

“... NANTUCKET AND NEW BEDFORD ARE WITHIN OUR LIMITS ...”



“So long as the past and present are outside one another, knowledge of the past is not of much use in the problems of the present. But suppose the past lives on in the present: suppose, though encapsulated in it, and at first sight hidden beneath the present’s contradictory and more prominent features, it is still alive and active; then the historian may very well be related to the non-historian as the trained woodsman is to the ignorant traveller.”



— R.G. Collingwood, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939, page 100

The Islands offlying New England

Block Island	Mt. Desert Island
Boston Harbor	Nantucket Island
Dry Salvages	Naushon Island
Gardiners Island	Newfoundland
Isles of Shoals	Plum Island
Long Island	Shelter Island
Manhattan	Staten Island
Martha’s Vineyard	St. George’s Bank
Minots Ledge	Aquidneck Island

“An island always pleases my imagination, even the smallest, as a small continent and integral portion of the globe. I have a fancy for building my hut on one. Even a bare, grassy isle, which I can see entirely over at a glance, has some undefined and mysterious charm for me.”

— A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS

The last Indian of Nantucket Island, who died a few years ago, was very properly represented in a painting which I saw there, with a basket full of huckleberries in his hand, as if to hint at the employment of his last days. I trust that I may not outlive the last of the huckleberries.

—Henry Thoreau’s “Huckleberries”



MOBY-DICK; OR, THE WHALE: Nantucket! Take out your map and look at it. See what a real corner of the world it occupies; how it stands there, away off shore, more lonely than the Eddystone lighthouse. Look at it – a mere hillock, and elbow of sand; all beach, without a background. There is more sand there than you would use in twenty years as a substitute for blotting paper. Some gamesome wights will tell you that they have to plant weeds there, they don't grow naturally; that they import Canada thistles; that they have to send beyond seas for a spile to stop a leak in an oil cask; that pieces of wood in Nantucket are carried about like bits of the true cross in Rome; that people there plant toadstools before their houses, to get under the shade in summer time; that one blade of grass makes an oasis, three blades in a day's walk a prairie; that they wear quicksand shoes, something like Laplander snowshoes; that they are so shut up, belted about, every way inclosed, surrounded, and made an utter island of by the ocean, that to their very chairs and tables small clams will sometimes be found adhering, as to the backs of sea turtles. But these extravaganzas only show that Nantucket is no Illinois.

Look now at the wondrous traditional story of how this island was settled by the red-men. Thus goes the legend. In olden times an eagle swooped down upon the New England coast, and carried off an infant Indian in his talons. With loud lament the parents saw their child borne out of sight over the wide waters. They resolved to follow in the same direction. Setting out in their canoes, after a perilous passage they discovered the island, and there they found an empty ivory casket, – the poor little Indian's skeleton.

What wonder, then, that these Nantucketers, born on a beach, should take to the sea for a livelihood! They first caught crabs and quohogs in the sand; grown bolder, they waded out with nets for mackerel; more experienced, they pushed off in boats and captured cod; and at last, launching a navy of great ships on the sea, explored this watery world; put an incessant belt of circumnavigations round it; peeped in at Behring's Straits; and in all seasons and all oceans declared everlasting war with the mightiest animated mass that has survived the flood; most monstrous and most mountainous! That Himmalehan, salt-sea Mastodon, clothed with such portentousness of unconscious power, that his very panics are more to be dreaded than his most fearless and malicious assaults!

And thus have these naked Nantucketers, these sea hermits, issuing from their ant-hill in the sea, overrun and conquered the watery world like so many Alexanders; parcelling out among them the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans, as the three pirate powers did Poland. Let America add Mexico to Texas, and pile Cuba upon Canada; let the English overswarm all India, and hang out their blazing banner from the sun; two thirds of this terraqueous globe are the Nantucketer's. For the sea is his; he owns it, as Emperors own empires; other seamen having but a right of way through it. Merchant ships are but extension bridges; armed ones but floating forts; even pirates and privateers, though following the sea as highwaymen the road, they but plunder other ships, other fragments of the land like themselves, without seeking to draw their living from the bottomless deep itself.



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

MOBY-DICK; OR, THE WHALE (**continued**): The Nantucketer, he alone resides and riots on the sea; he alone, in Bible language, goes down to it in ships; to and fro ploughing it as his own special plantation. **There** is his home; **there** lies his business, which a Noah's flood would not interrupt, though it overwhelmed all the millions in China. He lives on the sea, as prairie cocks in the prairie; he hides among the waves, he climbs them as chamois hunters climb the Alps. For years he knows not the land; so that when he comes to it at last, it smells like another world, more strangely than the moon would to an Earthsman. With the landless gull, that at sunset folds her wings and is rocked to sleep between billows; so at nightfall, the Nantucketer, out of sight of land, furls his sails, and lays him to his rest, while under his very pillow rush herds of walruses and whales.



You can go Cape Air between Boston and [Nantucket Island](#), \$119 for the round trip, or take the Steamship Authority ferry out of Hyannis at \$19.50 for the round trip.

As [Henry Thoreau](#) recognized, [Nantucket Island](#) is part of the same landform as [Cape Cod](#):

There were these two roads for us -an upper and a lower one -the bank and the beach; both stretching twenty-eight miles northwest, from Nauset Harbor to Race Point, without a single opening into the beach, and with hardly a serious interruption of the desert. If you were to ford the narrow and shallow inlet at Nauset Harbor, where there is not more than eight feet of water on the bar at full sea, you might walk ten or twelve miles further, which would make a beach forty miles long, -and the bank and beach, on the east side of [Nantucket Island](#), are but a continuation of these. I was comparatively satisfied. There I had got the Cape under me, as much as if I were riding it bare-backed. It was not as on the map, or seen from the stage-coach; but there I found it all out of doors, huge and real, Cape Cod! as it cannot be represented on a map, color it as you will; the thing itself, than which there is nothing more like it, no truer picture or account; which you cannot go further and see. I cannot remember what I thought before that it was. They commonly celebrate those beaches only which have a hotel on them, not those which have a humane house alone. But I wished to see that sea-shore where man's works are wrecks; to put up at the true Atlantic House, where the ocean is land-lord as well as sea-lord, and comes ashore without a wharf for the landing; where the crumbling land is the only invalid, or at best is but dry land, and that is all you can say of it.



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

He was well aware that not only the coastline, but also the coastal islands, kept changing:

The sea is not gaining on the Cape everywhere, for one man told me of a vessel wrecked long ago on the north of Provincetown whose "bones" (this was his word) are still visible many rods within the present line of the beach, half buried in sand. Perchance they lie alongside the *timbers* of a whale. The general statement of the inhabitants is, that the Cape is wasting on both sides, but extending itself on particular points on the south and west, as at Chatham and Monomoy Beaches, and at Billingsgate, Long, and Race Points. James Freeman stated in his day that above three miles had been added to Monomoy Beach during the previous fifty years, and it is said to be still extending as fast as ever. A writer in the Massachusetts Magazine, in the last century, tells us that "when the English first settled upon the Cape, there was an island off Chatham, at three leagues' distance, called Webb's Island, containing twenty acres, covered with red-cedar or savin. The inhabitants of [Nantucket](#) used to carry wood from it"; but he adds that in his day a large rock alone marked the spot, and the water was six fathoms deep there. The entrance to Nauset Harbor, which was once in Eastham, has now travelled south into Orleans. The islands in Wellfleet Harbor once formed a continuous beach, though now small vessels pass between them. And so of many other parts of this coast.

It wasn't only [Thoreau](#) who knew this, of course, it was general knowledge even in that time.

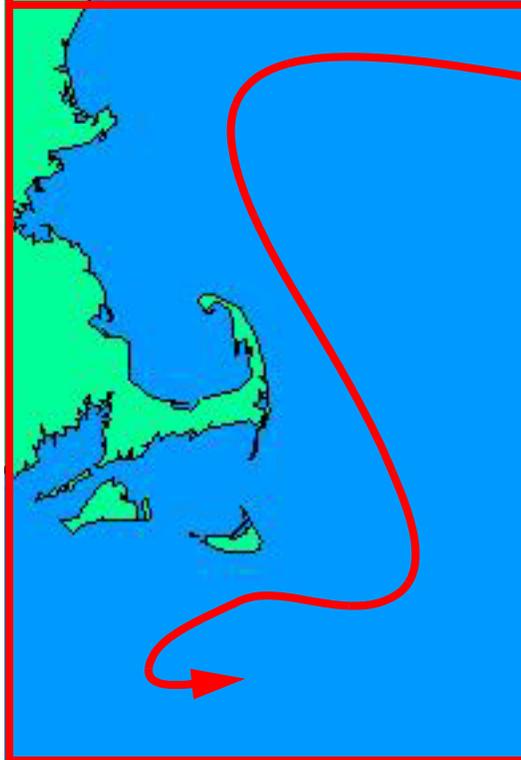
1593

[Thomas Mayhew](#) was born. He would grow up in a town called Tisbury in Wiltshire, a tiny place between London and Bristol to the west. His father would die when he was 21 and he would become a merchant in the town in which he likely had been apprenticed, Southampton, due south, one of the great seaport towns of England. One of the London merchants who was very active in the colonization of New England was Matthew Cradock, and somehow Mayhew would become acquainted with Cradock and, after having been in business for himself for about 10 years, accept an offer in 1631 to become Cradock's agent in the colonies.

[NANTUCKET ISLAND](#)
[MARTHA'S VINEYARD](#)

1602

May 14, Tuesday: [Captain Bartholomew Gosnold](#), in the vessel *Concord* commissioned by the Earl of Southampton in March to establish a New World colony, had sighted Cape Neddick (Latitude 43 degrees) on the Maine coast:



They skirted the coastline for several days and then on this day came to anchor in York Harbor, where they were greeted by “a Biscay shallop [a small fishing vessel used by the Basque of Spain on the Bay of Biscay] with sails and oars, having eight persons in it, whom we supposed to be Christians distressed. But approaching us nearer, we perceived them to be savages.” It is to be noted that even at this early point, one of the natives was attired in a waistcoat, breeches, stockings, shoes, and a hat, and knew some English words, and was able to draw a map of the coastline, on which he marked out the Newfoundland fisheries. Clearly, the New England coast had previously been being visited by trading or fishing vessels.



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

One of these intrusives, the [Reverend John Brereton](#), reporting on the voyage, would author a BRIEF AND TRUE RELATION OF THE DISCOVERIE OF THE NORTH PART OF VIRGINIA. The sponsor of this voyage, the Earl of Southampton, was also a patron of [William Shakespeare](#), and about three years later this playwright would be writing a little something called *The Tempest* — quite probably accessing, for inspiration, Brereton's accounts of Cuttyhunk.

RHODE ISLAND

BRERETON'S RELATION

[Brereton](#) described the *Wampanoag*:

exceeding courteous, gentle of disposition and well-conditioned, excelling all others that we have seen; so for shape of body and lovely favour ... of a stature much higher than we ... complexion ... dark olive; their eyebrows and hair black ... of a perfect constitution of body, active, strong, healthful and very wittie [intelligent].

May 15: [Captain Bartholomew Gosnold](#)'s bark *Concord* came within sight of the New World headland which they would designate "[Cape Cod](#), and sailed into Provincetown harbor."

CAPE COD: The time must come when this coast will be a place of resort for those New-Englanders who really wish to visit the seaside. At present it is wholly unknown to the fashionable world, and probably it will never be agreeable to them. If it is merely a ten-pin alley, or a circular railway, or an ocean of mint-julep, that the visitor is in search of, -if he thinks more of the wine than the brine, as I suspect some do at Newport,- I trust that for a long time he will be disappointed here. But this shore will never be more attractive than it is now. Such beaches as are fashionable are here made and unmade in a day, I may almost say, by the sea shifting its sands. Lynn and Nantasket! this bare and bended arm it is that makes the bay in which they lie so snugly. What are springs and waterfalls? Here is the spring of springs, the waterfall of waterfalls. A storm in the fall or winter is the tide to visit it; a light-house or a fisherman's hut the true hotel. A man may stand there and put all America behind him.

NEWPORT

TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

They would go ashore in a region of white sands before passing on around Nantucket Island. Following the coastline for several days, he discovered the large island “Marthaes Vineyard” (actually it seems that this name was originally applied not to the large island, but to an almost insignificant one near it that is now known as “Noman’s Land”). Then, passing around Dover Cliff, they would enter what they termed “Gosnold’s Hope,” which we now know as Buzzards Bay, and go ashore again at what they termed “Elizabeth’s Island,” which we now know as [Cuttyhunk Island](#), which is the last of the chain of Elizabeth Islands that divide the waters off



[Martha’s Vineyard](#) from Buzzards Bay. It would take them 19 days, late in May, to erect a fort and storehouse there, on a small island in the center of a lake that was some three miles in circumference, a place that it would be maximally difficult for the native inhabitants to approach by stealth. They would trade with the native inhabitants of this place for furs, skins, and sassafras. They would sow wheat, barley, and peas, and in two weeks the shoots would be nine inches tall and higher. Realizing at this point that the supplies which they had brought with them were not going to last until harvest, they got back aboard their bark to return to England.¹

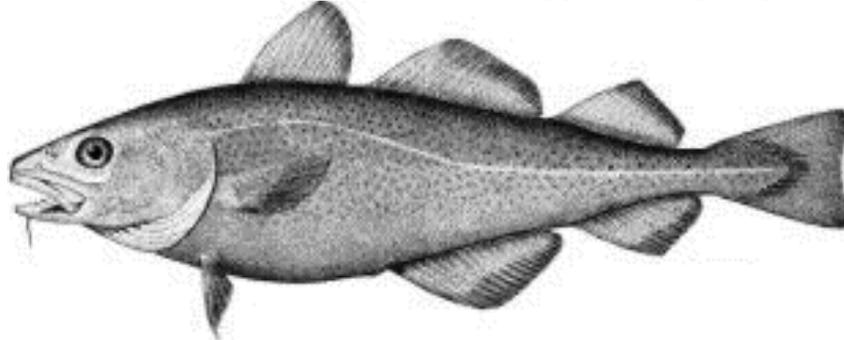
1. A notable account of the voyage, written by one of the gentlemen adventurers, the [Reverend John Brereton](#), would help in popularizing subsequent voyages of exploration and colonization of the northeast seaboard of America. Then there would be [Gabriel Archer](#)’s account some two decades later, after [Captain Bartholomew Gosnold](#)’s death.

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK



The crew knew that the local sassafras would do well on the market, since Europeans at the time considered this root a cure-all. Despite the accuracy of this estimate that their sassafras would fetch many a pretty penny upon their return, this 1st known attempt to establish a trading post in Wampanoag territory would fail.



Gosnold's expedition anchored in what would become Provincetown harbor and "tooke there a great store of Cod Fysshes":

... that "great store of codfish" which Captain Bartholomew Gosnold caught there in 1602; which fish appears to have been so called from the Saxon word *codde*, "a case in which seeds are lodged," either from the form of the fish, or the quantity of spawn it contains; whence also, perhaps, *codling* ("pomum coctile"?) and coddle, -to cook green like peas.

