb and finger it came and nibbled it, and afterwards cleaned its face and paws like a fly, and walked away."¹⁴¹

Even fish showed little apprehension. "I have often attracted these small perch to the shore at evening by rippling the water with my finger, and they may sometimes be caught by attempting to pass inside your hand."¹⁴² He tells of a pout that he drew from its ova without its making opposition.¹⁴³ "The breams are so careful of their charge that you may stand close by in the, water and examine them at your leisure. I have thus stood over them half an hour at a time, and stroked them familiarly without frightening them, suffering them to nibble my fingers harmlessly, and feel them erect their dorsal fins in anger when my hand approached their ova, and have even taken them gently out of the water with my hand."¹⁴⁴

He was himself equally ready to accept the advances of living things. "The wasps came by thousands to my lodge in October as to winter quarters, and settled on my windows and on the walls overhead, sometimes deterring visitors from entering. Each morning when they were numbed with cold I swept some of them out, but I did not trouble myself much to get rid of them. I felt complimented by their regarding my house as a desirable shelter. They never molested me seriously, though they bedded with me."¹⁴⁵

XIV

He was an expert fisherman, and might have been an expert hunter, but this sympathy eventually made such sport distasteful. He said at Walden: "I have found repeatedly of late years that I cannot fish without falling a little in self-respect;"¹⁴⁶ and again: "The carcasses of some poor squirrels however, the same that frisked so merrily in the morning, which were skinned and embowelled for our dinner, we abandoned in disgust, with tardy humanity, as too wretched a resource for any but starving men.

139. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

140. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

141. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

142. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS.](#)

143. [SUMMER, with a map of Concord.](#)

144. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS.](#)

145. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

146. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)



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It was to perpetuate the practice of a barbarous era. If they had been larger, our crime had been less. Their small red bodies, little bundles of red tissue, mere gobbets of venison, would not have 'fattened fire.' With a sudden impulse we threw them away, and washed our hands, and boiled some rice for our dinner. Behold the difference between him who eateth flesh and him to whom it belonged! The first hath a momentary enjoyment, whilst the latter is deprived of existence! Who would commit so great a crime against a poor animal, who is fed only by the herbs which grow wild in the woods, and whose belly is burnt up with hunger?"¹⁴⁷

XV

He prided himself on loving nature for its own sake, as an end, not a means. He says with sarcasm: "We had the mountain all to ourselves that afternoon and night. There was nobody going up that day to engrave his name on the summit, nor to gather blueberries."¹⁴⁸

He was an honorary member of the Boston society of natural history, and he left them his collection of plants, Indian tools, and the like.¹⁴⁹ Early in 1847 he made collections of fishes, turtles, etc. for Agassiz, then newly arrived in America. But he would not offer the society a memoir of his observations. "Why should I? To detach the description from its connection in my mind would make it no longer true or valuable to me, and they do not wish what belongs to it."¹⁵⁰ None knew better than he that it is not the fact that imports, but the impression or effect of the fact on your mind.¹⁵¹ It was not nature he cared particularly to observe, but the effect of nature upon him.¹⁵² He records the minutest feeling or thought that comes to him for fear the world should lose it.

XVI

If this was as [Emerson](#) thinks in one way a strength, it was in another a weakness. He was always self-conscious. Friendship was to him only a means of developing himself.

[Stevenson](#) says: "[Thoreau](#) is dry, priggish, and selfish. It is profit he is after in these intimacies, moral profit certainly, but still profit to himself. 'If you will be the sort of friend I want,' he remarks naively, 'my education cannot dispense with your society.'¹⁵³ His education! as though a friend were a dictionary! And with all this not one word about pleasure or laughter or kisses, or any quality of flesh and blood. It was not inappropriate surely that he had such close relations with

147. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).

148. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

149. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

150. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

151. Biographical Sketch by [R.W. Emerson](#), in MISCELLANIES, BY HENRY DAVID THOREAU (Boston, 1894).

152. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

153. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).



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the fish. We can understand the friend already quoted when he cried,¹⁵⁴ 'As for taking his arm, I would as soon think of taking the arm of an elm tree.'¹⁵⁵

He writes to Mrs. Ralph Waldo Emerson: "I like to deal with you for I believe you do not lie or steal, and these are very rare virtues";¹⁵⁶ but how curious a letter he could write appears in one that he wrote to her on June 20, 1843, probably as near a love-letter he ever penned.

Margaret Fuller wrote to him: "The unfolding of affections, a wider and deeper human experience, the harmonizing influences of other natures will mould a man and melt his verse. He will seek thought less and find knowledge the more."

XVII

Naturally a man of [Thoreau](#)'s convictions cared little for manners. In fact he said the man of manners was an insect in a tumbler. "It would indeed be a serious bore to be obliged to touch your hat several times a day. A Yankee has not leisure for it."¹⁵⁷

[Emerson](#) says: "It cost him nothing to say no; indeed he found it much easier than to say yes."¹⁵⁸

Men of note would come to talk with him. "I don't know," he would say; "perhaps a minute would be enough for both of us."

"But I come to walk with you when you take your exercise."

"Ah, walking — that is my holy time."¹⁵⁹

He could be as rude to friends as to strangers "who did not know when their visit had terminated."¹⁶⁰ When in Walden his poet friend [Ellery Channing](#) comes to call on him he says: "I will go with you gladly soon, but I am just concluding a serious meditation. I think that I am near the end of it. Leave me alone then for a while."¹⁶¹



To David Ricketson, a wealthy merchant of New Bedford, who frequently entertained him, and who permitted him to come in his old clothes, he wrote declining an invitation: "*Such are my engagements to myself* that I dare not promise to come your way;"¹⁶² but this was unusually polite. On another occasion he wrote: "I have a faint recollection of your invitation referred to, but I suppose that I had no new or particular reason for declining, and so made no new statement";¹⁶³ and again in a

154. Biographical Sketch by [R.W. Emerson](#), in MISCELLANIES, by HENRY DAVID THOREAU (Boston, 1894).

155. [FAMILIAR STUDIES OF MEN AND BOOKS](#), by [Robert Louis Stevenson](#) (New York, 1896).

156. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

157. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

158. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

159. TALKS WITH RALPH WALDO EMERSON, by Charles J. Woodbury. New York, 1890.

160. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

161. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

162. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.



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response to a reproach for not having written: "You know I never promised to correspond with you, and so when I do I do more than I promised."¹⁶⁴

XVIII

Yet he sometimes made great sacrifices to avoid hurting the feelings of poor people. "The Irishman's wife could not give me fresh water, so shutting my eyes, and excluding the motes by a skilfully directed under-current, I drank to genuine hospitality the heartiest draught I could. I am not squeamish in such cases when manners are concerned."¹⁶⁵

"When I would go a-visiting," he says. "I find that I go off the fashionable street to where man meets man, and not polished shoe meets shoe."¹⁶⁶ He came to see the inside of every farmer's house and head, his pot of beans and mug of hard cider. Never in too much hurry for a dish of gossip he could sit out the oldest frequenter of the barroom, and was alive from top to toe with curiosity.¹⁶⁷ "I love to see the herd of men feeding heartily on coarse and succulent pleasures," he said, "as cattle on the husks and stalks of vegetables;"¹⁶⁸ and again: "It chanced that the Sunday morning that we were there I had joined a party of men who were smoking and lolling over a pile of boards on one of the wharves, (*nihil humanum a me*, etc.)."¹⁶⁹ [Channing](#) says that when Hawthorne and [Thoreau](#) laughed, the operation was sufficient to split a pitcher.¹⁷⁰ He was sometimes given to music and songs, and now and then in moments of great hilarity would dance gaily, and sing his unique song "Tom Bowline," which none who heard would ever forget.¹⁷¹

XIX

But unless he saw something genuinely original in a companion he preferred to be alone. He would not consent "to feebly fabulate and paddle in the social slush."¹⁷² "I occasionally observed that he wasthinking for himself and expressing his own opinions," he says, "a phenomenon so rare that I would any day walk ten miles to observe it;"¹⁷³ but again: "I have an immense appetite for solitude, like an infant for sleep, and if I don't get enough of it this year, I shall cry all the next."¹⁷⁴

163. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

164. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).

165. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

166. SUMMER, with a map of Concord.

167. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).

168. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS.](#)

169. [CAPE COD.](#)

170. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

171. [CAPE COD.](#)

172. [FAMILIAR STUDIES OF MEN AND BOOKS](#), by [Robert Louis Stevenson](#). New York, 1896.

173. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

174. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.



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Even with those with whom conversation seemed worth while it is a favorite thought of his that the nearer they get together the less they speak.

"Each moment as we nearer drew to each, A stern respect withheld us farther yet, So that we seemed beyond each other's reach, And less acquainted than when first we met."¹⁷⁵

He prided himself upon being an iconoclast. Holmes called him the nullifier of civilization, who insisted on nibbling his asparagus at the wrong end.¹⁷⁶ [Emerson](#) says, "Not a particle of respect had he to the opinions of any man or body of men;"¹⁷⁷ and [Thoreau](#) declared at thirty that he had yet to hear the first syllable of valuable advice from his seniors.¹⁷⁸

"If a man does not keep pace with his companion," he says, "perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away. The greater part of what my neighbors call good I believe in my soul to be bad, and if I repent of anything it is very likely to be my good behavior."¹⁷⁹ He advises Mr. Blake not to be too moral; he may cheat himself out of much life.¹⁸⁰

XXI

Naturally his disregard of tradition was most marked with reference to religion. Holmes said of [Emerson](#) that he took down our idols from their pedestals so tenderly that it seemed an act of worship,¹⁸¹ but [Thoreau](#) found savage pleasure in defacing them. Thus he declares: "If I could, I would worship the paring of my nails"; and again: "Jehovah, though with us he has acquired new attributes, is more absolute and unapproachable, but hardly more divine, than Jove. He is not so much of a gentleman, not so gracious and catholic, he does not exert so intimate and genial an influence on nature, as many a god of the Greeks."¹⁸²

"The reading which I love best," he says, "is the scriptures of the several nations, though it happens that I am better acquainted with those of the Hindoos, the Chinese and the Persians, than of the Hebrews."¹⁸³ Later he makes this distinction: "The New Testament is remarkable for its pure morality, the best Hindoo scripture for its pure intellectuality."¹⁸⁴ Hence as he chose the latter, it is not strange to hear him say: "No greater evil can happen to anyone than to hate reasoning. Man is evidently made for thinking: this

175. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

176. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS. RALPH WALDO EMERSON, by Oliver Wendell Holmes. Boston, 1885.

