

# *The Grasmere Journals*

2nd edition ed. Mary Moorman

---

## **Wednesday 14th**

William did not rise till dinner time. I walked with Mrs C. I was ill out of spirits – disheartened. Wm and I took a long walk in the Rain.

## **Thursday 15th.**

It was a threatening misty morning – but mild. We set off after dinner from Eusemere. Mrs Clarkson went a short way with us but turned back. The wind was furious and we thought we must have returned. We first rested in the large Boat-house, then under a furze Bush opposite Mr Clarkson's. Saw the plough going in the field. The wind seized our breath; the Lake was rough. There was a Boat by itself floating in the middle of the Bay below Water Millock. We rested again in the Water Millock Lane. The hawthorns are black and green, the birches here and there greenish but there is yet more of purple to be seen on the Twigs. We got over into a field to avoid some cows – people working, a few primroses by the roadside, wood-sorrell flower, the anemone, scentless violets, strawberries, and that starry yellow flower which Mrs C. calls pile wort. When

we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow park we saw a few daffodils close to the water side. We fancied that the lake had floated the seeds ashore and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more and at last under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful they grew among the mossy stones about and about them, some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillow, for weariness and the rest tossed and reeled and danced and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake, they looked so gay ever glancing ever changing. This wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot and a few stragglers a few yards higher up but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity and unity and life of that one busy highway. We rested again and again. The Bays were stormy, and we heard the waves at different distances and in the middle of the water like the sea.

# Extracts from *American Notes*

by Charles Dickens

## **A description of his trip on a train from Boston to Lowell in the USA:**

A great many newspapers are pulled out, and a few of them are read. Everybody talks to you, or to anybody else who hits his fancy. If you are an Englishman, he expects that that railroad is pretty much like an English railroad. If you say 'No,' he says 'Yes?' (interrogatively), and asks in what respect they differ.

You enumerate the heads of difference, one by one, and he says 'Yes?' (still interrogatively) to each. Then he guesses you don't travel faster in England; and on your replying that you do, says 'Yes?' again (still interrogatively), and, it is quite evident, doesn't believe it.

After a long pause he remarks, partly to you and partly to his stick, that 'Yankees are reckoned to be considerable go-ahead people too,' upon which you say 'Yes,' and then he says 'Yes' again (affirmatively this time); and upon your looking out of the window, tells you that behind that hill, and some three miles from the next station, there is a clever town in a smart lo-ca-tion, where he expects you have concluded to stop.

Your answer in the negative naturally leads to more questions in reference to your intended route (always pronounced rout); and wherever you are going, you invariably learn that you can't get there without immense difficulty and danger, and that all the great sights are somewhere else.

## **A visit to scenic Cairo, Illinois USA!**

I'm going to send this passage to the Cairo, Illinois, tourism bureau; they may want to use it in some of their promotional material:

The scenery as we approached the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, was not at all inspiring in its influence. The trees were stunted in their growth; the banks were low and flat; the settlements and log cabins fewer in number; their inhabitants more wan and wretched than any we had encountered yet.

No songs of birds were in the air, no pleasant scents, no moving lights and shadows from swift-passing clouds. Hour after hour, the changeless glare of the hot, unwinking sky shone upon the same monotonous objects. Hour after hour, the river rolled along as wearily and slowly as the time itself.

At length, upon the morning of the third day, we arrived at a spot so much more desolate than any we had yet beheld that the forlornest places we had passed were, in comparison with it, full of interest.

At the junction of the two rivers, on ground so flat and low that at certain seasons of the year it is inundated to the housetops, lies a breeding place of fever, ague, and death.

A dismal swamp, on which the half-built houses rot away; cleared here and there for the space of a few yards; and teeming then with rank, unwholesome vegetation, in whose baleful shade the wretched wanderers who are tempted hither droop, and die, and lay their bones.

The hateful Mississippi circling and eddying before it, and turning off upon its southern course, a slimy monster hideous to behold; a hotbed of disease, an ugly sepulchre, a grave uncheered by any gleam of promise: a place without one single quality, in earth or air or water to commend it: such is this dismal Cairo."

**Source A: *The Grasmere Journals* and Source B: *Extracts from American Notes***

1. Read again **lines 4 to 21** of Source A from 'It was a threatening misty morning' up to 'Mrs C. calls pile wort'. Choose four statements below which are TRUE. **[4 marks]**

- A. It was misty that day.
- B. They rested in a boat-house, under a furze bush and in the Water Millock Lane.
- C. The weather was cold.
- D. Mary Moorman saw black and green hawthorns and different flowers.
- E. They went into a field to avoid some cows.
- F. It was so windy that they felt breathless.
- G. They felt tired.
- H. Mary Moorman wanted Mrs Clarkson to walk with them but she turned back.

2. You need to refer to **the second column of both Source A and Source B** for this question. Use details from both Sources.

Write a summary of the differences between Dickens' thoughts about Cairo and Moorman's thoughts on the woods beyond Gowbarrow park. **[8 marks]**

3. You now need to refer only to the second column in **Source B**, Charles Dickens' description of Cairo, Illinois.

How does Dickens use language to show the reader that he was unimpressed with the scenery? **[12 marks]**

4. For this question, you need to refer to the whole of **Source A**, together with the second half of **Source B**.

**[16 marks]**

Compare how the two writers convey their different attitudes to extreme locations.

In your answer, you could:

- compare their different attitudes
- compare the methods they use to convey their attitudes
- support your ideas with references to both texts.