COD

He may have landed somewhere in the cluster of eight offlying islands now known as the Isles of Shoals without making an entry in his log to that effect.²

2. Other Europeans were along the coast of the northern continent in this year as well. Sir Walter Raleigh had sent Samuel Mace of Weymouth on a voyage to the Virginia coast of the New World to gather plant materials and to search for survivors of the Lost Colony. Captain Bartholomew Gilbert, [Gabriel Archer](#), and others were along the New England coast. Nova Scotia was being visited regularly by English traders.



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

Although he noted [Nantucket Island](#) in his log, he did not land.

[Captain Gosnold](#) noted a number of native American names on his chart and dedicated it to Prince Charles, 16 years of age (later King Charles I), asking that “you would please to change their Barbarous names for such English, as Posterity may say Prince Charles was their God-father.” Prince Charles substituted, for the placename Accomack on this map, the name Plymouth — which appears to be why, on some old maps, there would be a “New Plymouth” marking the location of the New Comers in the bay of Cape Cod and also an “Old Plymouth” marking no white settlement that we have ever known anything about. “Old Plymouth” would simply have referred to this native village Accomack which had been redesignated as Plymouth by the young Prince.

1604

Spring: A new French attempt was made at the colonization of Canada, by the [Huguenot](#) gentleman Pierre Dugua, Sieur de Mons, to whom a fur-trading monopoly had been granted. [Samuel de Champlain](#) and François Gravé or Pointgravé the Sieur du Pont went along on this one as well.



They sailed into the Bay of Fundy and landed at an islet on the southwest shore of Nova Scotia which they would name Port Royal. From this point Champlain would discover and name the “Isle des Monts Déserts.” The French, probably inspired by the Micmac name *aquoddy*, would call the region *L’Acadie*, meaning “place” or “region” but this “Acadia” had also an association with the honored name “Arcadia.” This trading post would persist until the French Catholic persecution of Huguenots began. From Champlain’s VOYAGES:

... a report had been made to the king on the fertility of the soil by him, and by me on the feasibility of discovering the passage to [China](#), without the inconveniences of the ice of the north or the heats of the torrid zone, through which our sailors pass twice in going and twice in returning, with inconceivable hardships and risks....

Champlain would map the east coast of North America from Canso to [Nantucket Island](#). He and Pierre de Monts would establish the 1st French settlement in North America at the mouth of the St. Croix River, the current boundary between Maine and the New Brunswick. Although it was close to both the Abenaki and Maliseet villages, the location proved a terrible choice, and the French would remain there only one winter.

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

Frozen and flooded, half the party would die of scurvy, and in 1605 Champlain and the survivors would move across the Bay of Fundy to the Nova Scotia's Annapolis Basin. The new site was in Micmac territory and would become known as Port Royal. Although this gave the Micmac a definite advantage, the French continued to trade with the Abenaki, particularly the Penobscot. The Penobscot would prosper as a result, and their sachem Bashaba would be able to form a powerful alliance which would threaten the Micmac across the bay. The rivalry over the French fur trade would aggravate earlier animosities and by 1607 would escalate into the 8-year Tarrateen War between the Bashaba's Penobscot confederacy and the Micmac and their Maliseet allies.



CARTOGRAPHY

Here is some further text and context from [Samuel de Champlain's VOYAGES](#):



TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

In the year 1496, the king of England commissioned John Cabot and his son Sebastian to engage in this search. About the same time, Don Emanuel, king of Portugal, despatched on the same errand Gaspar Cortereal, who returned without attaining his object. Resuming his journeys the year after, he died in the undertaking; as did also his brother Michel, who was prosecuting it perseveringly. In the years 1534 and 1535, Jacques Cartier received a like commission from King Francis I, but was arrested in his course. Six years after, Sieur de Roberval, having renewed it, sent Jean Alfonse of Saintonge farther northward along the coast of Labrador; but he returned as wise as the others. In the years 1576, 1577, and 1578, Sir Martin Frobisher, an Englishman, made three voyages along the northern coasts. Seven years later, Humphrey Gilbert, also an Englishman, set out with five ships, but suffered shipwreck on Sable Island, where three of his vessels were lost. In the same and two following years, John Davis, an Englishman, made three voyages for the same object; penetrating to the 72d degree, as far as a strait which is called at the present day by his name. After him, Captain Georges made also a voyage in 1590, but in consequence of the ice was compelled to return without having made any discovery. The Hollanders, on their part, had no more precise knowledge in the direction of Nova Zembla.

So many voyages and discoveries without result, and attended with so much hardship and expense, have caused us French in late years to attempt a permanent settlement in those lands which we call New France, in the hope of thus realizing more easily this object; since the voyage in search of the desired passage commences on the other side of the ocean, and is made along the coast of this region. These considerations had induced the Marquis de la Roche, in 1598, to take a commission from the king for making a settlement in the above region. With this object, he landed men and supplies on Sable Island; but, as the conditions which had been accorded to him by his Majesty were not fulfilled, he was obliged to abandon his undertaking, and leave his men there. A year after, Captain Chauvin accepted another commission to transport settlers to the same region; but, as this was shortly after revoked, he prosecuted the matter no farther.

After the above, notwithstanding all these accidents and disappointments, Sieur de Monts desired to attempt what had been given up in despair, and requested a commission for this purpose of his Majesty, being satisfied that the previous enterprises had failed because the undertakers of them had not received assistance, who had not succeeded, in one nor even two years' time, in making the acquaintance of the regions and people there, nor in finding harbors adapted for a settlement. He proposed to his Majesty a means for covering these expenses, without drawing any thing from the royal revenues; viz., by granting to him the monopoly of the fur-trade in this land. This having been granted to him, he made great and excessive outlays, and carried out with him a large number of men of various vocations. Upon his arrival, he caused the necessary number of habitations for his followers to be constructed. This expenditure he continued for three consecutive years, after which, in consequence of the jealousy and annoyance of certain Basque merchants, together with some from Brittany, the monopoly which had been granted to him was revoked by the Council to the great injury and loss of Sieur de Monts, who, in consequence of this revocation, was compelled to abandon his entire undertaking, sacrificing his labors and the outfit for his settlement.

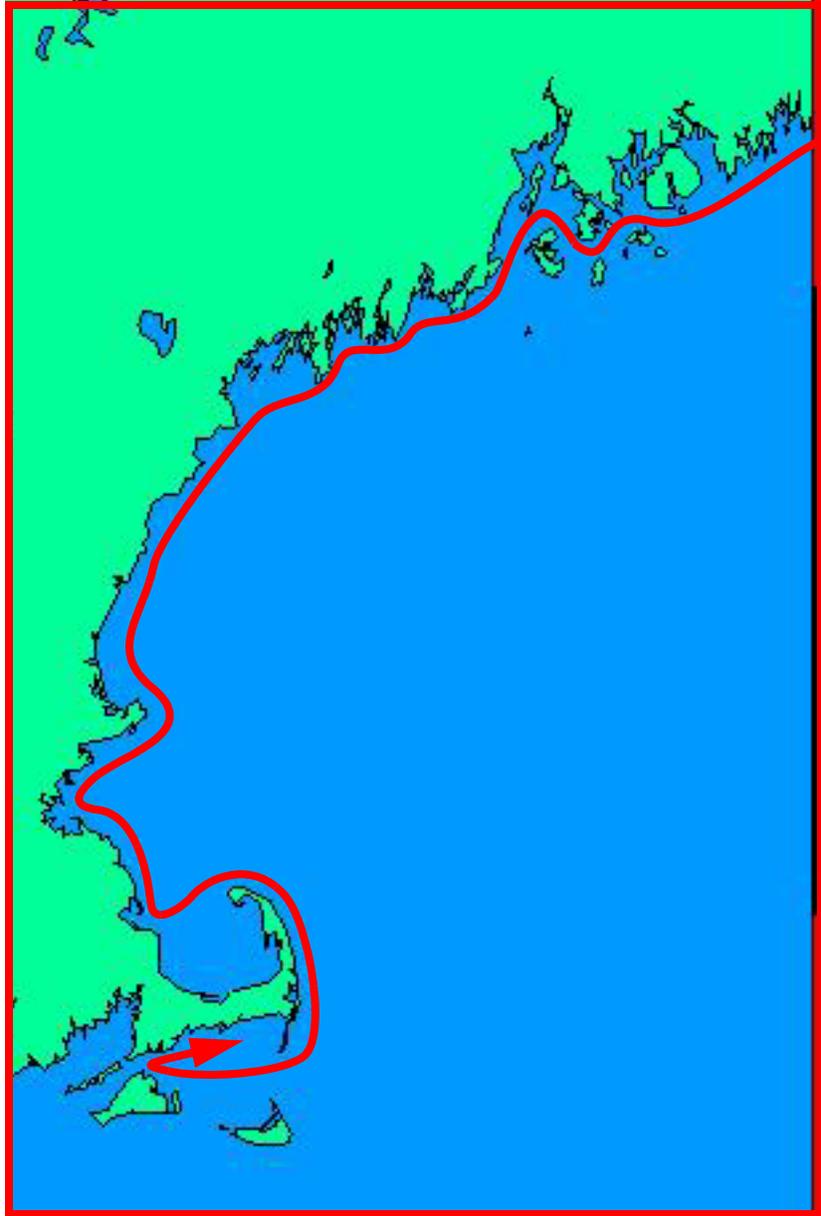
HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK





TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

But since, a report had been made to the king on the fertility of the soil by him, and by me on the feasibility of discovering the passage to [China](#), without the inconveniences of the ice of the north or the heats of the torrid zone, through which our sailors pass twice in going and twice in returning, with inconceivable hardships and risks, his Majesty directed Sieur de Monts to make a new outfit, and send men to continue what he had commenced. This he did. And, in view of the uncertainty of his commission, he chose a new spot for his settlement, in order to deprive jealous persons of any such distrust as they had previously conceived. He was also influenced by the hope of greater advantages in case of settling in the interior, where the people are civilized, and where it is easier to plant the Christian faith and establish such order as is necessary for the protection of a country, than along the sea-shore, where the savages generally dwell. From this course, he believed the king would derive an inestimable profit; for it is easy to suppose that Europeans will seek out this advantage rather than those of a jealous and intractable disposition to be found on the shores, and the barbarous tribes.



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

1605

[Sir Ferdinando Gorges](#) helped sponsor an expedition led by George Weymouth into northern Virginia, which is to say, to the mouth of the Kennebec River along the coast of the present day state of Maine, to find a place where English Catholics, undesirables in Protestant England, could found a settlement. James Rosier, one of his companions, wrote TRUE RELATIONS OF WAYMOUTH'S VOYAGE. The book briefly describes a voyage along the New England coast from [Nantucket Island](#) to Maine trading beads and knives for furs and tobacco. The traders noted an abundance of furs, of trees for timber, and of fish. They took five of the Maine [Narragansett](#) natives for exhibit in England.

Three of these five exhibits would be for a period in the custody of the governor of the fort at Plymouth, England, [Sir Ferdinando Gorges](#).

I observed in them an inclination to follow the example of the better sort, and in all their carriages manifest shows of great civility far from the rudeness of our common people.

(Most likely, these three Maine people would have accompanied the Plymouth Company's expedition to Sagadahoc in 1606.)

[Henry Hudson](#) may have used Weymouth's logs and charts for his own 1609 voyage.

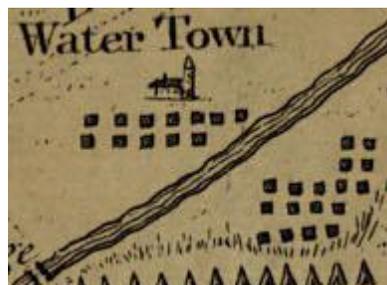
1631

Thomas Mayhew accepted an offer from a London merchant who was very active in the colonization of New England, Matthew Cradock, to become Cradock's agent in the colonies. This was only a decade after the Pilgrims had landed, first at Provincetown and then at Plymouth, Massachusetts. Mayhew was eventually to make his headquarters in Medford MA, where Cradock would have built for Mayhew a "greate stone house."



However, until about 1646, he would live in Watertown while working for Cradock.

MARTHA'S VINEYARD
NANTUCKET ISLAND



1634

Thomas Mayhew's first wife having died, he married again, with the widow of a Mr. Thomas Paine, Jane Gallion Paine. She moved to New England to join him with her children by Paine, Thomas Paine, Jr. and Jane Paine. Thomas Mayhew already had a son, Thomas Mayhew, Jr., who was then about 15. Later the step-brother and step-sister would marry, Jane Paine becoming the wife of Thomas Mayhew, Jr.

MARTHA'S VINEYARD NANTUCKET ISLAND

1641

Thomas Mayhew built the first bridge across the Charles River in Boston.

Lord Sterling, a representative of King Charles I, deeded Nantucket Island to Thomas Mayhew and his son Thomas Mayhew, Jr., whose family had first settled on Martha's Vineyard and grazed sheep out on Nantucket.



1642

Tristram Coffin, who would be the 1st Chief Magistrate of Nantucket Island as of 1671, arrived there in this year from Devonshire, England. (He owned in its entirety the adjoining lesser island known as Tuckernuck.)



1646

Until about this point, [Thomas Mayhew](#) had been living in Watertown while working for Matthew Cradock. Unfortunately, some of the business affairs Mayhew had established for himself and for Cradock had not proven successful and his English boss had become displeased with him. Nonetheless, Mayhew had been elected Selectman for Watertown, Representative to the General Court, and Magistrate. He had become also a miller and a merchant and bridgebuilder, building in 1641 the first bridge across the Charles River in [Boston](#). Despite all of these activities, Mayhew suffered financial reverses and was looking for new opportunities. At this time [Martha's Vineyard](#) and [Nantucket Island](#) were part of the province of Maine, which belonged to [Sir Ferdinando Gorges](#) who had received it from the King, Charles I. But title was a little unclear because the King had also given to Lord Stirling the title to Long Island, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket Island. Neither Gorges nor Lord Stirling had much interest in Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard nor were they concerned about the conflict in their titles. And so Mayhew, eager to leave his troubles behind, set out to acquire the title. He sought title from both of these gentlemen, so that there could be no disputing his own control over the two islands.