177. Biographical Sketch by [R.W. Emerson](#), in MISCELLANIES, BY HENRY DAVID THOREAU (Boston, 1894).

178. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

179. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

180. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

181. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS. RALPH WALDO EMERSON, by Oliver Wendell Holmes. Boston, 1885.

182. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS.](#)

183. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS.](#)

184. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS.](#)



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is the whole of his dignity, and the whole of his merit. To think as he ought is the whole of his duty";¹⁸⁵ and again: "The most glorious fact in my experience is not anything that I have done or may hope to do, but a transient thought, or dream, or vision I have had. I would give all the wealth of all the world and all the deeds of all the heroes for one true vision."

XXII

In such a creed good works have no place. "I very rarely indeed, if ever," he says, "feel any itching to be what is called useful to my fellow-men."¹⁸⁶ And again: "If I knew for a certainty that a man was about coming to my house with the conscious design of doing me good I should run for my life, as from that dry and parching wind of the African desert culled the simoom, which fills the mouth and ears and nose and eyes with dust till you are suffocated, for fear that I should get some of his good done to me, — some of its virus mingled with my blood."¹⁸⁷

Naturally he despises clergymen, "who speak of God," he says, "as though they enjoyed a monopoly of the subject."¹⁸⁸

At Montreal he writes: "From time to time we met a priest in the streets, for they are distinguished by their dress, like the civil police. Like clergymen generally, with or without the gown, they made on us the impression of effeminacy. We also met some Sisters of Charity, dressed in black, with Shaker-shaped black bonnets and crosses, and cadaverous faces, who looked as if they had almost cried their eyes out, their complexions parboiled with scalding tears; insulting the daylight by their presence, having taken an oath not to smile."¹⁸⁹

It seems strange that a man who appreciated flowers so much should get this impression of Sisters of Charity, in whom all the world, christian and pagan, has united in seeing rare attractiveness, and questioned only whether its source was the garb or the self-sacrificing soul speaking through the countenance. We are revenged to find that soon after he thinks he sees the soldiers drilling in white *kid* gloves.

XXIII

But there are glimpses here and there of other things.

"Let no one think," he says, "that I do not love the old ministers, who were probably the best men in their generation, and they deserve that their biographies should fill the pages of the town history. If I could but hear the glad tidings of which they tell, and which, perchance, they heard, I might write in a worthier strain than this."¹⁹⁰

185. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

186. [LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU](#). With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

187. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

188. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

189. [EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON](#).

190. [CAPE COD](#).



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"As I stand over the insect, crawling over the pine needles on the forest floor, and endeavoring to conceal itself from my sight, and ask myself why it will cherish those humble thoughts, and hide its head from me, who might, perhaps, be its benefactor, and impart to its race some cheering information, I am reminded of the greater Benefactor and Intelligence that stands over me the human insect."¹⁹¹

XXIV

His curse here as elsewhere is his self-confidence. Alcott quotes the famous speech -of an old Northman as thoroughly characteristic of this Teuton: "I believe in neither idols nor demons; I put my sole trust in my own strength of body and soul."¹⁹²

This is an early prayer of [Thoreau](#)'s: "Great God! I ask Thee for no meaner pelf,

Than that I may not disappoint myself;

That in my conduct I may soar as high

As I can now discern with this clear eye.

That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,

And my life practise more than my tongue saith;

That my low conduct may not show, Nor my relenting lines,

That I Thy purpose did not know, Or over-rated Thy designs."¹⁹³

From his own point of view he was consistent. "In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and the future, which is precisely the present moment, to toe that line."¹⁹⁴

March 31, 1862, he writes: "I suppose that I have not many months to live; but of course I know nothing about it. I may add that I am enjoying existence as much as ever, and regret nothing."¹⁹⁵

To Parker Pillsbury, who approached him on the subject of religion the winter before his death, he replied gently, "One world at a time."¹⁹⁶

XXV

He was consistently unmindful of personal appearance. Nature had given him little encouragement. He was small, inferior looking, usually taken for a peddler by strangers; and when the

191. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

192. CONCORD DAYS. by A. Bronson Alcott. Boston, 1872

193. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).

194. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

195. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

196. TALKS WITH RALPH WALDO EMERSON, by Charles J. Woodbury. New York, 1890.



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Provincetown bank was robbed soon after his first trip to Cape Cod he was suspected of being one of the thieves. [Emerson](#) says: "Henry was homely in appearance, a rugged stone hewn from the cliff. I believe it is accorded to all men to be moderately homely; hut he surpassed his sex."¹⁹⁷

[Channing](#) said: "In height he was about the average; in his build spare, with limbs that were longer than usual, or of which he made longer use. His features were marked; the nose aquiline or very Roman, like one of the portraits of Cæsar (more like a beak, as was said); large overhanging brows above the deepest-set blue eyes that could be seen, – blue in certain lights and in others gray; the forehead not unusually broad or high, full of concentrated energy and purpose; the mouth with prominent lips, pursed up with meaning and thought when silent, and giving out when open a stream of the most varied and unusual and instructive sayings. His whole figure had an active earnestness, as if he had no moment to waste; the clenched hand betokened purpose. In walking he made a short cut, and when sitting in the shade or by the wall-side, seemed merely the clearer to look forward into the next piece of activity. The intensity of his mind, like Dante's, conveyed the breathing of aloofness, – his eyes bent on the ground, his long swinging gait, his hands perhaps clasped behind him, or held closely at his side, – the fingers made into a fist."¹⁹⁸

XXVI

As for clothes, while he evidently prides himself here and there on the fact of having a new coat, and writes to Mr. Blake that he will come to see him as soon as he gets a new coat if he has money enough left,¹⁹⁹ yet he wonders that people spend so much money on clothes. "While one thick garment is for most purposes as good as three thin ones, and cheap clothing can be obtained at prices really to suit customers; while a thick coat can be bought for five dollars which will last many years, thick pantaloons for two dollars, cow-hide boots for a dollar and a half a pair, a summer hat for a quarter of a dollar, and a winter cap for sixty-two and a half cents, or better be made at home at a nominal cost, where is he so poor that, clad in such a suit of his own earning, there will not be found wise men to do him reverence?"²⁰⁰

"Kings and queens who wear a suit but once, though made by some tailor or dressmaker to their majesties, cannot know the comfort of wearing a suit that fits. They are no better than wooden horses to hang clean clothes on."²⁰¹

XXVII

197. TALKS WITH RALPH WALDO EMERSON, by Charles J. Woodbury. New York, 1890.

198. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).

199. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

200. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

201. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)



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On his excursion to Canada he wore a 25-cent unlined straw hat and a linen duster, and prided himself on being the worst dressed man in the party. He writes: "It is not wise for a traveller to go dressed. I should no more think of it than of putting on a clean dicky and blacking my shoes to go a-fishing; as if you were going out to dine, when, in fact, the genuine traveller is going out to work hard, and fare harder, – to eat a crust by the wayside whenever he can get it. Honest travelling is about as dirty work as you can do, and a man needs a pair of overalls for it. As for blacking my shoes in such a case, I should as soon think of blacking my face. I carry a piece of tallow to preserve the leather and keep out the water; that's all; and many an officious shoeblack, who carried off my shoes when I was slumbering, mistaking me for a gentleman, has had occasion to repent it before he produced a gloss on them."²⁰²

He always carried an umbrella; and as for a valise: "After considerable reflection and experience I have concluded that the best bag for the foot traveller is made with the handkerchief, or *if he study appearances* [!], a piece of stiff brown paper, well tied up, with a fresh piece within to put outside when the first is torn."²⁰³

At Walden he dug potatoes bare-footed until so late in the day that the sun would blister his feet, and on his walk to Wachusett he and his companion refreshed themselves by bathing their feet in every rill that crossed the road.²⁰⁴

XXVIII

In food he was equally original. [Emerson](#) says that when asked at table what dish he preferred [Thoreau](#) answered, "The nearest." That was probably at [Mr. Emerson](#)'s house where there was always pie, for he was as fond of that as [Mr. Emerson](#), and added a special fondness for plum cake.²⁰⁵ In Montreal he was much troubled because he could find no pie for sale, and no good cake to put in his box; and the Quebec restaurants were disappointing, for when he inquired for pies or puddings he could get only mutton chops, roast beef, beef steak, and cutlets, etc., so he had to buy musty cake and fruit in the open market place.²⁰⁶

He often speaks of refraining from meat to keep down his brute nature; and believes that "every man who has ever been earnest to preserve his highest or poetical faculties in the best condition has been particularly inclined to abstain from animal food, or much food of any kind."²⁰⁷ "Hasty pudding for the

202. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

203. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

204. THE MAINE WOODS.

205. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

206. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

207. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).



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masculine eye, chicken and jellies for the girls.”²⁰⁸

XXIX

Trying to advise a poor laborer struggling with a big family, “I told him”, he says, “I did not use tea, nor coffee, nor butter, nor milk, nor fresh meat, and so did not have to work to get them. Again as I did not work hard I did not have to eat hard, and it cost me but a trifle for my food. But if he began with tea and coffee and butter and milk and beef, he had to work hard to pay for them, and when he had worked hard he had to eat hard again to repair the waste of his system, and so it was as broad as it was long; indeed, it was broader than it was long, for he was discontented and wasted his life into the bargain.”²⁰⁹

When he goes up Wachusett he makes his supper with blueberries he picks, with milk bought at a farmhouse,²¹⁰ and his general advice to travellers is to go afoot, carrying a dipper, a spoon, and a fish-line, some Indian meal, some salt, and some sugar. “When you come to a brook or pond, you can catch fish and cook them; or you can boil a hasty pudding; or you can buy a loaf of bread at a farmer’s house for fourpence, moisten it in the next brook that crosses the road, and dip into it your sugar, – this alone will last you a whole day; – or, if you are accustomed to heartier living, you can buy a quart of milk for two cents, crumb your bread or cold pudding into it and eat it with your own spoon out of your own dish.”²¹¹

XXX

He is equally stoical as to bed clothing when travelling. On the top of Saddle mountain he says: “As it grew colder toward midnight I at length encased myself completely in boards, managing even to put a board on top of me with a large stone on it to keep it down, and so slept comfortably. I was reminded it is true of the Irish children, who inquired what their neighbors did who had no door to put over them in winter nights as they had. But I am convinced there was nothing very strange in the inquiry.”²¹²

“Mr. Edward Hoar remembers with a shiver to this day the rigor of a night spent on the bare rocks of Mt. Washington with insufficient blankets, – [Thoreau](#) sleeping from habit, but himself lying wakeful all the night, and gazing at the coldest of full moons.”²¹³

XXXI

He was always prodigal of his health, as he constantly shows in his account of his excursions to the Maine woods. He climbed

208. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

209. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

210. [THE MAINE WOODS](#).

211. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).

212. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).

213. [AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS](#), HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).



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four pines after hawks' nests, and gathered the brilliant flowers of the white pine from the very top of the tallest pines.²¹⁴ He was, moreover, in the habit of abnormally early rising. On his excursions he seems always to be getting up at three o'clock and starting off in a fog long before he could distinguish the very objects he had come to see.

The consequence of this under-feeding and over-working was that with all his inherited strength of constitution he was almost never well. He certainly was not a man to complain, and yet his letters and journals are full of such statements as these: "I must still reckon myself with the innumerable army of invalids, though I am tougher than formerly;"²¹⁵ "I do not see how strength is to be got into my legs again;"²¹⁶ "What I got by going to Canada was a cold";²¹⁷ "There is danger that the cold weather may come again before I get over my bronchitis."²¹⁸

Finally his lungs became so severely affected that he went to Minnesota with young Horace Mann in hope of recovery; but returned little benefited, and died May 6, 1862.

XXXII

Up to 1847, as we have said, he supported himself mainly by labor of his hands. By that time he began to be somewhat known as a writer and lecturer. At Concord, the headquarters of the lecture movement, he gave his first lecture in 1838, and afterwards lectured there nearly every year for twenty years.²¹⁹ While Hawthorne was surveyor at Salem he invited [Thoreau](#) to come there to lecture, telling him that the fee was \$20.²²⁰

But his lectures were less in demand than those of his fellow-townsmen. In 1852 he offered to lecture in New York, but Greeley replied that the course was full for the season, and even if it were not his name would probably not pass.²²¹ In 1856, he writes: "I have not heard from Harrisburg since offering to go there, and have not been invited to lecture anywhere else in the meantime;"²²² and again: "Perhaps it always costs me more than it comes to to lecture before a promiscuous audience. It is an irreparable injury done to my modesty even, — I became so indurated. O solitude! obscurity! meanness! I never triumph so as when I have the least success in my neighbor's eyes. The lecturer gets fifty dollars a night; but what becomes of his

214. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

215. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

216. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

217. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

218. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

219. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).

220. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).

221. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) (Boston, 1882).

222. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.



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winter?

What consolation will it be hereafter to have fifty thousand dollars for living in the world? I should not like to exchange any of my life for money."²²³

XXXIII

His first writing of consequence appeared in the Dial, where several of his pieces were published. Horace Greeley became interested in him, and secured the publication of several of his articles. Among them that on Carlyle in Graham's Magazine for 1857. While Bayard Taylor was editor of the Union magazine, Greeley brought him a roll of manuscript, saying: "You must do something for this young man. His name is Thoreau. He lives in a shanty on Walden Pond, near Concord, on \$37.21 a year. He must be encouraged." The manuscript was "Ktaadn and the Maine Woods." Taylor persuaded the publisher to give \$75 for it, and it was published in 1848; but it contained so many misprints that Thoreau became indignant.²²⁴ In 1852 Sartain offered him \$3 a page for what he might write for the magazine, and in April Greeley offered him \$50 for an article on Emerson, in advance if he desired.²²⁵

"The Yankee in Canada," an account of a ten-day excursion on which his total expenses were \$11.62,²²⁶ began in Putnam's magazine in September, 1853; followed in 1855 by the paper on "Cape Cod," which became the subject of controversy, first as to price and then as to its tone toward the people of that region. The editor wanted to make some changes, which Thoreau refused, and the articles came abruptly to an end. When Lowell left out this sentence from one of his pieces about the pine tree, "It is as immortal as I am, perchance will go to as high a heaven, there to tower above me still," Thoreau having given no authority considered the bounds of right were passed, and would write no more for the Atlantic.

XXXIV

His first book (1849) was "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers." It was published at his own expense, and as the sale was small it brought a heavy burden of debt upon him.

In 1853 Thoreau records that for a year or two past his publisher, falsely so called, has been writing from time to time to ask what disposition should be made of the copies still on hand, at last suggesting that he had use for the room they occupied in his cellar. "So I have had them all sent to me here, and they have arrived to-day by express, filling the man's wagon, 706 copies out of an edition of 1000, which I bought of Monroe four years ago, and have been ever since paying for, and

223. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

224. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, BAYARD TAYLOR, by Albert Smyth. Boston, 1896.

225. AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS, HENRY D. THOREAU, by Franklin Benjamin Sanborn (Boston, 1882).

226. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.



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have not quite paid for yet. Of the remaining 290 and odd, 75 were given away, the rest sold. I have now a library of nearly 900 volumes, over 700 of which I wrote myself."²²⁷

XXXV

The wonder is that the book sold at all. It is an account of a week's journey on two quiet New England rivers, in a boat that two young men had made, and in which they met with no adventure. It would seem hard to make out of this excursion, ten years afterwards, a book of 518 pages, but as a matter of fact the book is not made out of the excursion, which is only an excuse for it. Besides the poems and the local history, and the quotations from the Gazetteer, and the thoughts which the journey itself suggested, it gathers apparently everything that [Thoreau](#) had ever thought out on any subject. Here are 5 pages about gardening, 4 about mythology, 21 about religion, 25 about books and reading, 25 more about reformers and the scriptures, 15 about the Indian scriptures and history, 14 about a trip up Saddle mountain, 7 about Anacreon and 7 more about Persius with translations, 40 about friendship, 9 about Goethe, 11 about Ossian, 32 about Chaucer, with a multitude of others; so that of the 518 pages hardly half had any more relation to this particular trip than to his hoeing beans at Walden.

[Lowell](#) well says: "[Mr. Thoreau](#) becomes so absorbed in these discussions that he seems as it were to catch a crab, and disappear uncomfortably from his seat at the bow-oar. We could forgive them all, * * * we could welcome them all were they put by themselves at the end of the book; but as it is they are out of proportion and out of place, and mar our Merrimacking dreadfully. We were invited to a river party, and not to be preached at."²²⁸

XXXVI

His next book, "Walden, or Life in the Woods" (1854), was more successful, and is the one by which he is best known. It is the account of an experiment he made to prove that "a man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to let alone."²²⁹ He occupied land owned by [Mr. Emerson](#), on Walden pond, borrowed an axe of Mr. Alcott, bought an Irishman's shanty for \$4.25 and moved the timber, spent two hours digging the cellar, got his friends to help him to raise the frame, and completed the cabin at a total cost of \$28.12½, though it was 10 feet wide, 15 feet long, with a garret and a closet, a large window on each side, two trap doors, a door at the end, and a brick fireplace opposite. There was no other house in sight, and his nearest neighbor was a mile distant. He never fastened his door night

227. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).

228. [MY STUDY WINDOWS](#), by [James Russell Lowell](#) (Boston).

229. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).



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or day, even when he spent a fortnight in Maine.

XXXVII

To support himself he planted seven miles of beans, "making the yellow soil express its summer thought in bean leaves and blossoms rather than in wormwood and piper and millet grass."²³⁰ He used to hoe from five o'clock in the morning until noon, then swim, dress, and go to the village, or write, his principal work being to edit his "Week."²³¹

The expense of his food for eight months was \$8.74²³² and his entire expenses \$61.99^{3/4}, while he got for farm produce \$23.40, and earned by day labor \$13.34, leaving a balance of \$25.21^{3/4}, or about what he started with. His food alone cost him in money 27 cents a week. It was for nearly two years after this rye and Indian meal without meat, potatoes, rice, a very little salt pork, molasses and salt, with water for drink. At one time, owing to lack of money, he had no bread at all for a month. He found yeast not an essential ingredient, and thought it simpler and more respectable to omit it; he even questioned the utility of salt: "If I did without it altogether I should probably drink less water. I do not learn that the Indians ever troubled themselves to go after it."²³³

XXXVIII

He staid from July 4, 1845 to Sept. 6, 1847. He says: "I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more for that one."²³⁴

As a protest against extravagant living this is the bold statement he makes: "I have no doubt that some of you who read this book are unable to pay for all the dinners which you have actually eaten, or for the coats and shoes which are past wearing, or are already worn out, and have come to this page to spend borrowed or stolen time, robbing your creditors of an hour."²³⁵

He continually asserts that property, especially real estate, is a needless incumbrance. When a young man inherits a farm he wonders why he should eat 60 acres of dirt, when man is condemned to eat only a peck. He says: "How many a poor immortal soul have I met well-nigh crushed and smothered under its load, creeping down the road of life, pushing before it a barn 75 feet by 40, its Augean stables never cleansed, and 100 acres of land, mowing, tillage, pasture and woodlot." It is not the farmer that has got the house, but the house that has got him. It makes but little difference whether you are committed to a farm or the

230. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

231. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS.](#)

232. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

233. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

234. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

235. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)



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county jail. He thinks it absurd that Harvard students have to pay as much for the rent of a single room as his house costs him, not remembering that there is no land in Cambridge to be squatted upon.

There was nothing remarkably abstemious about his house at Walden. The writer of this article lived for two winters in houses he built for himself simply by digging out a rectangle of dirt 6 feet by 2 and 8 inches deep, piling it on an adjoining rectangle 6 feet by 2, divided from the first by a log so as to form a raised bed, putting over all a piece of cotton cloth, covering up the ends with logs plastered with mud, and making a chimney also of logs. To privates in the Union army such a house as [Thoreau](#) lived in at Walden would have seemed a palace, yet we were not seriously uncomfortable.

XXXIX

His narrative and descriptive style is certainly admirable. He says: "What I was learning in college was chiefly how to express myself, and I see now as the old orator prescribed first action, second action, third action, my teacher should have prescribed to me, first sincerity, second sincerity, third sincerity."²³⁶

He says again: "A true account of the actual is the rarest poetry, for common-sense always takes a hasty and superficial view. Though I am not much acquainted with the works of Goethe, I should say that it was one of his chief excellencies as a writer, that he was satisfied with giving an exact description of things as they appeared to him, and their effect upon him."²³⁷ * * *

"As for style of writing, if one has anything to say it drops from him simply and directly, as a stone falls to the ground. There are no two ways about it, but down it comes, and he may stick in the points and stops whenever he can get a chance. New ideas come into this world somewhat like fallen meteors, with a flash and an explosion, and perhaps somebody's castle-roof perforated. To try to polish the stone in its descent, to give it a peculiar turn, and make it whistle a tune, perchance, would be of no use, if it were possible. Your polished stuff turns out to be not meteoric, but of this earth."²³⁸

XL

On the other hand he writes to a friend: "Let me suggest a theme for you: to state to yourself precisely and completely what that walk over the mountains amounted to for you, - returning to this essay again and again, until you are satisfied that all that was important in your experience is in it. Give this good reason to yourself for having gone over the mountains, for mankind is ever

236. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

237. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).

238. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.



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going over a mountain. Don't suppose you can tell it precisely the first dozen times you try, but at 'em again, especially when, after a sufficient pause, you suspect that you are touching the heart or summit of the matter, reiterate your blows there, and account for the mountain to yourself. Not that the story need be long, hut it will take a long time to make it short."²³⁹

Alcott declares of his prose, that in substance and pith it surpasses that of any naturalist of his time.²⁴⁰ Much of it is surpassed by few writers of his time, whatever their subject. He has himself expressed his aim: "Their sentences are not concentrated and nutty, - sentences which suggest far more than they say, which have an atmosphere about them, which do not report an old, but make a new impression; sentences which suggest many things, and are as durable as a Roman aqueduct, to frame these, - that is the art of writing."²⁴¹

XLI

Here are some of his sentences:

"Time cannot bend the line which God has writ."²⁴²

"What exercise is to the body employment is to the mind and morals."²⁴³

"How can we expect a harvest of thoughts who have not had a seed-time of character?"²⁴⁴

"Some circumstantial evidence is strong, as when you find a trout in the milk."

"The youth gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or, perchance, a palace or temple on the earth, and at length the middle-aged man concludes to build a wood-shed with them."

Of a Cape Cod fisherman he said: "He looked as if he sometimes saw a doughnut, but never descended to comfort. Too grave to laugh, too tough to cry; as indifferent as a clam; like a sea-clam with hat on and legs, that was out walking the strand."²⁴⁵

He speaks of the powdered snow, where not a rabbit's track, nor even a fine print, the small type of a meadow mouse, was to be seen."²⁴⁶

XLII

239. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

240. CONCORD DAYS. by A. Bronson Alcott. Boston, 1872

241. [THOREAU THE POET NATURALIST](#), WITH MEMORIAL VERSES, by [William Ellery Channing](#) (Boston, 1873).

242. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

243. LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. With Bibliographical Introductions and full Indexes. Boston, 1884.

244. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

245. [CAPE COD](#).

246. [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).



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His greatest weakness was what he probably considered his greatest strength, the habit of glancing off from the fact to moralizing, already instanced in "A Week."

Of another fault [Emerson](#) says: "The habit of a realist to find things the reverse of their appearance inclined him to put every statement in a paradox. A certain habit of antagonism defaced his earlier writings, a trick of rhetoric not quite outgrown in his later, of substituting for the obvious word or thought its diametrical oposite [*sic*]. He praised wild mountains and winter forests for their domestic air; in snow and ice he would find sultriness; and commended the wilderness for resembling Rome and Paris; it was so dry that you might call it wet."²⁴⁷ [Thoreau](#) says: "I have heard of a dog that barked at every stranger who approached his master's premises with clothes on, but was easily quieted by a naked thief."²⁴⁸ It might be inquired in what part of the year naked thieves were common in New England.

XLIII

Theoretically he disapproves of humor, and cut out many of his humorous passages,²⁴⁹ though much genuine humor remains. He says of Chaucer's poetry: "For picturesque description of persons it is perhaps without a parallel in English poetry; yet it is essentially humorous, as the loftiest genius never is. Humor, however broad and genial, takes a narrower view than enthusiasm."²⁵⁰

But he has a marked weakness for puns, such as:

"Even the elephant carries but a small trunk on his journey."²⁵¹

"Next came the fort of George's Island. These are bungling contrivances, not our *fortes*, but our *foibles*."²⁵²

"It was literally, or *litorally*, walking down to the shore."²⁵³

"The more tired the wheels, the less tired the horses."²⁵⁴

"A government lighting its mariners on a wintry coast with summer-strained oil to save expense. That were surely a summer-strained mercy."²⁵⁵ This is strained if the quality of mercy is not.

"As I walked on the glaxis I heard the sound of a bagpipe from the soldier's dwelling in the rock, and was further soothed and affected by the sight of a soldier's cat walking up a cleeled plank into a high loop-hole, designed for *mus-catry*."²⁵⁶

247. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

248. [WALDEN: OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

249. [FAMILIAR STUDIES OF MEN AND BOOKS](#), by [Robert Louis Stevenson](#). New York, 1896.

250. [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS.](#)

251. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

252. [CAPE COD.](#)

253. [CAPE COD.](#)

254. [CAPE COD.](#)

255. [CAPE COD.](#)

256. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.



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"Thaw, with his gentle persuasion, is more powerful than Thor with his hammer."²⁵⁷

"But whether Thor-finn saw the mirage here or not, Thor-eau, one of the same family, did; and perchance it was because Lief the Lucky had, in a previous voyage, taken Thor-er and his people off the rock in the middle of the sea, that Thor-eau was born to see it."²⁵⁸

XLIV

There is often conscious effort for the snap he speaks of.

"You might make a curious list of articles which fishes have swallowed; sailors' open-clasped knives, bright tin snuff-boxes, not knowing what was in them, and jugs, and jewels, and Jonah."²⁵⁹

"This hotel was kept by a tailor, his shop on one side of the door, his hotel on the other; and his day seemed to be divided between carving meat and carving broad-cloth."²⁶⁰ How much broadcloth he would have to carve for Cape Cod fishermen is not stated.

He shows his study of words when he says of the French: "Their very *rivière* meanders more than our river."²⁶¹

Not much need be said of his poetry. [Emerson](#) speaks charitably: "His own verses are often rude and defective; the gold does not yet run pure, it is drossy and crude: the thyme and marjoram are not yet honey."²⁶²

XLV

As one studies the life and writings of [Thoreau](#) the conviction grows that much of what he calls sincerity was a morbid desire to be different from other people. It was his habit when he climbed or descended a mountain to disregard the beaten paths and go straight by the compass for the point aimed at, clambering up cliffs and wading through swamps rather than follow in the footsteps of others. His persistent determination enabled him to get there, but his way was not the easiest or the wisest. When he prefers the Veda to the Bible, he is odd, but he shows a lack of literary taste. When he declares that he would rather trust himself to the Greek divinities than to Jehovah he is audacious, but he shows a warped judgment. When he builds up a theory of friendship and of love based on intellectual estimate and excluding the affections, he is singular, but he deprives himself of the most needed help his kind can give. When he does the work of a porter on the diet of a hermit, he flies in the face of tradition, but he breaks down his constitution, and

257. [WALDEN: OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS.](#)

258. [CAPE COD.](#)

259. [CAPE COD.](#)

260. [CAPE COD.](#)

261. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

262. EXCURSIONS IN FIELD AND FOREST. WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON.



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reaps a premature death at forty-five.

XLVI

It is not necessarily a proof of wisdom to consider the rest of mankind fools. "I haven't credulity to believe in religion," said a flippant young man to his teacher. But his sage instructor replied, "Does it not take more credulity to believe that most of the best and wisest men who have ever lived have been wrong?" It is not necessarily true that whatever is is right, but whatever is has the presumption of being right, and should not be disturbed until one is quite sure he has something better to propose.

The superficialness of [Thoreau's](#) attitude toward the world is shown by his abundant inconsistencies. He boasted that his first book was hypaethral, like Egyptian temples, open to the heavens, and might have been written wholly out of doors; yet it contains three hundred quotations from a hundred different authors. He rails against newspapers, saying, "Blessed are they who never read them for they shall see nature;" and yet he reads even to the advertisements the scraps in which his lunches are wrapped.

XLVII

He lived for a time in [Emerson's](#) family, and unconsciously grew to imitate [Emerson's](#) tone and manner till [Lowell](#) declared that with his eyes shut he could not tell which was talking. But he never imitated the sweetness of [Emerson's](#) character. When he was imprisoned for refusing to pay a poll-tax to a State that sanctioned slavery, [Emerson](#) came to him and asked, "Henry, why are you here?" to which [Thoreau](#) replied, "Why are you not here?" But the reproach was unmerited. When a friend paid the tax for him, [Thoreau](#) accepted his release; [Emerson](#) would have died in that Concord jail had it been with him a matter of principle. But while [Emerson](#) never yielded where conscience forbade, he never made an issue with society unless conscience compelled.

[Thoreau's](#) contribution to mankind is great not because of his oddity but in spite of it, and except for it would have been much greater. As [Emerson](#) says, "Instead of engineering for all America, he was the captain of a huckleberry party."²⁶³



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1901

[Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#)'s THE PERSONALITY OF THOREAU (Boston: Goodspeed):

VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES

Sanborn recollected, on pages 5-6: When I first saw Thoreau, in the College yard at Cambridge, striding along the path, away from my room in Holworthy, where he had left a copy of Walden for me, I knew him not, but was struck with his short and rustic appearance, and that peculiar stride which all who have walked with him remember.

Sanborn recollected, on pages 9-10: In a wing of this capacious dwelling was the shop where the Thoreau lead-pencils had been made, perhaps, in former years; but this room, which I never visited while John Thoreau, the father, lived, was devoted, in my time, to the storing and shipping of a fine-ground [plumbago](#) for electrotyping – a business that had been taken up when the [pencil](#) industry became unprofitable. It was the family breadwinner for years, and yielded a modest income, supplemented by Henry's receipts for land-surveying, lecturing, and writing magazine articles. As late as 1850 he was making pencils; for, in his Journal for November 20, 1853, he writes, of an earlier period: "I was obliged to manufacture \$1,000 worth of pencils, and slowly dispose of, and finally sacrifice them, in order to pay an assumed debt of \$100." The plumbago, both for pencils and for electrotyping, was ground at a small mill in Acton (the next town west of [Concord](#)), where the Thoreaus had the secret of obtaining the finest-ground mineral; sent to the two-story shop attached to the dwelling-house, and there prepared for the market and shipped. Little was said of this business, although its existence was generally known; and it would not have been good manners to make inquiries about it, though in course of time Sophia spoke of it to me and others. It passed from the Thoreaus to the brothers, Marshall and Warren Miles, and has been carried on by the latter in recent years, but with less profit than in the time of the Thoreaus, who finally gave it up about 1870. After Mrs. Thoreau's death a weird story was invented about her ghost being seen in the pencil-shop.

Sanborn fabricated a tendentious recollection which could not have been true or believed by him to be true,²⁶⁴ on pages 30-31: One day as I entered the front hall of the Thoreau house for my noonday dinner, I saw under the stairs a pile of books; and when we met at the table, Henry said, "I have added several hundred volumes to my library lately, all of my own composition." In fact, he had received from his first publisher the last parcel of his unsold Week, and for a year or two afterwards he sold

264. [Sanborn](#) knew very well that he had not met [Thoreau](#) until 1855, while Thoreau had long since received these unsold copies and carried them up the steps and stored them in his room, on October 27, 1853.