These presents doth witness that I, James Forrett, Gentleman, who was sent over into these Parts of America By the honourable the Lord Sterling with a commission for the ordering and Disposing of all the Island that Lyeth Between Cape Cod hudsons river and hath better unto confirmed his agency without any consideration, Do hereby Grant unto Thomas Mayhew of Watertown, merchant, and to Thomas Mayhew his son, free Liberty and full power to them and their associates to Plant and inhabit upon Nantuckett and two other small Islands adjacent, and to enjoy the said Islands to them their heirs & assigns forever, provided that the said Thomas Mayhew and Thomas Mayhew his son or either of them or their associates Do Render and Pay yearly unto the honourable the Lord Sterling, his heirs or assigns such an acknowledgement as shall be thought tt [?] by John Winthrop, Esq, the elder or any two magistrates in Massachusetts Bay Being chosen for that end and purpose by the honourable the Lord Sterling or his Deputy and By the said Thomas Mayhew his son or associates: it is agreed that the government that the said Thomas Mayhew and Thomas Mayhew his son and their associates shall set up shall Be such as is now established in the Massachusetts aforesaid, and that the said Thomas Mayhew & Thomas Mayhew his son and their associates shall have as much privilege touching their planting Inhabiting and enjoying of all and evry part of the Premises as By the patent is granted to the Patent of the Massachusetts aforesaid and their associates. In witness hereof I the said James Forrett have hereunto sett my hand and seal this 13th Day of October, 1641.
JAMES FORRETT.
Signed Sealed and Delivered in the presence of
Robert
Nicholas Davison 2
Richard Stileman 3

In a second instrument which he drew up, James Forrett added "Martin's" Vineyard and the Elizabeth Islands, and authorized the grantees to plant upon and inhabit those parts, as follows:

Whereas By virtue of a commission from the Lord Sterling, James



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

Forrett, Gentleman, hath granted Liberty and full Power unto Thomas Mayhew of Watertown, merchant, and Thomas Mayhew his son, and their associates to Plant the Island of Nantucket according to the article In a deed to that purpose expressed: Now for as much as the said Island hath not Been yett whole surrendered whereby it may appear that Comfortable accomodations for themselves and their associates will be found there, this therefore shall serve to testifye that I, the said James Forrett, by virtue of my said commission, Do hereby grant unto the said Thomas Mayhew and Thomas Mayhew his son and their associates, as much. to plant upon Martins Vinyard and Elizabeth Isles as they have by virtue heretofore of the Deed granted unto them for Nantuckett as therein plainly In all considerations Both on the Right honourable the Lord Sterling's part and on the said Thomas Mayhew & Thomas Mayhew his son and their associates Doth appear In Witness whereof I, the said James Forrett have hereunto sett my hand the 3rd Day of October, Annoque Domini 1641.

JAMES FORRETT.

Signed and delivered

In Presence of us

John X Vahane.

Garret Church.

his

mark

However, even this was not entirely satisfactory, since still it ignored Sir Ferdinando Gorges's claim and so he concluded to "make assurance doubly sure" by securing the rights as well from the Gorges interests; and two days later the following instrument, executed by Richard Vines, authorized the elder Mayhew to "plant and inhabit upon the Island Capawok alias Martins Vineyard," as set forth in the following copy:

I, Richard Vines of Saco, Gentleman, Steward General for Sir Ferdinando Gorges, Knight and Lord Proprietor of the Province of Maine and the Islands of Cappawok and Nautican, Do by these presents give full power and authority unto Thomas Mayhew, Gentleman, his agents and associates to plant and Inhabit upon the Islands Capawok alias Martins Vinyard with all privileges and Rights thereunto belonging to enjoy the premises to himself heirs and associates forever, yielding and Paying unto the said Ferdinando Gorges, his heirs and assigns annually, or two Gentlemen Independently By each of them chosen Shall Judge to Be meet by way of acknowledgement.

Given under my hand this 25th Day of October, 1641.

RICHARD VI QES.

Witness: Thomas Payne

Robert Long."

This sewed up the deal. Being especially prudent, [Mayhew](#) also "endeavored to obtain the Indian right of them," going to the islands and negotiating for permission for he and his group to intrude. Mayhew interested some of his Watertown neighbors to join him and among them, you will recognize the names of Daggett and Pierce, which are big names in present-day Edgartown. They made their first settlement there in what they called the East End where the Chief Sachem was Towanquatack. Initially, apparently due to the more violent contacts of previous decades, there was little contact between the indigenous red islanders and the new white settlers. Thus the Vineyard was no longer solely the land of the original Alquonquin Wampanoags, but had become home to Thomas Mayhew of Watertown, Massachusetts and before that Tisbury, Wiltshire. And so Thomas had become "Governor" Mayhew, the master of [Martha's Vineyard](#) and [Nantucket Island](#), his very own tight little islands. He would appoint a group of assistants to help adjudicate disputes between islanders.



1650

A dead “cachalot” whale washed ashore on [Nantucket Island](#) and the people there discovered its head to be full of the mysterious sea-substance that had been known for centuries as spermacetti and valued for the high-quality candles which could be made from it. Once this became known, the cachalot became known as the sperm whale and people began to wonder whether they might be hunted.

1653

The group of assistants to Governor [Thomas Mayhew](#) in the governing of [Martha’s Vineyard](#) and [Nantucket Island](#) included Peter Folger, who had moved from Watertown with Mayhew.

1658

[Sir Ferdinando Gorges](#)’s A BRIEF NARRATION OF THE ORIGINAL UNDERTAKINGS OF THE ADVANCEMENT OF PLANTATIONS INTO THE PARTS OF AMERICA, ESPECIALLY SHEWING THE BEGINNINGS, PROGRESS, AND CONTINUANCE OF THAT OF NEW ENGLAND. WRITTEN BY THE RIGHT WORSHIPFULL, SIR FERDINANDO GORGES, KNIGHT AND GOVERNOUR OF THE FORT AND ISLAND OF PLYMOUTH, IN DEVONSHIRE (London: Printed by E. Brudenell, for Nath. Brook, at the Angell in Corn-Hill)

THE PLANTATION OF MAINE

Also, his grandson’s AMERICA PAINTED TO THE LIFE, THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE SPANIARDS PROCEEDINGS IN THE CONQUEFTS OF THE INDIANS, AND OF THEIR CIVIL WARS AMONG THEMSELVES, FROM COLUMBUS HIS FIRFT DIFCOVERY, TO THEFE LATER TIMES. AS ALSO, OF THE ORIGINAL UNDERTAKINGS OF THE ADVANCEMENT OF PLANTATIONS INTO THOFE PARTS; WITH A PERFECT RELATION OF OUR ENGLIFH DIFCOVERIES, FHEWING THEIR BEGINNING, PROGREFS AND CONTINUANCE, FROM THE YEAR 1628. TO 1658. DECLARING THE FORMS OF THEIR GOVERNMENT, POLICIES, RELIGIONS, MANERS, CUFTOMS, MILITARY DIFCIPLINE, WARS WITH THE INDIANS, THE COMMODITIES OF THEIR COUNTRIES, A DEFCRIPTION OF THEIR TOWNS AND HAVENS, THE INCREASE OF THEIR TRADING, WITH THE NAMES OF THEIR GOVERNORS AND MAGIFTRATES. MORE EFPECIALLY, AN ABFOLUTE NARRATIVE OF THE NORTH PARTS OF AMERICA, AND OF THE DIFCOVERIES AND PLANTATIONS OF OUR ENGLIFH IN VIRGINIA, NEW-ENGLAND, AND BERBADOES (LONDON, PRINTED FOR NATH. BROOK AT THE ANGEL IN CORNHIL), including his own “A Brief Description of Laconia, a Province in New England.”

THE LACONIA PROVINCE

Governor [Thomas Mayhew](#) of [Martha’s Vineyard](#) and [Nantucket Island](#), perhaps frustrated with the opinions

AMERICA

Painted to the Life.

THE TRUE
HISTORY
OF

The Spaniards Proceedings in the Conquests of the
INDIANS, and of their Civil Wars among them-
selves, from **COLUMBUS** his first Discovery,
to these later Times.

AS ALSO,

Of the Original Undertakings of the Advancement of
Plantations into those parts;

With a perfect Relation of our English Discoveries, shewing
their Beginning, Progress and Continuance, from the Year
1628. to 1658. Declaring the Forms of their Govern-
ment, Policies, Religions, Maners, Customs, Military Disci-
pline, Wars with the *Indians*, the Commodities of their
Countries, a Description of their Towns and Havens,
the Increase of their Trading, with the Names of
their Governors and Magistrates.

More especially, an absolute *Narrative* of the North
parts of *America*, and of the Discoveries and
Plantations of our English in

Virginia, New-England, and Barbadoes,

Publisht by **FERDINANDO GORGES**, Esq;

A Work now at last exposed for the publick good, to stir up the Heroick and
Active Spirits of these times, to benefit their Countrey, and Eternize
their Names by such Honorable Attempts.

For the Readers clearer understanding of the Countreys, they are lively
described in a compleat and exquisite Map.

Ovid. *Auri sacra fames quid non*—



of other islanders as to his governing of things, abolished his various assistant positions and declared himself Magistrate. This dismissal, along with his increasing rejection of Puritanism in favor of Baptism (or Anabaptism as it was then called) would lead his former assistant Peter Folger to leave the Vineyard in 1662 and settle in [Portsmouth, Rhode Island](#). From this point forward, Magistrate Mayhew's undiluted authority would be a source of island tension he would need to quell. The source for Mayhew's authority, which had originally been [Sir Ferdinando Gorges](#) but had then become Stirling, had by this point become the Duke of York, courtesy of Charles II. This royal authority which had heretofore been unasserted over Mayhew now became something of a thorn in Mayhew's side as the Duke, through his agent in New-York, Colonel Francis Lovelace, interceded in various island affairs. Mayhew would frequently ignore instructions received from the Colonel, or let them lay dormant on his desk before replying many months later.

1662

Peter Folger left [Martha's Vineyard](#) and settled in [Rhode Island](#). He would last only a short time in [Portsmouth](#), quickly accepting an offer from Tristram Coffin to come to [Nantucket Island](#) where, in exchange for land, he would teach and interpret the Wampanoag language for the new settlement there.

During this year or early the following year, Ann Starbuck, the 1st white child born on the island, was born to Mary Coffin Starbuck, who would become a convert to [Quakerism](#).

1667

August 15, Thursday: Abiah Folger (the mother of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born on [Nantucket Island](#), the ninth and last child of Peter Folger, a schoolmaster and a miller, and Mary Morrils Folger.³

1671

July 6, Monday: Magistrate [Thomas Mayhew](#) had been summoned from [Martha's Vineyard](#) to New-York for a conference at Fort James. He had brought with him as an assistant his 23 year-old grandson, Matthew Mayhew. Mayhew apparently handled the Duke to his advantage, for when he would leave New-York, he would carry with him the extraordinary title of Governor for Life. Despite the new grandeur of his title, the residents of the Martha's Vineyard and [Nantucket Island](#) still would resist Mayhew's assertion of unconditional authority.

3. Ben, worlds apart in attitude, would be distantly related by blood to Friend [Lucretia Mott](#) of Nantucket.

1673

The Dutch re-took control of New-York, and attempted to force Governor for Life [Thomas Mayhew](#) to abdicate his control over [Martha's Vineyard](#) and [Nantucket Island](#) on the theory that the "source" for his authority no longer existed (the area would revert again to English rule in 1674).

1674

 As part of the Treaty of Westminster, the Dutch returned Nieuw-Amsterdam to the English. Edmund Andros, the new English governor over the colonies of New-York and New Jersey, restored Governor for Life [Thomas](#)



[Mayhew](#)'s unconditional authority over [Martha's Vineyard](#) and [Nantucket Island](#). The Governor for Life promptly fined or punished many of his more prominent critics, and many left the islands. Governor Mayhew's "reign" was not to end until he died on March 25th, 1682. His grandson, Matthew, would have learned the lesson well, and would get himself appointed "Chief Magistrate" — a position in which he would be able to exercise nearly as total an authority as had his grandfather, but without nearly so great a hassle.

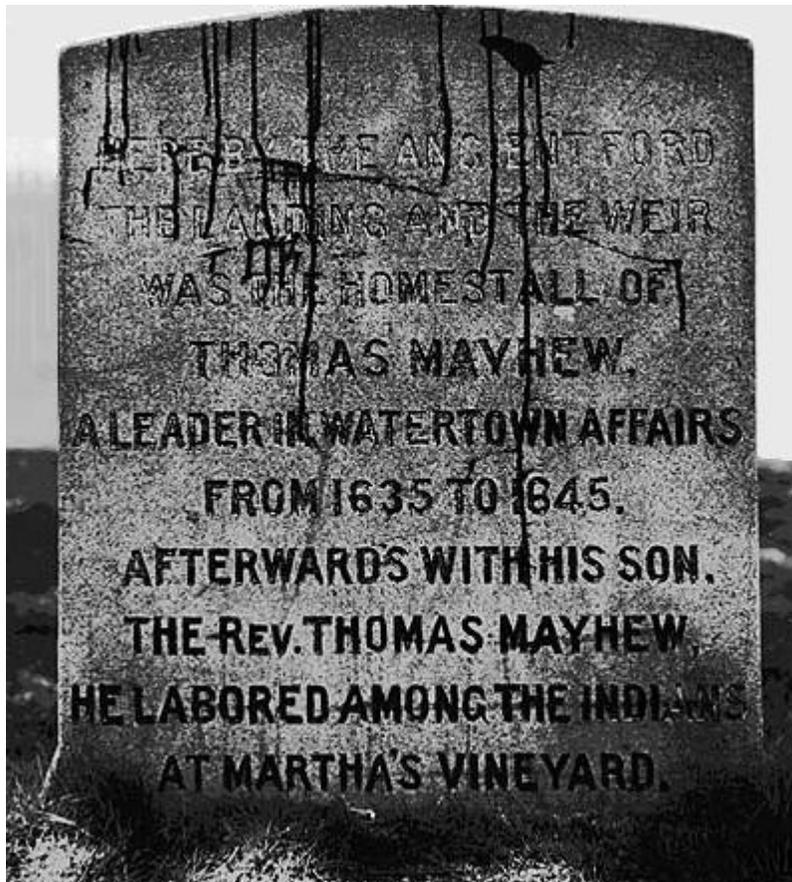
Edmond Andros

1676

A prison was established on [Nantucket Island](#), the first real prison in the American colonies. William Bunker was chosen as warden and his compensation was set at “foeur pounds, halfe in wheat, the other in other graine.”

1682

March 25, Wednesday: Governor for Life [Thomas Mayhew](#) died, and his position of control over [Martha's Vineyard](#) and [Nantucket Island](#) passed to his grandson Matthew Mayhew. The grandson, an astute observer, would forsake titles such as “Governor for Life” and get himself appointed “Chief Magistrate” — a position in which he would be able to exercise nearly as total an authority as had his grandfather, but without nearly so great a hassle.





NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

1690

The 1st whale killed by a white Nantucketer had been a gray whale (locally known as a “scrag”) that had become trapped in the island’s harbor. In this year, Ichabod Paddock was induced to relocate from Cape Cod to [Nantucket Island](#) in order to teach the Nantucketers something they were eager to learn: techniques for offshore whaling. In decades the Atlantic population of these gray whales would be wiped out.

1692

[Nantucket Island](#) and [Martha’s Vineyard](#), purchased from the Earl of Sterling by the Earl of York, and up to this point under New York’s jurisdiction as Dukes County, were granted to Massachusetts.

1698

[Friend](#) Joanna Slocomb Mott came to [Nantucket Island](#) to preach.⁴

1702

At this point the English population of [Nantucket Island](#), at better than 600 souls, was approaching parity in size with its [Wampanoag](#) population, which had not yet been decimated by disease. During the first half of the 18th Century, the English population of the island would more than quadruple, while the native population would dwindle away primarily as the result of disease and of depletion of food resources.

1704

[Quaker](#) meetings began on [Nantucket Island](#).

4. She would be the ancestor of Friend [James Mott](#).



1706

January 6, Sunday, 1705 (Old Style or Julian Calendar); January 17, Thursday, 1706 (New Style or Gregorian Calendar)⁵: [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s baptism by Samuel Willard at the Old South Church, Boston. Benjamin had been born at 17 Milk Street in [Boston](#) in the house that his father [Josiah Franklin](#) rented from Lieutenant Nathaniel Reynolds, on the south corner of Milk and High streets. Since Milk Street ended at High Street, there were only two corners at Milk and High. The Old South Church was just across the street, at the other corner, on the north side of Milk and High. The [Franklins](#) would reside on Milk Street for the initial six years of Benjamin's life, until January 25, 1712. He was the youngest son and the 15th child born to his father, and the 7th child born to his mother [Abiah Folger Franklin](#). Eleven brothers and sisters were living when he was born: five of Josiah's seven children by his first wife ([Elizabeth Franklin](#), born during 1678; [Samuel Franklin](#), born during 1681; [Hannah Franklin](#), born during 1683; [Josiah Franklin](#), born during 1685; and [Anne Franklin](#), born during 1678); and six of the seven so far born to his 2nd wife, Abiah, who came from a family of [Nantucket Island](#) Puritans ([John Franklin](#), born during 1690; [Peter Franklin](#), born during 1692; [Mary Franklin](#), born during 1694; [James Franklin](#), born during 1697; [Sarah Franklin](#), born during 1699; and [Thomas Franklin](#), born during 1703). Two sisters would follow, [Lydia Franklin](#) (born during 1708) and [Jane Franklin](#) (born during 1712).

July 14, Sunday: [Josiah Franklin](#) wrote to Peter Folger, Jr. about his experiments with rushes from [Nantucket Island](#) (where Folger lived) as substitutes for candles. He told Folger that in partial payment for the supply of rushes he might retain a "Book of Atheisme" (doubtless, this was a religious treatise in opposition to atheism).

1708

The [Nantucket Island Quakers](#) had increased to 75 adults. (At this point life was not boring enough on the little island, so they began to hold monthly meetings for business.)

1711

A meetinghouse for [Friends](#) was erected at the head of Hummock Pond on [Nantucket Island](#), not far from the Parliament House. This early meetinghouse was approximately 900 square feet.

5. This note was written on January 17, 2006: When Benjamin was born, the Julian calendar was still in effect in the English-speaking world. The date under that calendar was January 6, 1705. When we converted to the Gregorian calendar in around 1745, eleven days were added to dates in the 18th century, and the beginning of the year was changed from March 25 to January 1. Therefore, Ben's birth date was changed from January 6 to January 17, and his birth year was changed from 1705 to 1706 — i.e., 300 years ago today.

1712

Captain Christopher Hussey and his crew of Nantucketers were blown away from their usual offshore fishing grounds by a storm and while they were in these unaccustomed waters came across a sperm whale, at this point known to be valuable for its spermacetti, vital in the manufacture of the very best candles.



(This would lead Nantucketers toward more deliberate deep-water whale hunting.)

NANTUCKET ISLAND

1713

On [Nantucket Island](#), Friend Tabitha Trott Frost incautiously married again, to a Dr. Joseph Brown, despite the fact that her previous husband, a [privateer](#), had been considered lost at sea for only a few years. The absent husband, John Frost, would turn up shortly, leading to a charge of bigamy against the wife. Friend Tabitha had not been disowned when her husband became a privateer in defiance of the Peace Testimony and had not been disowned for marrying a non-Quaker, but this was her third strike and she was out! She would be [disowned](#) by the Nantucket monthly meeting, and would move with her new husband the doctor to [Newport, Rhode Island](#). This is on record as the first disownment ever, in the Nantucket meeting. Tabitha's mother would in shame no longer seat herself on the special bench for the meeting's elders.

QUAKER DISOWNMENT

1716

The [Quaker](#) meetinghouse on [Nantucket Island](#), erected in 1711, was expanded at this point so that it would seat the more than 300 [Friends](#) who desired to take part in silent worship. At this point some Quakers of the [Newport, Rhode Island](#) community were engaging in the "[triangular trade](#)," involving as one of its legs the bulk manufacture of rum and as another of its legs the [international slave trade](#),⁶ and some black [slaves](#) were present on Nantucket, where at least one Quaker, Friend Stephen Hussey, was a [slaveholder](#). During this year an Englishman, Friend [John Farmer](#), was making a missionary tour of the colonies attempting to persuade us that chattel slavery was "not in agreement with Truth." Winning the support of Friend Priscilla Starbuck Coleman, Friend John was able to persuade the monthly meeting on the island into a minute depicting enslavement as immoral. It was "not agreeable to Truth for Friends to purchase slaves and keep them for a term of life."⁷ This declaration made the Nantucket monthly meeting the 1st group of Friends anywhere in the world to disavow human enslavement, but it would seem that the island's Quakers would fall back somewhat from their commitment to racial fairness, for some sixteen years, while Friend John's success on the island would

6. Below appears the rotting hulk of the slave ship *Jem*, as of the Year of Our Lord 1891 at Fort Adams near [Newport](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#):



7. Refer to Friend Henry J. Cadbury's JOHN FARMER'S FIRST AMERICAN JOURNEY, published in Worcester in 1944.

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

not be matched by any great success on the mainland of the American colonies — in fact, in the Philadelphia meeting, he would be put under dealing (visited by an official committee and struggled with), and he would, eventually, be publicly [disowned](#) by the Friends. Furthermore, the Friends in England would honor the American [disownment](#), so that Friend John would come to be regarded as troublesome on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

Flushing [Quakers](#) who would speak out against slavery would include Friend Horseman Mullenix and Friend Matthew Franklin, who would come with another antislavery Friend John, an American one, Friend [John Woolman](#) (not yet born), when he would travel on Paumanok Long Island and visit their monthly meeting to speak against [slavery](#).



Costumes of Philadelphia Quakers



1717

The 2d disownment in the [Nantucket Island](#) monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) occurred when Friend Stephen Hussey and Friend Stephen Coffin, Jr. became embroiled in a dispute over the ownership of some land. Rather than follow the established practice, that such disputes were to be resolved by the meeting rather than by resort to civil courts, Friend Hussey took the case to law. He even would have some of the [Quaker](#) selectmen taken under arrest. A Quaker elder, Jethro Starbuck, would be appointed to mediate, and when this mediation would not be successful, Friend Hussey would be [disowned](#). The disownment would occur during Hussey's 82d year.

QUAKER DISOWNMENT

The old [Quaker](#) would send his son George to study the law at Harvard College, the intent being to achieve the destruction of the Nantucket Proprietary that had ruled against him, but this son would be expelled from Harvard — after having, crime of all crimes, been discovered during an election-day revel attired as a woman.

1728

The [Nantucket Island Quakers](#), which in 1708 had numbered 75 adults, at this point numbered 359 adults.

1732

The issue of race slavery had been submerged among the Quakers on [Nantucket Island](#) for some sixteen years after the visit of [Friend](#) John Farmer, and the enactment of the initial [Quaker](#) minute recognizing human enslavement as “not agreeable to Truth for Friends to purchase slaves and keep them for a term of life.” At this point, however, Friend Elihu Coleman, the son of Friend Priscilla Starbuck Coleman, wrote a tract on the immorality of enslaving fellow human beings, and got it approved by the Nantucket meeting. (It would not be until the 1740s and 1750s that a reform movement against [slavery](#) would sweep over the American Friends.)

June: The opening of the Great Meetinghouse of the [Quakers](#) on [Nantucket Island](#), where previously there had only been a 30X30 structure.

1734

Foundation of the community of [New Bedford, Massachusetts](#) on the banks of the Acushnet River. [Friend](#) William Russell obtained a certificate of clearness from his Dartmouth meeting, to marry with Elizabeth Smith, a Puritan, and the couple was married in the [Nantucket Island](#) meeting with the bride becoming a [Quaker](#) like her maternal grandfather. The newlyweds moved to the area that is now New Bedford, and would come to be regarded as city founders.

1738

The [Nantucket Island Quakers](#), which in 1708 had numbered 75 adults and in 1728 had numbered 359 adults, at this point numbered 580 adults.

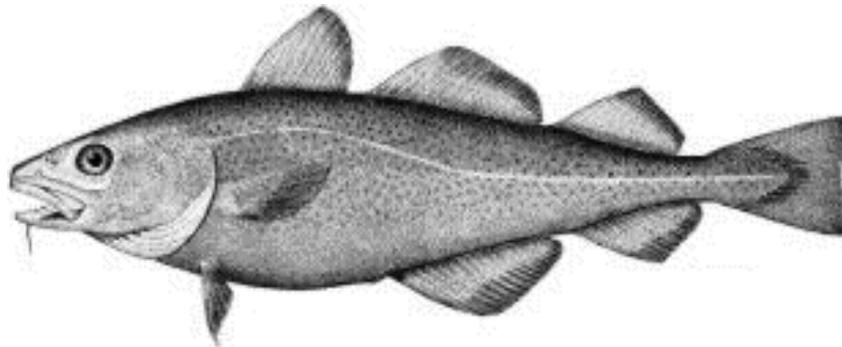


1747

The [Boston](#) Town Hall burned down, and with it the gilded [cod](#) that had been suspended from its ceiling. At the urging of merchant John Rowe, a wooden codfish would be hung in the Old State House at the head of State Street.



All of which proves that New Englanders are capable of great silliness.



...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 Island](#) 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.

1748

The [Nantucket Island Quakers](#), which in 1708 had numbered 75 adults and in 1728 had numbered 359 adults and in 1738 had numbered 580 adults, at this point numbered 832 adults.

1750

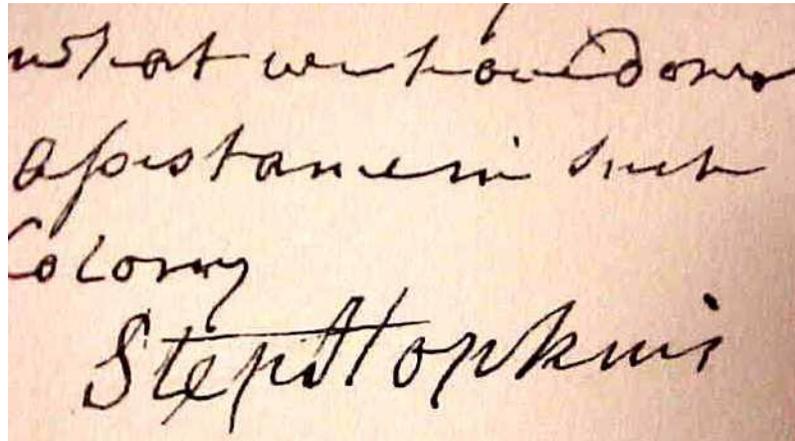
During the 1750s and 1760s the smaller sloops of 30 to 40 tons that had been the mainstay of the [Nantucket Island](#) whaling fleet would be gradually replaced by trying ships, ships large enough to house on-board tryworks. These ships would in essence become greasy, smutty, loathsome floating factories.

1754

June: On [Nantucket Island](#), a dispute had arisen over the use of the Sheep Commons of the community for the overgrazing of sheep. Four members of the [Quaker](#) community were placed under dealing for their activities, and of these four, one made a satisfactory apology and three were disowned. There was a claim of private ownership made, to at least a portion of the land regarded as held in common by the community. There was considerable question raised, as to whether it was proper for a religious community to so closely regulate the economic affairs of its members, or whether it would be more appropriate to submit such financial disputes to the civil courts.

1755

On [Nantucket Island](#), [Friend](#) Benjamin Coffin was almost disowned by the [Quakers](#) for dragging his feet in regard to the [manumission](#) of his three slaves. He would manage to avoid disownment, but eventually the former governor of [Rhode Island](#), [Friend Stephen Hopkins](#), more recalcitrant, would indeed eventually be disowned for such continued slaveholding. (Looking up the inside of his nose: this Hopkins dude, later, would be a signer of our [Declaration of Independence](#) — which means that he apparently was willing to tolerate freedom, justice, and the pursuit of happiness at least for **some** of us at least **some** of the time.)





"The capacity to get free is nothing; the capacity to be free, that is the task."

– André Gide, THE IMMORALIST
translation Richard Howard
NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970, page 7



1758

The [Nantucket Island Quakers](#), which in 1708 had numbered 75 adults and in 1728 had numbered 359 adults and in 1738 had numbered 580 adults and in 1748 had numbered 832 adults, at this point numbered 1,173 adults.

1759

A decision was handed down by Yearly Meeting in London, that the action of the monthly meeting of [Quakers](#) on [Nantucket Island](#) in 1754, of disowning three of its members for having grazed too many sheep on the island's common land, had been improper. It would not be considered "expedient" for a monthly meeting of the Religious Society of Friends to involve itself so closely in issues of property title and of land use. The disowned Quakers were to be reinstated in their religious community. The overgrazing of the Sheep Common would continue.

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

1761

➡ A Quaker counted a total of 1,027 Quaker families in [Rhode Island](#), including [Nantucket Island](#), and a total of 1,146 Quaker families living elsewhere in New England. Despite the continuing ownership of [slaves](#) by [Quaker](#) families, at this point those who traded in slaves were being [disowned](#).



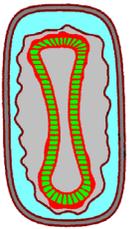
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1763

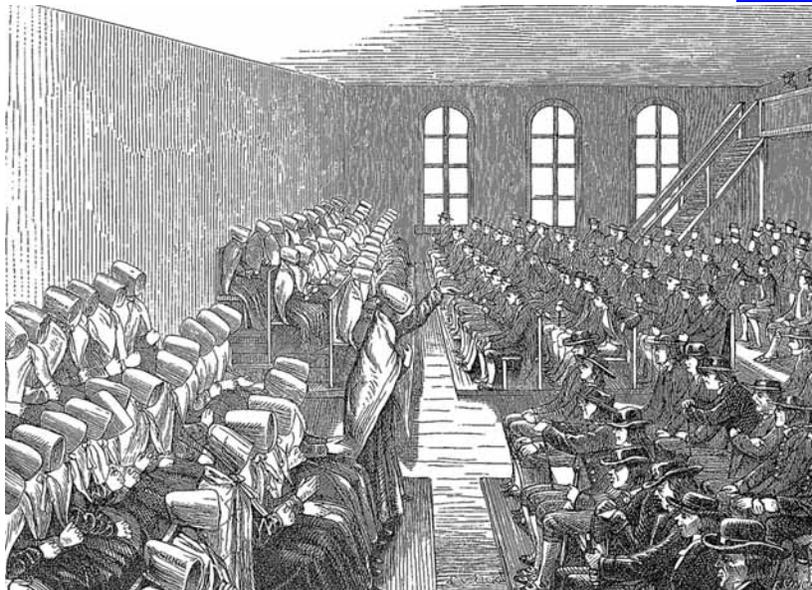
In this year Friend [John Woolman](#) wrote A PLEA FOR THE POOR, and warned the [Quakers](#) of [Nantucket Island](#) to beware of [small pox](#) inoculation and other such worldly practices that might display a suspicious lack of faith in God’s providence.