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them himself upon orders through the mail.

Sanborn recollected, on pages 37-38: When I first heard Thoreau lecture, as he did every year at the Concord Lyceum, and frequently at Worcester and elsewhere, I did not find his spoken essays so interesting as his conversations. He had few of the arts of the orator, in which Emerson and Phillips excelled; his presence on the platform was not inspiring, nor was his voice specially musical, though he had a musical ear and a real love of melody. But for the thought and humor in his lectures they would have been reckoned dull, – and that was the impression often made. He appeared to best advantage reading them in a small room; or when, as with the John Brown Address, he was mightily stirred by the emotions that a life so heroic excited in his fearless heart. At the age of forty, or thereabout, I heard him sing his favorite song, Tom Bowline, by Didbin, which to Thoreau was a reminiscence of his brother John, so early lost and so dearly loved. The voice was unpractised and rather harsh, but the sentiment made the song interesting.

Ellery Channing recollected, on pages 66-67: His illness might be passed over by some persons, but not by me; it was most impressive. To see one in middle life, with nerves and muscles and will of iron, torn apart piecemeal by that which was stronger than all, were enough to be described, if pen had the power to do it. It was a saying of his, not unfrequent, that he had lived and written as if to live forty years longer; his work was laid out for a long life. Therefore his resignation was great, true, and consistent; great, too, was his suffering. "I have no wish to live, except for my mother and sister," was one of his conclusions. But still, as always, work, work, work! During his illness he enlarged his calendar, made a list of birds, drew greatly on his Journals; at the same time he was writing or correcting several articles for printing, till his strength was no longer sufficient even to move a pencil. Nevertheless, he did not relax, but had the papers still laid before him. I am not aware that anywhere in literature is a greater heroism; the motive, too, was sacred, for he was doing this that his family might reap the advantage. One of his noblest and ablest associates was a philosopher (Alcott) whose heart was like a land flowing with milk and honey; and it was affecting to see this venerable man kissing his brow, when the damps and sweat of death lay upon it, even if Henry knew it not. It seemed to me an extreme unction, in which a friend was the best priest.

BRONSON ALCOTT

Sanborn has taken a detached scrap of paper out of a textbook allegedly owned by Thoreau, the 3d edition, the 1828 edition, of Professor John Farrar of Harvard College's brief 1818 knock-off of Euler's famous textbook, entitled AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ELEMENTS OF ALGEBRA, DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF THOSE WHO ARE ACQUAINTED ONLY WITH THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF ARITHMETIC / SELECTED FROM THE ALGEBRA OF EULER



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(Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little, and Wilkins, 1828), and glued

ELEMENTS OF ALGEBRA

this scrap of paper into the front of copy #105 of his THE PERSONALITY OF THOREAU. (This volume with its holographic fragment is now copy #3 in the special collections of Brown University, at the John Hay Library.) The paper scrap contains a holograph algebraic proof written by Thoreau in Concord on January 10, 1840.²⁶⁵ The problem he selected is to identify a four-number geometric progression series in which the 4th number of the series is 24 more than the 2d number of the series, and the sum of the 1st number and 4th number is to the sum of the 2d number and 3d number, in the ratio of 7 to 3.

Thoreau's first move was to identify the four numbers of the series as respectively x , xy , xy^2 , and xy^3 .

Then he stated the first of the constraints, that the 4th number of the series is 24 more than the 2d number of the series, as $xy^3 - xy = 24$.

Then he stated the second of the constraints, that the sum of the 1st number and 4th number is to the sum of the 2d number and 3d number in the ratio of 7 to 3, as $3x + 3xy^3 = 7xy + 7xy^2$. Not bothering to write down the steps of the transformation, this immediately became $y^3 = (7y + 7y^2)/3 - 1$.

Then, putting $y^3 = (7y + 7y^2)/3 - 1$ into $xy^3 - xy = 24$ and freeing the denominator and reducing immediately generated $7xy^2 + 4xy - 3x = 72$.

Then comparing $7xy^2 + 4xy - 3x = 72$ with $3x + 3xy^3 = 7xy + 7xy^2$ and eliminating xy and reducing $7xy^2 - 3x + 4xy^3 = 168$ on $xy^2 = 24 + (3x - 4xy^2)/7$ giving xy^3 its value obtained from $xy^3 - xy = 24$, putting the value of xy^2 as it then stands in the geometric progression series and taking the product of the means equal to that of the extremes xy^2 [hole in the paper] $4x = 24xy + (3x^2y - 4x^2y^2 - 95xy)/7$.

Then finding by x , freeing of the denominator, and reducing, results in $xy + xy^2 = 18y - 42$.

Then putting the value of xy^2 obtained from this into $3x + 3xy^3 = 7xy + 7xy^2$ and reducing, results in $x + xy^3 = 42y - 98$.

Then putting the value of xy^3 obtained from this in $xy^3 - xy = 24$ and reducing, generates $x + xy = 42y - 122$.

This is followed by $xy + xy^2 = 18y - 42$.

265. We note that in this writing which is indisputably Thoreau's, he forms the numeral "2" by beginning his stroke at the top left with a minuscule complete circle.



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This is followed by $18y - 42 = 42y^2 - 122y$.

This is followed, on the basis of $xy^3 - xy = 24$, by $x = 24/(y^3 - y)$

By comparing $xy + xy^2 = 18y - 42$ he obtained $y=3$, hence $x=1$, and so the geometric progression that solves these simultaneous equations would have to be "1 3 9 27."

December 23, Monday: Gustav Mahler and Alma Schindler became engaged, before her guardians, Carl and Anna Moll, at their home in Vienna.

[Ellery Channing](#) died.



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Last seen in 'Geom. Prog. in' Gay's Algebra.
 There is a Geom. Prog. of four numbers, such that the last is 24
 more than the second, and the sum of the extremes is 5 times of the
 means, as 4 & 3. $x \ x \ y \ xy^2 \ xy^3$ Then $(xy^3 - xy = 24) \textcircled{1}$
 and $(3x + 3xy^3 = 4xy + 4xy^2) \textcircled{2}$ From the last $y^3 = \frac{xy + y^2}{3} - 1$
 Putting this in $\textcircled{1}$, freeing of the denominator, and reducing -
 $7xy^2 + 4xy - 3x = 72$ Comparing $\textcircled{2}$, eliminating xy ,
 and reducing $7xy^2 - 3x + 4xy^3 = 168$ or
 $xy^2 = 24 + \frac{3x - 4xy^3}{7}$ Giving xy^3 its value obtained from $\textcircled{1}$,
 putting the value of xy^2 as it then stands in the Prog.
 and being the product of the means equal to that
 of the extremes. $x^2y^2 + 4x = 24xy + \frac{3x^2y - 4x^2y^2 - 36xy}{7}$
 Dividing by x , freeing of the denominator, and reducing -
 $(xy + xy^2 = 18y - 4) \textcircled{3}$ Putting the value of xy^2 obtained
 from this in $\textcircled{2}$ and reducing. $x + xy^3 = 42y - 98$
 Putting the value of xy^3 obtained from this in $\textcircled{1}$,
 and reducing $x + xy = 42y - 122$ Comparing $\textcircled{3}$
 $xy + xy^2 = 18y - 42$ he obtain
 $18y - 42 = 42y^2 - 122y$ Hence $y = 3$
 From $\textcircled{1}$ $x = \frac{24}{y^3 - y}$ Hence $x = 1$
 Prog. = 1 3 9 27

(Merrill's Geom. Alg. 18th - 1840)

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1902

April 15, Tuesday: Arnold Schoenberg received the following postcard message at his Berlin address: “Dear Sir, you can see me every day from three till four at home. Yours sincerely, Richard Strauss.”

A 20 year-old Social Revolutionary student shot to death at point blank range Russian Minister of the Interior D.S. Sipiagin, in the Mariinsky Palace of St. Petersburg.

Mounting anti-British protests induced the British government to declare a state of emergency in nine counties of [Ireland](#).

The children’s operetta Fairy Pantomime of Cinderella was performed for the initial time, at St. Mary’s School, and was conducted by its composer Gustav Holst.

Two airs from John Knowles Paine’s unperformed opera Azara were performed for the initial time, in Steinert Hall, Boston.

[Ellery Channing](#) having died in the previous year (which rendered it somewhat less convenient for him to be difficult), [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) completed an enlarged edition of Channing’s 1853/1863/1873 effort titled THOREAU THE POET-NATURALIST WITH MEMORIAL VERSES BY WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING (the original Channing editions had been of course a total mess — and this Sanborn edition, you will find, printed in November for the firm of Charles E. Goodspeed in Boston at the Merrymount Press of D.B. Updike, would not be all that much of an improvement).

READ THE FULL TEXT

ELLERY CHANNING’s biography of his most intimate friend, Thoreau, had a peculiar history. Soon after Thoreau’s death in May, 1862, Channing began to write his life, for which he had long been making preparation, both consciously and unconsciously. In 1853, when a plan was formed, which never was fully carried out, for collecting into a book under Channing’s editing a series of walks and talks about Concord and its region, in which Emerson, Thoreau, Channing, and Alcott should be the recorders and interlocutors, Mr. Channing, who had then been for ten years a resident of Concord, with occasional absences in New York and Europe, had access to the journals of Thoreau, and made various copies therefrom. Later, and during Thoreau’s last illness, he copied from them still more specifically; and the books, now in my possession, in which these extracts were entered, were borrowed by Emerson in revising for publication his funeral eulogy of Thoreau, which now appears as an introduction to the volume called “Excursions.” Other portions were copied while Channing was assisting Sophia Thoreau to edit the “Maine Woods”; so that the manuscript volume finally contained many pages from Thoreau’s journals for the last ten or twelve years of his life. In 1863 very few of these had been published, although a few appeared in Thoreau’s contributions



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to the "Atlantic Monthly," and in Emerson's eulogy. Had the book appeared then, early in 1864, as Channing expected, it would have been a fresh and varied addition to what the public had of Thoreau's original and carefully written observations on nature and man.