Those who inoculated their children against the disease, he recommended, should be disowned and driven from the faith community.⁸ (Ironically, in 1772, while attending a Quaker meeting in England, Friend John would die of the small pox.)



QUAKER DISOWNMENT



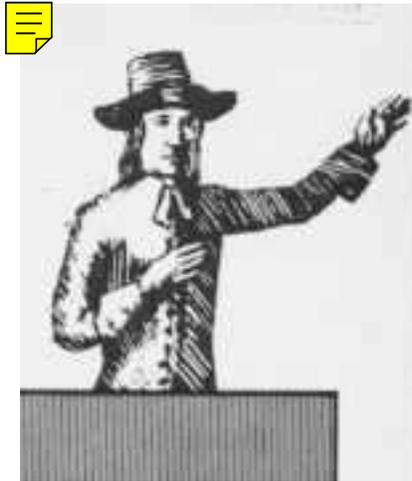
Here is an attitude Friend John expressed toward the frivolous arts: “There came a man to Mount Holly who had previously published a printed advertisement that at a certain public-house he would show many wonderful operations, which were therein enumerated. At the appointed time he did, by sleight of hand, perform sundry things which appeared strange to the spectators. Understanding that the show was to be

8. JOURNAL, Chapter IX 1763-1769 “Account of John Smith’s Advice and of the Proceeding of a Committee at the Yearly Meeting in 1764. Contemplations on the Nature of True Wisdom. Visit to the Families of Friends at Mount Holly, Mansfield, and Burlington, and to the Meetings on the Sea-Coast from Cape May towards Squan. Some Account of Joseph Nichols and his Followers. On the different State of the first Settlers in Pennsylvania who depended on their own Labour, compared with those of the Southern Provinces who kept Negroes. Visit to the Northern Parts of New Jersey and the Western Parts of Maryland and Pennsylvania, also to the Families of Friends at Mount Holly and several Parts of Maryland. Further Considerations on Keeping Slaves, and his Concern for having been a Party to the Sale of One. Thoughts on Friends exercising Offices in Civil Government.”

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

repeated the next night, and that the people were to meet about sunset, I felt an exercise on that account. So I went to the public-house in the evening, and told the man of the house that I had an inclination to spend a part of the evening there; with which he signified that he was content. Then, sitting down by the door, I spoke to the people in the fear of the Lord, as they came together, concerning this show, and laboured to convince them that their thus assembling to see these sleight-of-hand tricks, and bestowing their money to support men who, in that capacity, were of no use to the world, was contrary to the nature of the Christian religion. One of the company endeavoured to show by arguments the reasonableness of their proceedings herein; but after considering some texts of Scripture and calmly debating the matter he gave up the point. After spending about an hour among them, and feeling my mind easy, I departed.”⁹



Winter: In an epidemic of unknown nature, 222 of the remaining 358 [Wampanoag](#) of [Nantucket Island](#) died.

9. “Religious Conversation with a Company met to see the Tricks of a Juggler” in *JOURNAL*, ed. Rufus Jones. Available online. A slightly different version is found in *THE JOURNAL AND MAJOR ESSAYS OF JOHN WOOLMAN*, ed. Phillips P. Moulton (Richmond IN: Friends United Press, 1989) 138f.

1764

The Greet Meetinghouse of the [Quakers](#) on [Nantucket Island](#) was again expanded, from seating 1,500 to seating 2,000, which would have been a majority of the entire population of the island.



1769

With the overgrazing of the common for sheep on [Nantucket Island](#) still ongoing, [Friend](#) Rachel Wilson arrived from England accompanied by [Friend](#) John Pemberton of Philadelphia, to attempt to achieve a final compromise and a reconciliation. It was discovered that some of the papers in dispute had clearly been forged, because “it appeared the opposite party’s papers were recorded by the same penman,” and this opened a path toward resolution. The charges against a [Friend](#) who had been accused of “surreptitiously getting a deed on record” were dismissed — and meanwhile the excess sheep were withdrawn.

1770

On [Nantucket Island](#), [Friend](#) William Rotch achieved the legal release of a slave named Prince Boston.

1774

In about this timeframe Hugh Finlay described the condition of the post in and around [Rhode Island](#).

FINLAY'S DESCRIPTION

The geographer to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Thomas Jefferys, created this map:



CAPE COD
BOSTON HARBOR

On [Nantucket Island](#), Dr. Samuel Gelston was administering inoculations against the small pox. The [Religious Society of Friends](#) there was searching out any [Quakers](#) who were receiving such inoculations, and disowning them for their display of lack of trust in the provenance of God. For instance, [Friend](#) Silvanus Macy, and [Friend](#) Benjamin Coffin's son Micajah, were disowned. There were so many disownments during this year that, at the suggestion of [Friend](#) William Rotch, a prominent businessman, there was a streamlining of the process of disownment. It would no longer be necessary to achieve a public reading of the charges prior to such an action.

QUAKER DISOWNMENT

1775

In order to be able to deny funds for the education of the offspring of disowned former members, the Men's Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on [Nantucket Island](#) began a "Book of Disownments." They searched out all the records of all the disownments that had taken place during the previous decade, to enter into this book.

QUAKER DISOWNMENT



TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

During the American Revolution there were some Americans who considered it necessary to guard the shoreline of the mainland, and [Nantucket Island](#), against seizure of property by British foraging parties based on [Aquidneck Island](#) in [Narragansett Bay](#). We don't know how effective this fighting was in protecting American property from the British, but Quakers of course refused to contribute to the cost of such protection, and therefore there were 496 cases of seizure of the goods of peace-testimony Quakers in [Rhode Island](#) by local revolutionary authorities. In 1778 the property thus distrained from members of New England [Yearly Meeting](#) by local American authorities amounted to £2,473, while in 1779 the total distraint rose to £3,453. For instance, here are some of the revolutionary seizures made of property of ancestors of [Quaker](#) families of [Providence](#) monthly meeting:

- In 1775, local revolutionary authorities seized a dictionary belonging to Friend Thomas Lapham, Jr. of [Smithfield](#).
- In 1775, local revolutionary authorities seized 5 pairs of women's shoes belonging to Friend Paul Green of [East Greenwich](#).
- In 1776, local revolutionary authorities would seize the fire tongs of Friend Stephen Hoxsie of [South Kingstown](#), as he was the guardian of John Foster but John had not mustered during an alarm.
- Between 1777 and 1782, local revolutionary authorities would seize 7 cows, 5 heifers, and 2 table cloths belonging to Friend Simeon Perry of South Kingstown.
- In 1777, local revolutionary authorities would seize a mare worth £30 belonging to Friend John Foster of South Kingstown.
- In 1777, local revolutionary authorities would seize 3 felt hats belonging to Friend John Carey of [East Greenwich](#).
- In 1780, local revolutionary authorities would seize a silver porringer belonging to Friend Isaac Lawton of [Portsmouth](#).
- Between 1780 and 1782, local revolutionary authorities would seize 29 boxes of spermaceti candles, 20 yards of white linen sheeting, 14 yards of kersey, 16 sides of sole leather, a 3-year-old heifer, and 2 stacks of hay belonging to Friend [Moses Brown](#) of [Providence](#).
- In 1781, local revolutionary authorities would seize 9 sheep and 2 steers belonging to Friend Amos Collins of South Kingstown.
- In 1781, local revolutionary authorities would seize 2 ox chains and an ax belonging to Friend George Kinyan of [Rhode Island](#), because he had not been appearing at militia trainings.

In addition to property seizures, in three cases a Quaker man who refused to participate in militia activities would be jailed. One of these men was Friend David Anthony of [East Greenwich](#). In each case the Friends would conduct an investigation to determine whether the person had acted in the spirit and manner of Friends, and if he had, would go to the General Assembly at [Providence](#) to petition the "tender consciences" of the lawgivers for his freedom.

Not all [Rhode Island](#) Quakers refused to participate in the civil unrest of the period but those who did participate in any way were always rigorously and promptly [disowned](#). Between 1775 and 1784, the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) would disown a total of 147 Quakers who had become involved in one way or another with the civil disruption. Among those [disowned](#) was, upon his own request, Major General [Nathanael Greene](#). (Less tolerance, in fact, was shown for those who deviated from the Peace Testimony than for those Friends who continued to hold slaves.)

[THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY](#)

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK





1782

The botanist Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecoeur,¹⁰ in his *LETTERS FROM AN AMERICAN FARMER* (Stone, ed., page 160), had some alarming things to say about women's use of [opium](#) on [Nantucket Island](#):

A singular custom prevails here among the women, at which I was greatly surprised and am really at a loss how to account for the original cause that has introduced in this primitive society so remarkable a fashion, or rather so extraordinary a want. They have adopted these many years the Asiatic custom of taking a dose of opium every morning, and so deeply rooted is it that they would be at a loss how to live without this indulgence; they would rather be deprived of any necessary than forego their favorite luxury. This is much more prevailing among the women than the men, few of the latter having caught the contagion, though the sheriff, whom I may call the first person in the island, who is an eminent physician beside and whom I had the pleasure of being well acquainted with, has for many years submitted to this custom. He takes three grains of it every day after breakfast, with the effects of which, he often told me, he was not able to transact any business. It is hard to conceive how a people always happy and healthy, in consequence of the exercise and labour they undergo, never oppressed with the vapours of idleness, yet should want the fictitious effects of opium to preserve that cheerfulness to which their temperance, their climate, their happy situation, so justly entitle them. But where is the society perfectly free from error or folly; the least imperfect is undoubtedly that where the greatest good preponderates; and agreeable to this rule, I can truly say, that I never was acquainted with a less vicious or more harmless one.

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)

As a Quaker as well as a researcher into the general past, I can think of a suggestion to make, a suggestion only, as to a novel line of research in regard to this revelation. Nantucket was from a very early point a [Quaker](#) center. And the Quakers of England had been in that era involved in the manufacture and sale of opium products. Nowadays we don't hear much of this, although we hear a whole lot about the involvement of certain Quaker families, such as the [Cadburys](#), in the manufacture and sale of a comparison product, fine chocolate candies. Someday I'd like to know whether any of those Quakers were making any sort of connection between the use of opium, a decided pacifier, and the Quaker Peace Testimony. I'm not jesting.

[THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY](#)

Lawrence Buell characterizes this literary effort thusly on page 55 and pages 127-8 of *THE ENVIRONMENTAL*

10. He was also known during his lifetime as Hector Saint-John de Crèvecoeur and, in the New World, as J. Hector St. John.



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

IMAGINATION: THOREAU, NATURE WRITING, AND THE FORMATION OF AMERICAN CULTURE:¹¹



America's first major work of literary agrarianism, Crèvecoeur's *LETTERS OF AN AMERICAN FARMER* (1782), ... begins with images of Farmer James's happy, thriving estate –the proper way of the new world, clearly– and ends with somber autobiographical reminiscence of the loyalist untimely ripped from that estate when revolution struck. Crèvecoeur's visions of agrarian prosperity in the middle colonies are not a homegrown American documentary so much as a European visitor's or immigrant's dream of what might be enacted, ventriloquized first through the letters of a model farmer writing to an English gentleman who had visited him, then in Crèvecoeur's more cosmopolitan authorial voice. We witness American culture and writing at the moment of being dreamed by the European mind. ... One sign of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s yielding that also presaged (and, through his influence, helped to shape) the whole course of American literary naturalism was the opening of a split between pastoral and agrarian sensibility in his work not present in early American literary naturalism. Crèvecoeur and the Virginia planters domesticated the pastoral ideal in an agrarian context, as did Jefferson's Yankee Federalist counterpart [Timothy Dwight](#). Thoreau, however, generally satirized farming as part and parcel of the soul-withering false economy of the work ethic against which he set his own ethos of contemplative play, which approached crop growing in a wilfully fanciful manner: "Shall I not rejoice also at the abundance of the weeds whose seeds are the granary of the birds?" (*WALDEN* 166). His favorite metaphor for necessary labor was the myth of Apollo tending the flocks of King Admetus (*WALDEN* 70; cf. *Journal* 4: 114) – a way of pastoralizing but spurning pasture duty at a single stroke. (It became one of his code phrases for days spent surveying [*Journal* 6: 185].) Thoreau's desire to imagine an actualization of the pastoral idea more as leisure than as work drove him more often to picture the countryman as a Colin Clout than as a Lycidas.

The *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*, which of course very seldom mentions Thoreau, has this to say in addition:

The passage containing his "melting pot" theory and answering the question "What is an American?" is widely quoted, and historians of the frontier depend heavily on his documented account of the stages by which the log cabin became the opulent farmhouse. Crèvecoeur also provides natural history essays like those of [Thoreau](#), descriptions of nature, Indian legends, poignant tales of the Revolution, and melancholy, sentimental stories of slavery and the disappearance of the red men. His charming style, keen eye, and simple philosophy are universally admired.

11. It is not clear to me why Buell here refers to him as Farmer James. Although he was known by several names, I was not aware that James had been one of them.



CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE

1791

July 12, Tuesday: [Eliza Ware Rotch](#) was born at Dunkirk on the coast of Flanders, a daughter of Friends Benjamin Rotch and Elizabeth Barker Rotch of [New Bedford](#), Massachusetts. The parents were [Quakers](#) originating on the whaling island of [Nantucket](#), who had emigrated to France in order to participate in the establishment of a tax-free whaling port. This family would need to escape to England due to the Reign of Terror, and so Friend Eliza would be educated in England.

1792

There were so many [Quakers](#) by this point on [Nantucket Island](#) that it was clear it was going to be necessary to construct a 2d meetinghouse, at the island's northern end.

1793

January 3, Thursday: On [Nantucket Island](#), [Friend](#) Lucretia Coffin received her membership in the [Religious Society of Friends](#) (that is, she was born on this date as a "birthright" member of a [Quaker](#) family).

A native of the Island of Nantucket, – of the Coffins and Macys on the father's side, and of the Folgers on the mother's; through them related to Dr. Franklin.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Born in 1793. During childhood was made actively useful to my mother, who, in the absence of my father, on a long voyage, was engaged in mercantile business, often going to Boston and purchasing goods in exchange for oil and candles, the staple of the island. The exercise of women's talents in this line, as well as the general care which devolved upon them in the absence of their husbands, tended to develop their intellectual powers and strengthen them mentally and physically.

LUCRETIA MOTT

AN 1884 BIOGRAPHY

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

 June: Friend [Elias Hicks](#) of Long Island visited the monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on [Nantucket Island](#).¹²

This was part of [Friend](#) Elias's 14th ministry journey. That summer he was traveling with the young [James Mott, Jr.](#), future bridegroom of the newborn Lucretia Coffin.