With all this preparation, Channing in 1863 composed a hundred and thirty-four large manuscript pages in a book now lying before me, his first draft of "Thoreau, the Poet-Naturalist"; copied it out, with omissions and additions, and sent me the first half of the copy for publication, week by week, in the "Boston Commonwealth" newspaper, which I had begun to edit in February, 1863, and to which Miss Thoreau had contributed several of her brother's unprinted poems. I copyrighted the work in my own name, as Mr. Channing desired, and began to publish it early in 1864. After several weeks, I omitted the weekly chapter of Thoreau (whose readers were much fewer forty years ago than now), in order to give my limited space for literary matter to other contributors for a fortnight. At this omission my friend took offence, and recalled his manuscript, so that the work remained a fragment for nearly ten years, during which time much of the unprinted manuscript of Thoreau found its way into print, and stimulated the desire of readers to know more of the author. This suggested to me and to Channing that he might issue his work in a volume, as he had "The Wanderer" (1871), which proved in some degree popular. I made an arrangement with the late Thomas Niles, then the head of the house of Roberts Brothers, by which an edition of fifteen hundred copies of the biography should be published in the autumn of 1873; and the volume known to libraries and collectors as "Thoreau, the Poet-Naturalist" made its appearance, and sold moderately well.

Indeed, it was the most popular of all Channing's nine volumes, published by him at intervals from 1843 to 1886. It escaped the Boston fires which had destroyed the unsold copies of "The Wanderer," and in twenty years was so completely sold out that it was with difficulty the publishers procured for me a single copy for presentation to our Plymouth friend, Marston Watson of Hillside, to whom Channing had omitted to send it, or who may have given away his copy. A copy now and then coming to market at present sells for five dollars. But the volume of 1873 (now out of print and its copyright expired) was very different from that composed in 1863. With the perversity of genius Channing had gone over his first draft, omitting much, making portions of the rest obscure and enigmatical, but enriching it with the treasures of his recondite learning in mottoes, allusions, and numberless citations, — the whole without much method, or with a method of his own, not easily followed by the reader, who had not the guide-board of an index to help him out. Withal, Channing had inserted here and there matchless passages of description, his own or Thoreau's, which made the book then, and ever since, a mine of citations for every biographer of the poet-naturalist who succeeded him, — beginning with the Scotch litterateur who called himself "H.A. Page," and whose little volume was soon



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reprinted in Boston by Thoreau's publishers.

In my new edition, based upon a copy with the author's revision and notes, I have inserted here and there passages of no great length which I find in the original sketch, and which make the meaning plainer and the story more consecutive. At the end of this volume will be found some additions to the "Memorial Poems" which evidently belong there.

But a still more singular peculiarity marked the volume of 1873. As its printing went on, the publisher (Mr. Niles) consulted me in regard to it, finding Mr. Channing not always responsive to his suggestions; and finally said to me, for the author's information, that the volume was about fifty pages smaller than he had expected to make it. Could not Mr. Channing, then, who seemed to have much material at his disposal, add the requisite pages to the work? Certainly, was the reply; and how was it done? From the long-deferred manuscript of 1853, "Country Walking" by name, containing long passages from the journals of Emerson and Thoreau with bits of actual conversation; sketches and snatches of character by Channing himself, and here and there a poem or fragment by Channing or Emerson, — from this medley of records, meant for another purpose, Channing selected the required number of pages, — cut the original book open in the midst, and inserted the new-old matter. It makes the bulk of sixty-seven pages (old edition), from the hundred and twentieth to the hundred and eighty-seventh, inclusive, and is so printed that the authors themselves could hardly pick out their own share in this olio [sic]. In the revision Channing has indicated with some clearness (to my eyes) who is the spokesman in each colloquy, and I have prefixed or affixed the names of the interlocutors in most cases. This matter, though improperly given to the world thirty years ago, and occasioning Mr. Emerson, and possibly Miss Thoreau, some vexation, has now been public property so long that I reprint it without hesitation, but sometimes changing its order. I have also inserted occasionally passages out of Thoreau's journal or papers which have not yet been published, perhaps, but the printing of which will only add to the value of that great store of unprinted manuscript which Mr. E.H. Russell of Worcester now holds, and is preparing to publish in a more methodical form than Thoreau's good friend Blake did.

I have felt a strong personal interest in this biography, not only from my long friendship both with Thoreau and Channing, but because I have been so conversant, for nearly forty years, with the contents of the volume, and with the manuscripts out of which they were condensed. And I have prefixed to this edition a portrait, not of Thoreau, but Ellery Channing himself, taken as a photograph by that excellent artist, Mr. Henry Smith of the Studio Building, Boston, not long after the publication of the first edition in 1873. At the time, three sittings were given by Mr. Channing, all in one day, but presenting different views of the sitter. That chosen for this book is not his most poetic aspect, — which is reserved for the volume of Channing's "Poems of Sixty-five Years," now in press at Philadelphia, — but rather



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the shrewd, humorous face, with its ancestral resemblances and reminders of kinship, which seems most fitting for this prose volume. Those who remember Mr. Channing's cousin, the late John Murray Forbes, at the age (about fifty-six) when this portrait was made, will be struck, as I was, with a certain resemblance, — as also to the interesting Perkins family of Boston, from whom both Mr. Forbes and Ellery Channing derived many traits. Intellectually, the cousinship of John Forbes and Ellery Channing showed itself in that surprising quickness and perspicacity which, in the elder, the Merchant, was directed towards the secrets of Fortune and the management of men, — and in the younger, the Poet, towards every aspect of Man and of Nature, imaginatively transcribed in that volume which Shakespeare studied, saying,

“In Nature's infinite book of secrecy
A little I can read.”

Channing read much therein: had his gift of expression been coequal with his extraordinary insight, none would ever think of denying to him the title which he modestly claimed for himself, — the high name of Poet. He had, in fact, more completely than any man since Keats, the traditional poetical temperament, intuitive, passionate, capricious, with by turns the most generous and the most exacting spirit. One other trait he had, never seen by me in such force in any other, — the power to see and the impulse to state all sides of any matter which presented itself to his alert and discriminating intellect. He would utter an opinion, in itself pertinent, but partial; in a moment, if not disputed, he would bring forth the complementary opinion, and so go round his subject until its qualities had been exhausted; and this not with the formality of syllogisms or enthymemes, but as the poet's eye, in Shakespeare's phrase,

“Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to
heaven.”

The “Memorial Verses” at the end of the biography are here printed with some alterations and additions. Their connection with his friend Thoreau is sometimes slight, but the connection existed in his enduring memory and his tender heart, and among them are some of his best lines. The Cape poems, commemorative in part of his walks along the sands with Thoreau, and in part of earlier joys and sorrows at Truro, were, I believe, regarded by Emerson as the best of his middle-age verses, except the Ode at the consecration of the Cemetery, in 1855, where his ashes now repose. The “Still River” deals with a walk from Ayer to Lancaster, passing by a village or two, and the lonely farmhouse of “Fruitlands,” where Alcott and his friends in 1843-44 played out their idyll of an ascetic community. I have added to this poem, which was written before 1853, a concluding passage describing the winter landscape in the valley of the Nashua, into which, not far from Fruitlands, the stream called Still River quietly flows. Nashua, into which, not far from Fruitlands, the stream called Still River quietly flows.

F.B. SANBORN.



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1909

[Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#)'s collection of essays CARLYLE'S LAUGH AND OTHER SURPRISES.

[Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), in his RECOLLECTIONS OF SEVENTY YEARS BY F.B. SANBORN OF CONCORD IN TWO VOLUMES, identified the "tailoress" of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s "Economy" chapter as [Mary Minot](#) of Concord but neglected to specify which one of the three persons of that name in the town he had intended:

WALDEN: When I ask for a garment of a particular form, my tailoress tells me gravely, "They do not make them so now," not emphasizing the "They" at all, as if she quoted an authority as impersonal as the Fates, and I find it difficult to get made what I want, simply because she cannot believe that I mean what I say, that I am so rash. When I hear this oracular sentence, I am for a moment absorbed in thought, emphasizing to myself each word separately that I may come at the meaning of it, that I may find out by what degree of consanguinity **They** are related to **me**, and what authority they may have in an affair which affects me so nearly; and, finally, I am inclined to answer her with equal mystery, and without any more emphasis on the "they," -"It is true, they did not make them so recently, but they do now." Of what use this measuring of me if she does not measure my character, but only the breadth of my shoulders, as it were a peg to hang the coat on? We worship not the Graces, nor the Parcaë, but Fashion. She spins and weaves and cuts with full authority. The head monkey at Paris puts on a traveller's cap, and all the monkeys in America do the same. I sometimes despair of getting any thing quite simple and honest done in this world by the help of men. They would have to be passed through a powerful press first, to squeeze their old notions out of them, so that they would not soon get upon their legs again, and then there would be some one in the company with a maggot in his head, hatched from an egg deposited there nobody knows when, for not even fire kills these things, and you would have lost your labor. Nevertheless, we will not forget that some Egyptian wheat is said to have been handed down to us by a mummy.

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[Ellery Channing](#) took this opportunity to record, on pages 400-1 of Sanborn's Volume II, that:



He [[Henry Thoreau](#)] was very reticent of biographical recollections; yet I recall that he well remembered a certain field, through which we walked in Concord, a good distance from the village, to which he used to drive his cow, with bare feet, like the other village boys. He did not dwell on the past. I am confident he rarely read a book over twice, and he loved not to repeat a story after its first freshness. His talent was onward, vigorous, in the moment, which was perfectly filled, and then he went to the next with great speed.

But I doubt not he loved to linger in mind over the old familiar things of boyhood; and he occasionally let fall some memory of the "Mill Dam" when he was a boy, and of the pond behind it, now a meadow. Of the many houses in which he lived (for his was a very moving family), I heard him rarely speak: that one, now torn away, at the corner of the slaughter-house street (Walden Road); another, where the Library now stands (the Parkman house), farther towards the railroad; and still another which had been "fixed over" for more aspiring villagers than the Irish, who succeeded the Thoreaus in the Parkman house. Three of these mansions he passed in his daily walks to the Post Office, a duty he fulfilled after the death of his father, for the benefit of his family, -for he was a martinet in the family service,- but I never heard him say more than, "I used to live in that house," or, "There it was that so-and-so took place"; thus refreshing his memory by the existing locality. In the year before he built for himself at Walden his only true house, he assisted in making a house in that western part of the village called "Texas," not far from the River. To this spot he was



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always much attached; it commended an excellent view toward the southwest, was retired, and he had planted a small orchard there.

Franklin Benjamin Sanborn recollected on page 44 of Volume I that:

Gov. Banks's grand muster in 1859 ... was the opportunity for a jest by Thoreau at the expense of the State authorities. A friend met him on his way from his mother's house to the Village, and said, "I hear the Governor comes to Concord today." "Yes," said the philosopher, "I am going down to buy a lock for our front-door." "But the Legislature are coming too." "Indeed?" said Thoreau, "then I must put a lock on our back-door."

— and on page 320 of Volume II that:

It once happened that Alcott and Thoreau spent some days together at Hillside, and in their walks through the surrounding wood encountered the remains of a dead hog — his white, firm jawbone, and his bristles quite untouched by decay. "You see," said Thoreau to his vegetarian friend, "here is something that succeeded, beside spirituality, and thought, — here is the tough child of nature," — and they fell into high converse respecting the bristly darling of the Great Mother.