LUCRETIA MOTT



On this long journey, he had gone from the Jericho meetinghouse on *Paumanok* Long Island (still extant, pictured above) across the sound to Port Chester meeting, up the Connecticut shore to Stamford meeting, on up the shore to Stonington meeting, into [Rhode Island](#) to the [Westerly](#) meeting, up to the meetings in and around [Providence](#) and Taunton, back down and round through the [Newport](#) meeting and the [New Bedford MA](#) meeting to the Falmouth meeting, and at this point out to the meeting on [Nantucket Island](#). He would continue back up across Cape Cod to the Sandwich meeting and on up along the South Shore to the Scituate meeting, and on to the [Boston](#) area and the Salem meeting, and north to the Newburyport MA and Hampton and Dover NH meetings, and on to the Portland ME meeting, and beyond that crossing the “great river Kennebeck” twice and reaching to the Fairfield and Winthrop meetings, and then the Pittsfield NH meeting, and then back down into Massachusetts and to [Boston](#), visiting again some meetings already preached at and attending New England [Yearly Meeting](#), and then striking west presumably through [Concord](#), over to the North Adams meeting in the north-west corner of Massachusetts, and up through Vermont to the Sharon, Hanover, and Vergennes meetings, and up across Lake Champlain to the Grand Isle meeting, and then back down through Vergennes again to the meetings in Saratoga and Albany and Hudson NY, and then back home to Jericho by way of the Brooklyn meeting of New-York. Total mileage they would put on their horses during this traveling season: 2,283 miles. During this absence his child Sarah would be born, and the two traveling ministers by November had spoken at about 123 meetings.

It was at some point during this year that Friend Elias's young orphaned relative, [Edward Hicks](#) who had been taken into the Quaker household of David and Elizabeth Lewis Twining, having reached the age of 13, was being put out as an apprentice to the Tomlinson brothers, coachmakers in Attleborough.

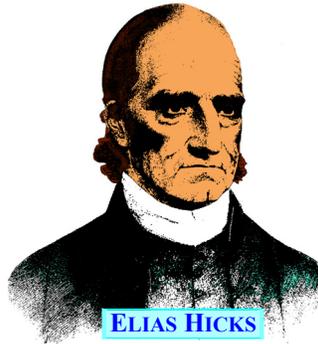
12. Other famous-name visitors to [Nantucket Island](#): John Easton, former [Rhode Island](#) deputy governor, [Metacom](#), sachem of the [Wampanoag](#), Frederick Douglass, and [Henry Thoreau](#).

1794

A Quaker organization was established on Paumanok “Long Island,”

“We, the subscribers, do hereby associate and unite into a Society of Charity for the relief of poor among the black people, more especially for the education of their children.”

Friend Elias subscribed an initial \$50.00 and this was, so far as is known, the first organized effort of the Society of Friends in providing scholarships for black children. Needless to say, the Quaker education being funded was segregated no more by gender than by race.



In this year, there having come to be so many Quakers on Nantucket Island, a 2d meetinghouse was established on Broad Street at the northern end of the island — where for about two years a number of families had already been meeting for worship in private homes. This new group would be known as the “Nantucket Northern District Monthly Meeting” and would be in existence until 1829 (when it would be laid down to the original Nantucket Monthly Meeting in the municipality of Nantucket).

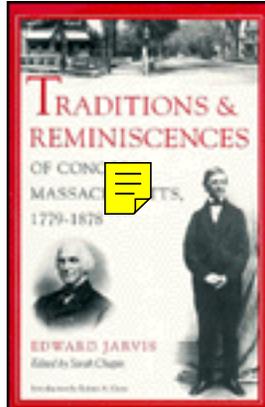
1799

Friends on Nantucket Island began sending off their children for a guarded education in their faith, at the Nine Partners boarding school in the Hudson River valley.

QUAKER EDUCATION

1801

→ Whale oil stood at an unprecedented £66 the barrel. According to Dr. [Edward Jarvis](#)'s TRADITIONS AND REMINISCENCES OF [CONCORD](#), MASSACHUSETTS 1779-1878, pages 74-5:



→ December 10: On this day, in the [Quaker](#) meetinghouse of Nantucket on [Nantucket Island](#), Massachusetts, Friend Nathan Comstock (birthright Quaker son of Friend Samuel Comstock of Gloucester, the south side of Burrillville, [Rhode Island](#) north of [Providence](#), and Friend Lucy his wife), and Friend Elizabeth Emmett (birthright Quaker daughter of Friend Edward Tillet Emmett of Nantucket and Friend Elizabeth Emmett his widow), “having declared their Intentions of taking each other in Marriage, before several Monthly Meetings of the people called Quakers in Nantucket, ... appeared at a public Afsembly of the aforesaid people and others, in their Meeting-house in Nantucket aforesaid, and he the said Nathan Comstock, taking the said Elizabeth Emmett by the hand, did openly declare as forthwith: Friends, I take this my friend Elizabeth Emmett to be my Wife, promising through divine assistance to be unto her a loving and faithful Husband, until it shall please the Lord by death to separate us. And the said Elizabeth Emmett did then and there in like manner declare as followeth: Friends, I take this my friend Nathan Comstock to be my Husband, promising through divine assistance to be unto him a loving and faithful Wife, until it shall please the Lord by death to separate us. — Or words of the like import. — And the said Nathan Comstock and Elizabeth Emmett, as a further confirmation thereof, have hereunto set their hands: She, after the Custom of Marriage, assuming the name of her husband. —

Nathan Comstock
Elizabeth Comstock”

SAMUEL B. COMSTOCK



TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

As far back as I can remember, in 1808 and afterwards, oil was coming into use in lamps. It was somewhat more expensive than tallow, and those who were supplied with tallow from their own beasts still used candles. Whale oil was used. This was coarse and gave an imperfect, dull light. The lamps were small and generally with only one wick. Afterwards those with two wicks were substituted. Lamps were generally of tin, japanned, which stood on pedestals more or less high but some had no pedestal, merely the lamp an egg-shaped cup with a projection at the bottom. Black tin was used at a later date and also glass. While I was in college, 1822-1826, I used two such lamps, each having two wicks. These four wicks only gave sufficient light for my study. Larger lamps, Astral, Solar, etc., were made in later years for parlors, larger rooms and on tables. Those had a better draft, burned more brilliantly and gave a much better light. Sperm oil was a richer source of light and was used by all who could afford it, a few years later than whale. Later, about 1830-1840, lard oil was used and was a good substitute for the fish oils and more economical. There were many kinds of burning fluids invented for lighting. Most of them had alcohol as a large ingredient and were very combustible. These were much praised by the manufacturers and sellers. They gave a brilliant light and were much used, yet they were liable to explosion. They took fire readily. Many accidents occurred – the glass lamps falling and breaking, the fluid taking fire, endangering the house, also the clothes of the women on their person. The vapor of this fluid, when exposed to the air, spread rapidly and would take fire, if in contact with a blaze. Some lives were lost in consequence. Nevertheless these fluids had an extensive use, until the coal oils took their places and the place of all other means of lighting in the country, excepting gas. About 1840-1850, Mr. Samuel Downes, a large refiner of whale oils, was convinced that ordinary coal oil could be purified and converted into a convenient and safe oil for ordinary lighting. After much investigation and many experiments by Mr. Merrill, his chemist, they succeeded in eliminating its dangerous and offensive elements and obtaining the very safe and brilliantly burning Kerosene oil. This is not only the cheapest means of lighting that has ever been known, but it gives a larger light than any material except gas, which can be used only in cities. Gas is very much more expensive than kerosene. Downes's kerosene is pure and safe, is sold by the barrel now, 1878, (1877 for 12 cts.) for 15 cents a gal., and at retail for 20 or 26 cents a gallon. A gallon of this oil will burn in an ordinary lamp 142-150 hours. A gallon of whale oil, costing 60 cts., will burn in an ordinary lamp with two wicks 31-33 hours. A gallon of sperm oil, costing 120 cts., will burn 30-31 hours. A pound of tallow candles, costing formerly 20 and now 14 cts., will burn 48 hours and give only about 1/15 or 1/20 as much light as the kerosene. The light given by kerosene, in [an] ordinary lamp is 12-14 times as great as that of a sperm two-wicked lamp. So it seems that the poorest of our people now enjoy 45-60 times as much light as the richest of our father and grandfathers [at] about the same cost. Kerosene oil gives a softer light, which wearies the eyes less than any other, and people are more comfortable as well as richer by this great and new blessing.



1802



September: [Samuel B. Comstock](#) was born on [Nantucket Island](#). His father was Friend Nathan Comstock, who had been born during 1776 in Burrillville near [Providence](#), a birthright [Quaker](#) ([Smithfield Monthly Meeting](#) in what is now [Woonsocket, Rhode Island](#)). The father had gotten married with Friend Elizabeth Emmett, a daughter of Friend Edward T. Emmett who had been born during 1782. He became a teacher in Nantucket Island and also a cashier at the local bank. In 1811, while their firstborn Samuel was about 9, the family would relocate to New-York where for 40 years the father would be doing a business in whaling products in a firm at 191 Front Street. Friend Nathan must have been remarkably successful, since after losing \$75,000—an extraordinary sum—in the failure of the business of Jacob Barker, he would manage to continue. This firstborn, birthright Friend Samuel, however, after having been a troublesome teenager, would on January 25, 1824, aboard the whaler *Globe*, disgrace himself by making himself the leader of a mutiny and by becoming a murderer. He would wind up being killed by another of the mutineers, with his body thrown into the ocean.

This couple, Friend Nathan and Friend Elizabeth Comstock, would produce seven other children in addition to their woebegone firstling Samuel:

2. William Comstock, born on April 24, 1804 on Nantucket Island, who would get married with Mary M. Davenport. At the age of 14 he would go along with his troublesome brother Samuel on the ill-fated voyage of the *Globe*, would refuse to take part in his older brother's mutiny, and after return would twice write the story of the mutiny (THE LIFE OF SAMUEL COMSTOCK, THE TERRIBLE WHALEMAN: CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF THE MUTINY, AND MASSACRE OF THE OFFICERS OF THE SHIP GLOBE, OF NANTUCKET: WITH HIS SUBSEQUENT ADVENTURES, AND HIS BEING SHOT AT THE MULGRAVE ISLANDS... / BY HIS BROTHER, WILLIAM COMSTOCK, published in Boston by James Fisher in 1840, and in addition an unpublished manuscript on the same events). He would produce a son, Augustus Comstock, who would become an author in his own right, and would die on November 20, 1882.
3. George Comstock, probably born in 1808, would also sign aboard the *Globe*, would refuse to take part in his older brother's mutiny, and would be killed by the natives of the atoll on which they landed.
4. Thomas Comstock, born during 1810, who did not marry and who would die in Brooklyn during 1855.
5. Phebe Comstock, born during 1812, who would die during 1820.
6. Martha Comstock, born during 1814, would marry first with Dr. Josiah Hopper and then with Robert Haviland, the widower of her sister Lucy Comstock, and would die in about 1892.
7. Lucy Comstock, who married Robert B. Haviland of New-York, and would die at the age of 33.
8. Elizabeth Ann Comstock, who married Joseph Comstock, son of a Dr. Comstock of Lebanon, Connecticut. The couple would have no children and she would die in 1860.

Friend Elizabeth Emmett Comstock would die during 1818 after creating the above eight children. Friend Nathan Comstock would remarry with Anne Merritt, a daughter of John Merritt of New-York, and the couple would add the following five children to the previous eight:

9. Nathan Comstock, born during January 1822 in New-York, who would be a lawyer in Brooklyn. He would get married on December 24, 1853 with Charlotte H. Cromwell, a daughter of Oliver Cromwell and Sarah Titus Cromwell. Charlotte had been born on March 31, 1832 in Canterbury, New York and would die on March 6, 1912 in Brooklyn. He would die on January 18, 1897 in New-York.



10. John Merritt Comstock, born in 1824. He would get married with Elsie W. Hoxie, daughter of Joseph Hoxie of New York, and would serve in the US Naval Office and also at the Treasury Department in Washington DC.
11. Louisa Comstock, who got married with Thomas W. Piggot of Manchester, England, would die in about 1891.
12. Mary Comstock, who got married with Dr. J. O'Brien of New-York — the couple would have no children.
13. Sarah Comstock, who got married with Theodore Moelling; in 1894 the couple would be residing in Germantown, Pennsylvania.

1803

 [Enoch Pratt](#) graduated from the [College of Rhode Island](#). He would study theology with Dr. Kirkland in Boston.

Friends on [Nantucket Island](#) began sending off their children for a guarded education in their faith, at the [Quaker](#) school of Friend Elisha Thornton in [Providence, Rhode Island](#). —Except for the ten-or-eleven-year-old who would become Friend [Lucretia Mott](#), for her family in the following year would be relocating from [Nantucket Island](#) to Boston:

In 1804 my father's family removed to Boston, and in the public and private schools of that city I mingled with all classes without distinction. My parents were of the Religious Society of Friends, and endeavored to preserve in their children the peculiarities of that sect, as well as to instill its more important principles. My father had a desire to make his daughters useful.

1804

→ The Coffin family of Friends relocated from Nantucket Island to Boston:

In 1804 my father's family removed to Boston, and in the public and private schools of that city I mingled with all classes without distinction. My parents were of the Religious Society of Friends, and endeavored to preserve in their children the peculiarities of that sect, as well as to instill its more important principles. My father had a desire to make his daughters useful.



LUCRETIA MOTT

→ July 26, Thursday: Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

26 of 7 mo 1804 I have just returned from our Mo Meeting which was held in town, the first Meeting was silent but I believe the masters presence was felt in it, & that being the substance itself is more to be craved than vocal communication. I think the business was transacted with unusual solemnity & weight

Wm Estes alias Francis was admitted to membership with us - Anne Greene laid before us a concern which had been long on her mind to pay a religious visit to some meetings as truth might open the way in Smithfield Quarterly Meeting, & the families of Friends in Providence Mo Meeting which was feelingly sympathized with & a committee appointed to take an opportunity with her & if it appears necessary to draught a few lines by way of certificate & bring to next Mo Meeting.

Abigail Robins on returnd to us the certificate she took last summer as credentials to perform a religious visit to friends in Baltimore, N Carolina & Georgia. She said, she had not much account to give of the visit & it had not been so extensive as she at first apprehended. two of the most distant Quarterly Meetings in North Carolina Yearly Meeting, she was prevented from visiting on account of her extream low state of health, & said that thro' mercy & favor she felt her mind released from the service - she said much weakness of mind had been her lot, but the Mountains were made to skip like Rams & the little hills



like lambs at the presence of the Mighty Gods of Jacob-
 Her accounts appeared to be satisfactory to the Meeting, & for my part I felt a degree of thankfulness on her Account. Since I came from meeting, have received a very acceptable letter from my esteemed friend Jonathon Gorham of [Nantucket](#) at the reading of which I felt much interested as it contains an account of their Quarterly Meeting-& other matters which give me to believe that he is a young man laboring to walk in the paths of Truth for which I felt rejoiced, & desire to walk in the service with him hand in hand.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1807



April 25, Saturday: In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal of having recently encountered a former school classmate, hardened, who “had just come on shore from a [Slave](#) Voige to the Coast of Africa”:¹³

TRIANGULAR TRADE

7 day 25 of 4 M / My mind still under livly impressions & tho' they lead me in the line of the Cross as to the natural part, desire to endure all with patience, if I can but insure to myself the presence of the Lord which is my delight to feel, but Oh my weakness. I'm afraid of falling. Help [?] me Oh Lord. keep me in the hollow of they all preserving hand. This forenoon H Almy called at the shop & after a little pleasant conversation, he appeared inclin'd to sit still, & I willing to join him therein. So after a pause which was attended with a good degree of solemnity, Holder was concerned to make a few remarks on the exellency of a pious life, & the wretched disconsolate State of such who have lived to old age without having conform'd to the dictates of truth, being favor'd from time to time with the visitations of Gods love in their hearts, & now when on the graves edge to look back on their past omissions & commissions thro' time not to feel the enlivning hope of peace & rest in the life to come, observing "The child shall die an hundred years old, but the Sinner, being an hundred years old shall perish" he concluded by observing "that tho' our trials might be Severe & our disappointments hard to bear, yet by faithful obedience we may experience a way to be made where no way may appear & hard things renderd easy & bitter things sweet." The above remarks appear'd to reach the heart of poor old G.W who was present with us, so that after Holder left us he appeard quite contrite even unto weeping.

This afternoon a young man whose initials are J.S called in with whom I had a little conversation, & tho' it did not turn



13. This may have been the brig *Three Sisters*, whose [slaves](#) would be auctioned at the US Customs House in October, or it may have been one of the [negreros](#) *Eagle* bringing a cargo of 180, the brig *Nancy* bringing a cargo of 94, the schooner *Nancy* bringing a cargo of 73, the *Neptune* bringing a cargo of 140, the *Factor* bringing a cargo of 85, the *Lark* bringing a cargo of 95, the *Concord* bringing a cargo of 48, the *Alfred* bringing a cargo of 84, the *Hiram* bringing a cargo of 105, the *Flora* bringing a cargo of 80, the *Ann & Harriet* bringing a cargo of 145, or the *Baltimore* bringing a cargo of 80 — that we know of. There were so many Rhode Island vessels still engaged in this traffic — it was like it was going out of style or something!



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

naturally on religious Subjects yet it was very pleasant. I believe him to be a young man who has retained a good degree of innocence, thro' a considerable exposure to the vices of the world We Sometimes meet with Some who, tho' they are not in membership with us, yet feel pleasant, & our hearts become drawn into nearness with each other As I believe was reciprocally the case between us. I could but contrast the difference between him & some of my other old School fellows, who in their Younger days were in a pretty good state of innocence, but since they have come to man's estate have run into the various wickednesses of the present day. My mind was not a little affected not long since at meeting a young man with whom I formerly went to School, & then was an innocent lad. he had just come on shore from a Slave Voige to the Coast of Africa, his countenance bespoke a mind exactly suited for the purpose he had been about, he looked so hardened that I could scarcely endure to look at him, & so affected my feelings that I have frequently reflected on his situation with painful sensations many times since

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

("There, but for the grace of God, go I!")



November 27, Friday: The federal Congress returned, on this day, to the hard task of considering the possibility of the issuance of a clarification to Section 8 of their recent "Act to prohibit the importation of Slaves into any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States, from and after the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eight." This section had given permission for the continued buying and selling of slaves inside the borders of this nation. Nothing would come of their attempt at a clarification of this section.

STATUTES AT LARGE, II. 426. For proceedings in Senate, see SENATE JOURNAL (reprint of 1821), 9th Congress, 1-2d session, IV. 11, 112, 123, 124, 132, 133, 150, 158, 164, 165, 167, 168; ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 9th Congress, 2d session, pages 16, 19, 23, 33, 36, 45, 47, 68, 69, 70, 71, 79, 87, 93. For proceedings in House, see HOUSE JOURNAL (reprint of 1826), 9th Congress, 2d session, V. 470, 482, 488, 490, 491, 496, 500, 504, 510, 513-6, 517, 540, 557, 575, 579, 581, 583-4, 585, 592, 594, 610, 613-4, 616, 623, 638, 640; 10th Congress, 1st session, VI. 27, 50; ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 9th Congress, 2d session, pages 167, 180, 200, 220, 231, 254, 264, 270.

SLAVERY

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

6 day 27 of 11 M 1807 / Much engaged, in the Morning with T H visited Eleazer Trevets Charity School for the purpose of selecting proper objects to bestow some old cloaths put into our hands & \$5 in money to purchase new shoes for the most necesitous scholars in the School we selected twelve of this discription, with the money in our care we purchased Six pair of good shoes & gave those that needed most, & the old clothes we distributed according to the best of our judgement - When I see those that are poor it excites in my mind a desire to be more in a capacity to help them than I am but may I be content

with my lot & not aspire after things beyond my reach, for riches in this world will never be in my possession -but a disposition to do all the good I can is my sincere wish

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

➡ April 26, Sunday: In the Convention of Bartenstein, Russia and Prussia agreed to pool their forces to drive French troops out of [Germany](#).

Death of 3-year-old [Ralph Waldo Emerson](#)'s brother John Clarke Emerson.

I might as well record this material here as anywhere: At some point during Waldo's early boyhood, his Aunt [Mary Moody Emerson](#) took him and [Charles Chauncy Emerson](#) to Malden MA and showed the boys the grave of their great-grandfather [Joseph Emerson](#) who had died in 1767. Polly later would inform [Ellen Emerson](#) that "Your father ... was a little boy then, and skipped about among the graves."

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

*1 day 26 of 4 M / Pretty good meetings in the afternoon D Buffum bore a livly [testimony] to the necessity of our preparing for the final change, God being just and equal in all his ways would afford sufficient means to enable us to attain a seat in the Kingdom.
Between meetings finished a letter began the day before to my friend J Austin [of] [Nantucket](#)
Took tea at D Williams where my mind was cover'd with the precious life. Oh I love to feel it & desire to be found worthy more & more to receive the heavenly Bounty.*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1808

➡ Schoolmaster Benjamin Tappan beat a student so severely that he was obliged to summon a physician.

In upstate New York, [Friend](#) Lucretia Coffin became an assistant teacher at the Nine Partners school.

LUCRETIA MOTT





NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

1809

 [Nantucket Island](#) achieved its first [Unitarian](#) congregation.

 April 26, Wednesday: At New-York, Fulton's *Steamboat* began its 1st voyage up the Hudson River.

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

4th day 26 of 4 M / Yesterday rec'd a very acceptable letter from my much beloved friend Joseph Austin of [Nantucket](#) – Aunt M Wanton continues much the same –

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

 October 1, Sunday: [George Gordon, Lord Byron](#) and Hobhouse left Prevesa for Janina. That evening they arrived in Salakhora.

Adrien Boieldieu was hired by Tsar Alyekandr to write and teach at the Imperial Theater School, St. Petersburg.

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

1st day 1st of 10th M 1809// At Meeting this morning Our friend Benjm Mitchell from [Nantucket](#) – on his way to Nine Partners where he is going to settle) was with us & preached a little evincing himself to be a friend of descenment & green in life - In the Afternoon he was with us also but set in Silence, but our friend M Morton was solemnly & livingly engaged in supplication on behalf of all classes present & particularly for the Aged "thise who had lived many days & seen many sorrows". -- Sister E staid with Our little boy while My H went to meeting & set the evening with us –

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1810

 August 7, Tuesday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

3rd day 7 of 8 Mo// The day has passed as usual, except that I have read a few pages in the Journal of our friend John Richardson & have had my mind much animated & strengthened thereby. I read the account of his first visit on [Nantucket](#) & his visit to Lynn & his dispute with George Heath. I hope that as long as I live I shall be preserved in the love of friends writings, for I do consider they are a great help in religious exercise - & Now may insert that my posterity may be inform'd that it is my wish that they may frequently & attentively read



the religious writings of ancient friends, for I believe they will greatly tend to confirm & establish them in the right way. I well remember & have cause to be thankful for the benefit I received in reading the journal of that Ancient worthy G Fox in my younger years. The impressions then made were very great, & have, at seasons remained ever since

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



September 27, Thursday: French troops attacked a combined British/Portuguese force at Buçaco and were repulsed with great losses.

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

*5th day 27 of 9 M 1810// It is our Monthly Meeting day - & presently I expect to attend -- I feel the operation of the spirit of Truth in my mind, but I also feel a mixture of evil, which I hope to keep under, but Alass how weaek is human Nature, how easily does the enemy, work himself into those places where he ought not to be admitted. —
I had a very good quiet meeting both in the first & last, being favor'd with the prescious arisings of Life – Our friends Holder Almy & Abigail Robinson were very acceptably engaged in Public testimony – And in the last we had a considerable buinness in the transaction of which I felt a Quiet Solemn covering A Robinson & H dennis expressed a concern to pay a religious [visit] to [Smithfield](#) Moy [Monthly] Meetg & some meetings in that Quarterly Meeting which was united with & a copy of a Minute granted them - Also it was propsoed of this Moy [Monthly] Meeting's giving forth a testimony concerning Our Ancient & venerable friend Mary Mitchell deceased of the Island of [Nantucket](#), but formerly of this Island - We had the company of Caty & Nancy Almy at Dinner whose company was very pleasant - I have indeed had a very comfortable day for which I desire to be thankful - How pleasant it is, yes, how rejoicing it is, to feel the arisings of life & light upon the mind - My dear friend & Brother Philip Dunham spent the evening with us very sweetly on our part -*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



1811

 The Comstock family of [Nantucket Island](#) relocated to New-York, where the father, Friend Nathan Comstock, would engage successfully in a business of whaling products while his eldest son, birthright Friend [Samuel B. Comstock](#), would soon join a street gang, the “Downtowners,” and develop a taste for violence. In an attempt to rescue his son, the father would find him a berth aboard a merchant ship bound for Liverpool, England, but the son would be back in four months, even the worse for this experience having acquired in addition to his taste for violence a taste for women. Continuing his effort to redeem his son, the Quaker father would send him off to the boarding school of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) at Nine Partners northeast of Poughkeepsie, New York (the school at which Friend James Mott and Friend Lucretia Coffin were teachers, a school frequently visited and ministered to by Friend Elias Hicks). Abandoning this religious education, Samuel would sail on the *Beaver* running a shipment of guns to rebels in Chile, would be captured and held for a period in a Chilean jail, and would then sign on the whaler *George*. He was turning out to be a ne’er-do-well.

 June 18, Tuesday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

*3rd day 18 of 6 Mo// This day has passed with but one setting of the Yearly Meeting, the time of which was taken principally in reading & disproving of the testimony of R T & [Nantucket](#) Moy [Monthly] Meetings concerning our friend Mary Mitchell deceased – an exercising time it was. –
We have had a pretty large share of company & got along to pretty good satisfaction, for which I feel it in my heart at this point to give thanks. –*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

 July 9, Tuesday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

*3rd day 9th of 7th Mo// My mind is affected with low feelings, I feel poor weak & dependant in every sense – & peculiarly has my mind been lead to feel in the prospect of parting with a young friend from Society. It is now pretty fully known that E W L has engaged in matrimonial connections with M E, no objections to the young woman she is nearly as much a friend as himself, but to think of parting with one on whom I had indulged the hope would rise in Society has been very affecting to my mind. .I pray that they with myself may yet further advance in religion stand as ensamples to the flock. –
Sister Eliza returnd this Afternoon from [Nantucket](#), we were very glad to see her - in the eveng she entertained us with reading her well kept journal – My H & Mother R spetnt the day at Jon Dennis’s*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1812

➡ January 6, Monday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

2nd day 6th of 1 Mo// The mind again in conflict which I hope & pray may prove proffitable, may the Stubble & reprobate Metal be consumed, & nothing left which obstructs the circulation of the life - In the Mornng went to Wm Pattens to hear the relations of a passenger in the Ship Orion Capt Barzille Huzzey of [Nantucket](#) from London of grievances & imposition of the Captain on the Voige, which were truly afflicting, the Man whose name was White a Presbyterian Minister supposed the Capt was a member of our Society & wanted the interference of Some of our Members - but on investigation I am induced to think he is not in membership & if he is his conduct has been a disgrace to Us. - In the eveng Met at C J Tennys with the Directors of the African benevolent Society -

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1815

➡ On [Nantucket Island](#), [Samuel B. Comstock](#)'s youth had been unruly. Embarking at age 13 on a voyage aboard the *Foster* to encounter the Pacific Islands, he would attempt to foment a mutiny aboard this whaler and would wind up confined under careful watch. (When they returned to their home port, however, his troublemaking proclivities would be forgiven and Samuel, with his brothers William and George, would be allowed to sign aboard the whaler *Globe*.)



➡ September 16, Saturday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

7th day 16 of 9 M / Heard today of a dirty case on [Nantucket](#), which is a warning to all, to look well to their standing. The tempter is allways at work & I believe few, very few if any have



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

attained to that State which renders them secure from his attacks. - I have humbly to confess that at no time in my life have I felt a greater necessity to crave the blessing of preservation than of late, & especially within a few Days -

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1817

 March 30, Sunday: [Lieutenant Francis Hall](#) sighted the welcome hills of his own country.

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

1st day 30 of 3 M 1817 / Silent meetings both of them hard times to me & I believe some others - I called in the eveng at Br D Rodmans & set a little while with Sister E who is keeping House for Joanna, she being out of Town on a visit - also called at father Rs where I met Jonathon Swain from [Nantucket](#) - he has been about town several days & seems like a clearer friend

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1818

 The whaling ships of [Nantucket Island](#) began at this point to visit the “offshore Ground” near Chile and Peru.

 June 16, Tuesday: The “[Year Without a Summer](#)” had had a number of impacts, one of which had been that an ice-dammed lake formed below a tongue of the Giétro Glacier high in the Val de Bagnes. Although the engineer Ignaz Venetz had been struggling to control the situation, on this day the water devastated [Bagnes](#).

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

*3rd day Our Select Meeting this morning met under a solemn covering & thro' the whole course of it a weight & power was attendant which would have surprised those unacquainted with it, & indeed was deeply instructing to some who had long felt its influence at seasons. An individual an elder in society from one of the lower Quarters who has accepted the Offices of Justice of the peace & Judge of the Court of common pleas in the State of Massachusetts was present - & to him many weighty & deep testimonies were borne to the inconsistencies of such offices with the testimony of society - These testimonies appeared deeply to affect his mind as well as the minds of many present & Elizabeth Coggeshall was engaged in fervant solemn supplication on his behalf.
The Meeting for the general concerns of society met by adjournment at 3 OClock this Afternoon - Jeremiah Austin appear'd in the Meeting & prosecuted his appeal from the judgement of [Nantucket](#) Monthly Meeting & Sandwich Quarterly*

*Meeting against him & a committee was appointed to hear his case.
 – a few other concerns were acted upon but I thought not as
 lively as the Past sittings*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

➡ July 16, Thursday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

*5th day 16th of 7 M / Saml Wood & daughter left Town this morning
 for [Providence](#) on their way home – Our meeting was Small & to
 me exceedingly dull season - a few words were expressed by father
 Rodman. –
 This Afternoon Richard Mitchell Jr arrived from [Nantucket](#) with
 his wife. They were married the 9th inst & I hope she may prove
 an acquisition to our meeting.*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1820

➡ The [Essex, a whaler](#), sank after an attack by a sperm whale. The white members of the crew, in order to survive after their shipwreck, had resort to cannibalism. The crew members of color were of course the first to die and be eaten — the only crew members to survive would be of the white color. Only a few Quakers would survive — and only by drawing lots and killing and eating the Quaker who drew the short straw. This ship’s captain, [disowned Friend George Pollard, Jr.](#), would live out his life on [Nantucket Island](#) as a night watchman, but it would be generally recognized in this ship’s home port that “on Nantucket we do not speak of the *Essex*.”