BRONSON ALCOTT

— and on page 397 of Volume II that:

The Ricketsons said, when asked about the visit of Thoreau, Alcott, and Channing at their New Bedford house (Brooklawn) in April, 1857, that Thoreau sang and danced there to the accompaniment of Mrs. Ricketson's piano. Mr. Alcott, then giving Conversations in New Bedford, visited the Ricketsons for two or three weeks. Thoreau went there April 2d, and returned April 15th; but was at Plymouth and elsewhere part of the time. Channing, then living in New Bedford, came out to dine or take tea at Brooklawn several times a week. On this particular evening, Daniel Ricketson and Channing, after tea, had gone out to the "shanty," where the friends smoked and talked, while Alcott and Thoreau remained with Mrs. R. and Walton. Anna was taking her usual walk on the verandas, before going to bed. As Mrs. R. struck up a lively Scotch air ("The Campbells are Comin'"), Thoreau felt moved to try a dance, and did so, — keeping time to the music perfectly, but executing some steps more like Indian dances than the usual ball-room figures. Anna was so amused at the sight, which she saw through the window, that she ran and called her father and Channing, who came and looked on, — Alcott sitting on the sofa, meanwhile, and watching the dance. Thoreau continued the performance for five or ten minutes; it was earnest and spontaneous, but not particularly graceful.

BRONSON ALCOTT

FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON

ELLERY CHANNING



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1936

November: Any number of readers have been thrown off stride by the manner in which [Henry Thoreau](#) critiqued a hapless family of [Irish](#) ecological refugees in the “Baker Farm” chapter of [WALDEN](#), and have drawn an adverse conclusion as to Thoreau’s general sociability. But consider, this book had begun with a pointed discussion of household economy, of aims and manners of living. The record is more complex than what is contained in just this one chapter, in regard to Thoreau’s attitudes toward and dealings with people, common or otherwise, and such a mere excerpt should not be tendentiously taken out of its evocative context to make a point that could only be sustained by carefully disregarding other evidence. What comes to light in the aggregate, not only on the basis of Thoreau’s own reports but also on the basis of the testimonies of the many who knew him, is that he was a gentle and considerate man whose dealings with common people were predominantly marked by neighborly interest and fellow feeling. Although [WALDEN](#) happens to have become the primary repository of his cultural legacy, in fact Thoreau didn’t spend his whole life as a youth at Walden Pond, or crowing about that early experiment in living, or condemning others for failing to live as skillfully as he himself lived. He had found that he had several more lives to live, and had been in the process of living them, when snuffed by TB in 1862 — howevermuch the popular imagination seems intent upon containing this changing person at Walden Pond and in the years 1845-1846. There was so much more, and part of this is the nature and extent of Thoreau’s relations with his neighbors and passing strangers (including runaway slaves and poor Irishmen) during the years that he was no longer elaborating his early manuscript *A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS* while in residence at Walden Pond.

MEN OF CONCORD AS PORTRAYED IN THE JOURNAL OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, ed. [Francis Henry Allen](#) with illustrations by [Newell Convers Wyeth](#), issued in this year, is simply a 240-page compilation of excerpts from the *JOURNAL* in which Thoreau is allowed to describe and discuss, and report his walks and talks with, various of his neighbors, as a corrective for this general misperception of Thoreau’s neighborliness:

Many readers, thinking of [Henry Thoreau](#) as the staunch individualist, the apostle of wild nature, the rebel against man-made institutions, the “hermit of Walden,” forget that he had any but the most formal relations with human beings outside of his own family. And yet his *JOURNAL* records many and many a conversation with fellow-townsmen, and its readers encounter much shrewd and understanding comment on the ways and manners of this and that individual or group. He talked familiarly with farmers, hunters, and fishermen — as familiarly as he did with his friend [Ellery Channing](#), with [Edward Sherman Hoar](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), and [H.G.O. Blake](#). [Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson](#), in his

HENRY DAVID THOREAU AS REMEMBERED BY A YOUNG FRIEND

has testified to the regard in which Thoreau’s humbler neighbors held him.... [A]fter speaking of Thoreau’s propensity for taking the other side in conversation “for the joy of the intellectual fencing,” Dr. Emerson goes on to say: “Thoreau held this trait in check with women and children, and with humble people who were no match for him. With them he was simple, gentle, friendly, and amusing.” “His simple, direct speech and look and bearing

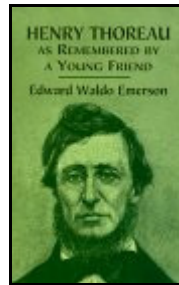


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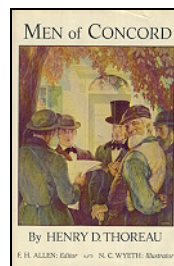
PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

were such that no plain, common man would put him down in his books as a fool, or visionary, or helpless, as the scholar, writer, or reformer would often be regarded by him.... He loved to talk with all kinds and conditions of men if they had no hypocrisy or pretense about them, and though high in his standard of virtue, and most severe with himself, could be charitable to the failings of humble fellow-men." A man who lived on a farm and had worked in the Thoreaus' [plumbago](#)-mill told Dr. Emerson that Thoreau was the best friend he ever had. "He was always straight in his ways: and was very particular to be agreeable.... When I saw him crossing my field I always wanted to go and have a talk with him.... He liked to talk as long as you did, and what he said was new."



Although the matter was not publicized, MEN OF CONCORD's pen-and-ink drawings had been done by his son Andrew Wyeth, rather than by the painter himself. Wyeth hoped to induce the [Concord Free Public Library](#) to pay him \$5,000 for the entire set of a dozen original painted panels that had been used to create this book, but that was something that would not come about. The paintings would be sold individually on the general market, and eventually the library would come into possession of five of them, "The Carpenters Repairing Hubbard's Bridge," "Thoreau and Miss Mary Emerson," "Johnny and His Woodchuck-Skin Cap," "Fishing Through the Ice," and "The Muskrat Hunters...." Other of the paintings would go to:

- pen-and-ink drawings — privately held
- jacket illustration — Brandywine River Museum



- endpaper illustration — Canajoharie Library and Art Museum
- "Mr. Alcott in the Granary Burying Ground" — Boston Athenaeum
- "A Man of a Certain Probity..." — privately held
- "Barefooted Brooks Clark Building Wall" — privately held
- "Thoreau and the Three Reformers" — privately held
- "Barefooted Brooks Clark Building Wall" — privately held
- "Thoreau Fishing" — location unknown



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According to the Preface, “Wyeth was a lifelong admirer of Thoreau, whose spirit has become a part of him. His work for this book, therefore, is a tribute from an intellectual disciple to an author who has had an important formative influence on his character and work.” One of the pieces of material selected is from the journal of February 13, 1841:

Extract: “A Lean Farm”



February 13, 1841: My neighbor says that his hill-farm is poor stuff and “only fit to hold the world together.” He deserves that God should give him better for so brave a treatment of his gifts, instead of humbly putting up therewith. It is a sort of stay, or gore or gusset, and he will not be blinded by modesty or gratitude, but sees it for what it is; knowing his neighbor’s fertile land, he calls his by its right name. But perhaps my farmer forgets that his lean soil has sharpened his wits. This is a crop it was good for, and beside, you see the heavens at a lesser angle from the hill than from the vale.

HDT

WHAT?

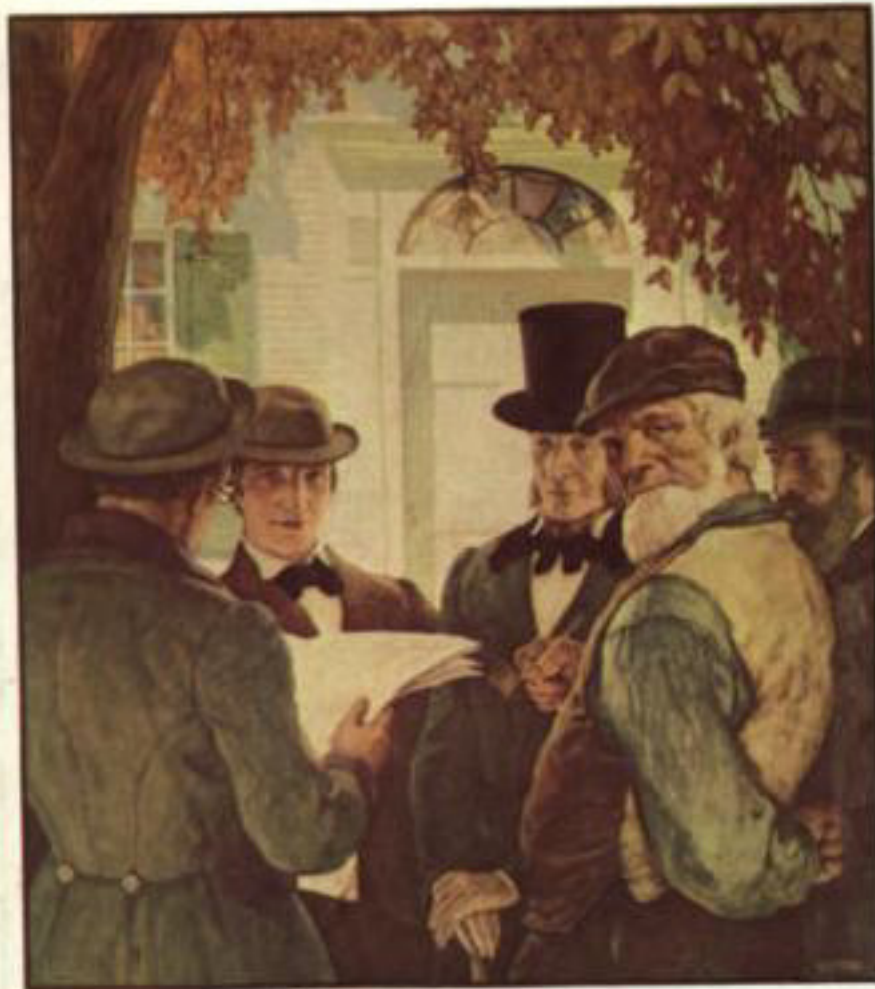
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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

MEN of CONCORD



By HENRY D. THOREAU

F. H. ALLEN: *Editor* N. C. WYETH: *Illustrator*



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1939

Henry Seidel Canby, in his THOREAU (Boston: Houghton Mifflin), trying to recuperate [Henry Thoreau](#) from having been known to us, through the writings of [Robert Louis Stevenson](#), as a “skulker,” or at best known to us since our childhoods only “as a man who wrote about birds and animals for children,” revealed that Henry had more recently been discovered by certain unnamed critics as perhaps “the greatest critic of values among modern writers in English.”

Walden in its cup of the hills above, and only a mile from the edge, of Concord is still beautiful; and Thoreau's sojourn there in his cabin by a cove, if less significant than St. Francis' retirement among the birds and beasts, or Christ's retreat to the wilderness, is, nevertheless, one of the memorable gestures of the spirit of man. Many of Thoreau's own contemporaries, like Lowell and Alger, thought that the escape to Walden was a pose, or sheer eccentricity. Even his youthful admirer, Hecker, called him in later years a consecrated crank. And admirers of Thoreau since have been too ready to think and write of his Walden adventure as the bravado of a perverse idealism, or as a hermit's challenge to a society which had to carry on with the responsibilities he left behind. [Robert Louis Stevenson](#), with this in mind, thought he was a skulker.





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Canby attempted to explicate the parable of the hound, the bay horse, and the turtle-dove as no search for any lost maid or boy,

WALDEN: In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line. You will pardon some obscurities, for there are more secrets in my trade than in most men's, and yet not voluntarily kept, but inseparable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all that I know about it, and never paint "No Admittance" on my gate.

I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves.

To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn merely, but, if possible, Nature herself! How many mornings, summer and winter, before yet any neighbor was stirring about his business, have I been about mine! No doubt many of my townsmen have met me returning from this enterprise, farmers starting for Boston in the twilight, or woodchoppers going to their work. It is true, I never assisted the sun materially in his rising, but, doubt not, it was of the last importance only to be present at it.



but instead a search "for that sense of the spiritual reality behind nature, which again and again in his JOURNAL he deplores as something felt in youth, but never quite regained."

The
WALDEN
parable

The
other
analyses



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The identification of these fabulous animals with Edmund Sewall, John Thoreau, and Ellen Sewall ... is both naïve and absurd. For no one of these three was Thoreau, by any stretch of the imagination, still searching.

On page xii in this new volume [Ellery Channing](#) was given a final opportunity to explore what wisdom he had accumulated over the decades about the essence of [Henry Thoreau](#), and this blazing amazing comment is what he was able to come up with:

Nothing bothered him so much as the friendships. Those and his moral sensitiveness. I have never been able to understand what he meant by his life.... Why was he so disappointed with everybody else &c. Why was he so much interested in the river and the woods and the sky &c. Something peculiar I judge.



"What a gump!...On the whole, he is but little better than an idiot. He should have been whipt often and soundly in his boyhood; and as he escaped such wholesome discipline then, it might be well to bestow it now."

— [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), about [Ellery Channing](#)



On page 234, Jane Hosmer had the following to relate:

When his mother heard of his arrest, she hastened to the Jail, then to the Thoreau house in the Square, at which Misses Jane and Maria Thoreau then lived, and one of the latter, putting a shawl over her head, went to the jailer's door, and paid the tax



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and fees to Ellen Staples, her father the jailer being absent.



AUNT MARIA THOREAU
AUNT JANE THOREAU

[In this year, at the end of the “Wizard of Oz” movie, Dorothy summed up the lesson that she has learned out of all her questing down the yellow brick road: “If I ever go looking for my heart’s desire again, I won’t look any further than my own backyard, because if it isn’t there, I never really lost it to begin with.” She had learned that in order to get back to her Kansas, all she needs to do is repeat her mantra, “There’s no place like home.” — Would it be legitimate to consider this to be a possible interpretation of Thoreau’s parable of the hound, the bay horse, and the turtledove?]



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1958

Miller, Perry. CONSCIOUSNESS AT CONCORD. 1958

“A Review From Professor Ross’s Seminar”

Perry Miller marshals evidence to prove “the androgynous nature of Thoreau’s monomaniac discussions of friendship.” He discovers in Thoreau a “delirium of self-consciousness” fed by sublimation of sexual love and a subsequent fear of inferiority made more intense by fear of being found out. Thus, he ascribes to Thoreau a homosexual nature, which he contends explains Thoreau’s apparent lack of significant relationships with women. He accuses such pre-Freudian biographers as [Waldo Emerson](#), [Ellery Channing](#), and [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) of bewilderment or embarrassment when confronted by intimations of sexual strangeness.

The problem with this approach is that it is Freudian psychoanalytic. The assumption is that an apparent lack of significant relationships with women automatically makes Thoreau a homosexual because the premise is that homosexual men cannot relate to women. That may have been Freud’s point of view. Contemporary psycho-sexual thought is very clear that [homosexuality](#) is not caused by a fear of women, or by a mother-fixation; that in fact gay men relate very well to women. Thus, Miller needs to look for another reason for Thoreau’s inability to relate to women.

(Martin L. Warren, May 7, 1989)

There is a page of the dissevered journalizing sometime after 1842 which has never been published, but which more than anything in print displays the state of mind [Thoreau] was fast approaching:

It is pathetic for one far in the fields in mid [?] to hear the village clock striking. The bees in the flowers seem to reprove my idleness yet I ask myself to what end do they labor? Is there so much need of honey and wax? Is the industry of man truly respectable? Can it rightly reprove my idleness? I will not mind the village clock. It makes time for the dead & dying. It sounds like a knell; as if one struck the most sonorous slates in the churchyard with a mallet which are engraved on them – tempus fugit irrevocabile. I harken for the clock that strikes the eternal hours. What though my walk is [?] and I do not find employment which satisfies my hunger & thirst, and the bee probing the thistle & loading himself with honey & wax seems better employed than I, my idleness is better than his industry. I would rather that my spirit hunger & thirst than it forget its own wants in satisfying the hunger & thirst of the body.

“I would fain hunger & thirst after life forever & rise from the present enjoyment unsatisfied. I feel the necessity of treating myself with more respect than I have done – of washing myself more religiously in the ponds and streams if only for a symbol



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of our inward cleansing & refreshment – of eating and drinking more abstemiously and with more discrimination of savors – recruiting myself for more and worthier labor. There are certain things which only senses refined and purified may take cognizance of – May such senses be mine! O that I might truly worship my own body as the worthiest temple of God – bow down with reverence to his image graven in it – and so love and reverence the very persons of my friends. May I love and revere myself above all the gods that men have ever invented, and never let the vestal fire go out in my senses.

Comment is mute in the presence of such declamation.



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1993

According to Anne McGrath, “Not long ago I started up Cambridge Turnpike and was surprised and pleased to see that the honeymoon house [of [Ellery Channing](#) and his bride [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) *circa* 1843] had been painted deep blue with a large red heart at the base of the wall that faces the Emerson home. What would the Sage of Concord say?”



[Harmon D. Smith](#)'s “[Ellery Channing](#): The Turning Point,” [The Concord Saunterer](#), 1993, New Series, Volume 1, Number 1



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1997

December 14, Sunday: The following letter appeared in the New York Times:

No Echoes of Thoreau in Unabom Case

To the Editor:

It is not only Henry David Thoreau's lack of explosives that distinguishes him from Theodore J. Kaczynski, the suspect in the Unabom case (Week in Review, Dec. 7). After "Walden," Thoreau wrote "Civil Disobedience," which inspired the nonviolent strategies of Mohandas K. Gandhi, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and others intent on correcting injustices.

Thoreau valued obedience to one's conscience over allegiance to the state, but here's his formula for lawbreaking: "If it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law."

His method of lawbreaking was refusing to pay a poll tax, for which he was jailed until Ralph Waldo Emerson paid the tax. The story goes that when Emerson asked Thoreau, "What are you doing in there?," Thoreau responded, "What are you doing out there?"

STEVEN GEVINSON Oak Park, Ill.

The interesting thing about this letter, to me, is that this letter-writer is able to leap directly from:

- 1.) an unsubstantiated influence assertion and
- 2.) a falsehood in regard to the poll tax incident, to
- 3.) a conclusion that is indeed accurate.

The letter-writer's unsubstantiated influence assertion:

- 1.) is that Thoreau inspired Gandhi and King.

In fact, although both Gandhiji and the Reverend King did **affirm** such inspiration, we all know very well that political and cultural icons sometimes affirm such inspirations from other political and cultural icons not because it happens to be the truth but because of the influence which such positive and warm affirmations may have upon potential followers. Tolstòy also made such an assertion, and in the case of Tolstòy the assertion seems to have been false — it seems that Tolstòy's actual influence was from the Reverend Adin Ballou of Hopedale, Massachusetts and that after the fact he had substituted the name of Thoreau (because Americans recognized that name but did not know much about the contemporary activities of Thoreau's neighbor, the Reverend Ballou of Hopedale). Whether or not there was actual inspiration and influence from Thoreau to Gandhi and King is a matter of conjecture which we may investigate at length, but we need to bear in mind that when asked, Gandhi denied such an influence.

The falsehood:

- 2.) is that Waldo Emerson did, or would have, visited Thoreau in his jail cell.

At that point in time Emerson considered Thoreau's self-martyrdom to verge upon madness.



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This letter-writer is offering us not facts from history but material invented for a pleasant [stage play](#).

No one visited Thoreau in jail except his jailer, and actually we do not know who it was who paid young Thoreau's poll tax for him and thus interfered with the example of self-sacrifice this dweller in Walden Woods was attempting to create.

The true conclusion this letter-writer reaches:

- 3.) is of course that there are no echoes whatever, none whatever, of the Thoreauvian principle of civil disobedience, in this current [UNABOM](#) case. Anybody can live in a cabin, just anybody.

We can notice this absence of echoes very clearly by considering a reaction which Thoreau had late in his life to something offered by his friend [Ellery Channing](#) the poet, who lived across the street from him in Concord. Ellery had somehow suggested that one could sneak about being civilly disobedient without getting caught and punished for it, and Thoreau took that occasion to insist that Ellery **simply didn't understand**. According to Thoreau's own idea of his tactic of civil disobedience, it was **essential** –key, vital, unavoidable– that one perform one's acts of civil disobedience in the public eye without any defense and then willingly endure all of society's retributions whatever these might amount to. Only in such manner can one demonstrate that one's civil disobedience is motivated by pure altruism and desire for the public good rather than by selfishness and self-conveniencing!

Did the UNABOM serial killer/terrorist adhere to this Thoreauvian principle? No, he adhered instead to Ellery Channing's easy but mistaken notion of a self-serving maneuver. What would it take for him now to redeem himself by beginning to live up to Thoreau's hard ideal of self-sacrifice for a principle? –He would need at the very least to not only proudly confess and proclaim all his actions but also demand execution.



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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: August 18, 2017



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.



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Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.