➡ June 18, Sunday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

*1st day 18th of 6 M 1820 / Our Morning meeting was large but did
 not prove so open a time as could be wished tho our frd Charles
 Osborn labord faithfully in the ability afforded - In the
 Afternoon as the other Meeting broke, many people flocked in,
 which happened just as Charles rose & it proved a season of good
 openness wherein he discharged himself to the comfort of friends
 & the satisfaction of others. –*



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

They took tea with us & after tea we took leave at which time Charles was concerned to impart a few words of Sweet encouragement very precious & consoling to our feelings - They rode to Rich Mitchells to lodge, intending from thence to [Tiverton](#) Little Compton, Westport & on to [New Bedford](#) wishing to be at [Nantucket](#) on first Day next.

I have to Acknowledge (I trust) under an humble sense of the Lords goodness that this Yearly Meeting has been to me a season of favor, tenderness & love, for which I desire to offer thanksgiving & praise where it is alone due. - before the meeting commenced it was a season of much fear & dread among us, least [lest] from some existing causes, the Truth would suffer, but the Lord made bare his holy Arm for the help of his people, & the good cause gained ground, to the consolation of the honest sincere hearted traveller, who travel for the prosperity of Zion & the right enlargement of her Borders.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1821

 June 11, Monday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

2nd day / The Meeting opened under a very solemn covering David Buffum appeared in a very reverend & impressive testimony - his opening was, where the Apostles received an injunction to tarry in Jerusalem untill they were endued with Power from on high. - Then Stephen Grellett in a solemn & very Baptising prayer, & the meeting under that covering proceeded to buisness & went thro' the usual service, in conducting which Some little Spirits Shewed themselves, but Truth rose above all & held dominion thro' all. - it is a season of deep trial & exercise in society, but I trust Zion will arise & shine & her Ancient beauty will be more & more conspicuous to people & Nations. -

In the Afternoon we were again troubled as last Year with Jeremiah Austin, a disowned member from [Nantucket](#), he came and took his seat & persisted in Sitting but After a while by persuasion went out. - After which S Grellett addressed the meeting in a very Solemn manner on the subject of Watchfulness least we also become castaways, alluding to Jeremiah who had once stood well in society - The Answers to the queries excited many remarks from many exercised friends, & tho' the wormwood was again dispenced, yet Truth bore the dominion, & there was renew'd cause to trust in Israels Shepperd, who will never forsake his humble dependant ones, not leave his Church without faithful Pillars to Support it The Meeting adjourned till 4 OClock tommorrow Afternoon

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



1822

June 14, Friday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

6th day 14th of 6 M / Friends have begun to come to attend the Yearly Meeting [a] number came last night from [Nantucket](#)

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

December 15, Sunday: The 20-year-old [Nantucket Island](#) boatsteerer [Samuel B. Comstock](#) and his 18-year-old brother William and his 14-year-old brother George sailed under Captain Thomas Worth aboard the *Globe* out of [Martha's Vineyard](#), on its 4th whaling expedition. (On a previous voyage this whaler had been the 1st to take 2,000 barrels of oil.)

This voyage would evidently become very frustrating, for although the vessel initially proceeded east toward the Azore Islands and the Cape Verde Islands, in order to pick up the northeast trade winds and proceed toward Cape Horn and the Pacific Ocean and the whaling grounds there, Captain Worth would turn the ship south without stopping at any of these Atlantic islands for the refreshment and recreation of the crew. Ouch! –Then, after the vessel had rounded the Horn, Captain Worth would pass up another refreshment and recreation spot, Valparaiso on the coast of Chile. Ouch! –Then, when the vessel reached Hawaiian waters, Captain Worth would refuse to allow any of his crewmen to go ashore for their usual refreshment and recreation, but instead would have fresh supplies brought out to the ship at anchor. It was almost as if this young Captain Worth, on his first command, had other things to think about than the usual fun and games with eager little brown people!

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

1st day 15th of 12 M / Our Morning meeting to me was a season of [obscured] ing to me, but I have no doubt it was to many a time [obscured] savour, & appeared like it as much solemnity seemd spread in the gathering – J Dennis had a short testimony [–]er which was acceptable & D Buffum was largely [–]erned to speak of the State of Christendom as portray[ing] a corrupt state of things, when professing Christians [–] different nations engaged in War, are praying to the same God for success on their Arms. Christian pro[–]ing Ministers thus at the same time engaged –how [incon]sistent with the Doctrines & precepts of Jesus Christ [whos]e injunction was to love one another – In the Afternoon it was still to me a season of little proffit but was enabled to feel that Truth [was] prevalent amongst us – Father Rodman bore a short but acceptable testimony – & J Dennis was [eng]aged to recount the present favours of society & [con]trast it with the times of sufferings in the days [–] our valient Predicessors & endeavoured to excite the youth & others present to live near the Truth, the light [–] have, & be obedient to Known Duty –

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1823



After the [War of 1812](#), when commerce had begun to flourish once more, the larger ships had found that they simply could not clear the sandy bar that had formed before the mouth of Nantucket harbor. Thus, the Nantucketers began to transfer their operations to the mainland, centering upon [New Bedford](#). By this point the fleet out of New Bedford equaled the size of the fleet out of [Nantucket Island](#). For the next four decades, up until civil war hit us, New Bedford would enjoy a constant growth and prosperity, and Ishmael, in Herman Melville’s MOBY-DICK; OR, THE WHALE, would refer to it as “perhaps the dearest place to live in, in all New England.”



“The whaler was a kind of pirate-miner – an excavator of oceanic oil, stoking the furnace of the Industrial Revolution as much as any man digging coal out of the earth.”



– Philip Hoare, THE WHALE: IN SEARCH OF THE GIANTS OF THE SEA (NY: HarperCollins, March 2010)

MOBY-DICK, THE OIL SPILL

February 11, Tuesday: During the hours of darkness [disowned Friend George Pollard, Jr.](#) had kept his whaling vessel moving along despite the fact that no stars were visible — and despite the fact that the [Two Brothers](#) was being sailed through a poorly charted quadrant of the Pacific Ocean some 600 miles northwest of the Hawaiian chain known to contain shoals. Due to this extremely poor judgment, off French Frigate Shoals his vessel ripped its bottom on a reef. The captain did not want to abandon ship but was brought along by his crew into their small boats, and the following morning all lives would be saved by another [Nantucket](#) whaler. (Captain Pollard had been in charge during the shipwreck of the *Essex*. This would be, therefore, the final time he would be entrusted with a vessel — he would finish out his life as a night watchman. [Herman Melville](#) would seek him out in Nantucket for a sympathetic interview, and in 2011 the wreck of the [Two Brothers](#) would be explored by skindivers: its anchors, its trying vessels for whale blubber, etc.)

LOST AT SEA



TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS

1824

January 25, Sunday: In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:
1st day 25th of 1st M 1824 / Silent Meeting, none of the Most lively to my feelings, tho' there was a good degree of Solemnity -Took tea & spent part of the evening at D Buffums. -

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

En route between Hawaii and Tahiti, a year into the Pacific voyage of the [Martha's Vineyard](#) whaler *Globe* (renown for having been the 1st ship to take 2,000 barrels of oil), late at night there was a mutiny.



One of the ship's boatsteerers, [Samuel B. Comstock](#), was the birthright [Quaker](#) first child of a birthright Quaker father from Burrillville, [Rhode Island](#), Friend Nathan Comstock, and a Quaker mother, Friend Elizabeth Emmet Comstock, living on [Nantucket Island](#) and then in New-York. This young scion of a privileged and responsible and religious family, having been given the benefit of a guarded Quaker education at Nine Partners, having the world at his feet, had determined that none of this was enough to satisfy himself with his life. He wanted all this plus adequate carousing and swiving. He had therefore equipped himself with the sorts of things he supposed he would need in order to recreate himself as a libertine chieftain on a South Seas atoll — things such as garden seeds.

He persuaded four companions and on this night, with a hatchet, Friend Samuel laid open the head of the sleeping captain, Thomas Worth, with an ax. Silas Payne, one of the new men who had signed aboard in Hawaii, was attempting to use a knife on the ship's 1st Mate, William Beetle, and was doing such an inadequate job of it that Friend Samuel needed to join in with his ax. The other two Comstock brothers took no part in the mutiny. (This would be written up by William Lay in conjunction with Friend Cyrus Hussey, Jr., a Nantucket [Quaker](#) who survived the mutiny, but in general the incident would become another forbidden topic in the community.)



TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

DEMON OF THE WATERS.

THE TRUE STORY OF THE MUTINY ON THE WHALESHIP *GLOBE*.

BY GREGORY GIBSON.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ERIK RONNBERG AND GARY TONKIN.

BOSTON: LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY, 2002

Reviewed by Rob Rulon-Miller

In a world where death is as certain as the setting sun, and is as perniciously random as the scattering of galaxies, it's no wonder that death -tragic and unexpected death- is the lifeblood of so much literature and history. I note in passing today's Sunday New York Times cover story on the horrific final minutes of those top-floor employees in the World Trade Towers as recorded in their desperate calls from cell phones or email messages - calls not so much for help as calls already from the afterlife. I also note but will not elaborate on Mr. Gibson's own life-altering foray into the nether world and back: his struggle to cope with the tragic death of his son Galen, who was murdered by a fellow student in a random act of violence at Simon's Rock College in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, in 1992, a journey Mr. Gibson brilliantly recounted in his critically acclaimed *GONE BOY: A WALKABOUT* (Kondansha International, 1999).

In *DEMON OF THE WATERS*, Gibson revisits death, examining the murderous and most bloody mutiny that occurred 175 years ago on board the whaleship *Globe*, where the loved sons of mothers and fathers were savagely mauled and killed. Successive generations have been captivated by the gruesome event, and it remains, arguably, the most disturbing case in the annals of American maritime history. The *Globe* mutiny has been well-documented and often recounted in maritime anthologies as well as in contemporaneous accounts, including two by the brother of the perpetrator, William Comstock (one in manuscript, one published), and another by two of the survivors, William Lay and Cyrus Hussey. The story falls into Mr. Gibson's lap with the discovery, in Indiana of all places, of a previously unlocated journal recounting the subsequent rescue of the stranded crew on the Marshall Islands in the western Pacific.

The antagonist of the story, Samuel Comstock, is a young man - a mere teenager when we first meet him- at sixes and sevens with



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

his Quaker upbringing on Nantucket, nothing but a burden for his family and an annoyance to any friends he might have had. When his family moved to Manhattan from Nantucket, Samuel fell in with a street gang named the Downtowners, "who passed their time battling the rival Corlears Hookers. In the manner of many troubled youths, Samuel kept his own hours and often came home late at night, bloody and bruised." To keep Samuel from straying further, his father found him a berth on a merchant ship bound for Liverpool. Four months later Samuel was home again, and to his repertoire of extracurricular activities he now added the chasing of women. The strict Quaker school he was sent to in Poughkeepsie did little more than harden him against authority. Whoring and street fighting were in his blood, and it seems there was little to do with him. Before finally shipping on the *Globe*, Comstock filled out his teenage years by sailing on the *Beaver* with a shipment of arms for rebels in Chile and then on the Nantucket whaler *George* after having spent "some months ... languishing in a Chilean jail" for gunrunning.

The captain of the *Globe* was Thomas Worth, and at age 29, it was his first command. The ship was manned by a crew of twenty, not one of them older than 26 and half of them teenagers. Samuel Comstock at the time was a mere twenty years old, although already well beyond his years. Departing Martha's Vineyard in December 1822, the *Globe* followed a usual course to the Pacific, which meant sailing east towards the Azores and the Cape Verdes, where ships would pick up the northeast trade winds that would blow them south and west towards Cape Horn. Ordinarily ships would stop in the Azores or the Cape Verdes for supplies, but because Captain Worth was delayed in leaving and anxious to get to the Pacific whaling grounds in season, he chose not to put in at either group and continued sailing towards the Horn.

In the south Atlantic the *Globe* captured its first whale, and it is here we learn from Samuel's younger brother, William, who was also on board, that "contact with the whale oil caused Samuel great distress, 'filling him with biles and inflaming his flesh.'" By March of 1823, the *Globe* rounded the Horn and headed up the South American coast towards Valparaiso, a usual stopping point for provisioning and relaxation after the arduous passage. But again, Captain Worth chose not to stop, and instead continued to head towards the rich whaling fields off the coast of Japan. By May, after five continuous months at sea, the *Globe* arrived at Hawaii; nor did she stop here. Nonetheless, provisions -including women- were brought from shore. Captain Worth forbade the women to spend the night, but Samuel Comstock disobeyed the order, and the next morning, according to William, "Lady Comstock made her appearance, emerging from steerage, with an air of great dignity, dressed in a new Scotch bonnet...." Captain Worth made no remark, and it was apparent to the rest of the crew that Samuel was becoming a favorite of the captain. "However," writes Gibson, "by allowing Samuel to openly flout his authority, Worth weakened his credibility and risked disrupting his relations" with the rest of the crew, and "alienated Samuel, a recipient of special privileges, from the mates."

By summer the *Globe* had reached the hallowed cruising grounds off Japan. Here, they spent nearly five months chasing whales,



but it was not a very successful hunt. "During these months of hard work and unspectacular results, the situation on board the *Globe* began to deteriorate. Samuel Comstock did his best to rock the boat." A wrestling match ensued between Comstock and the third mate, Nathaniel Fisher, which Comstock lost, a humiliating defeat he did not readily forget. On another occasion, one of the crew was put in irons, and on another, the cook was struck by the captain, both incidences on account of Comstock. There were complaints all around by the crew about the meager rations; even so, the crew complained that they didn't have enough time in which to eat them. So, after not having set foot on land for nearly a year, after being confined for that long to ninety feet of boat with twenty other men, the crew of the *Globe* returned from the Japan grounds and put in at last at Hawaii. Gibson writes, "All the ingredients for insurrection were there ... indifferent success, bad food, capricious exercise of authority by an inexperienced captain, bullying and physical beatings from the officers, long confinement aboard the ship with no liberty, and the concerted, pernicious influence of a malcontent." On Hawaii six of the crew -it's amazing the number was as small as it was- deserted, and the replacements Captain Worth found ashore -"a rough set of cruel beings" in the words of George Comstock- "seemed so spectacularly ill chosen that one has to wonder about Thomas Worth's grasp of human nature." Of the seven replacements, five were eventually involved in the mutiny. On December 9, 1823, the *Globe* departed Hawaii to hunt whales along the Equator. The captain was edgy and the crew tense. There was a flogging by Captain Worth of Joseph Thomas, who had signed on in Hawaii. Comstock took the side of Thomas, and -this being the last straw- with four other conspirators, in the very early morning hours of January 26, 1824, went down into Captain Worth's cabin and, in the sentence we've been waiting for, brought down an axe, "with such force that it nearly severed the top of the captain's head from his body." Silas Payne, who had also shipped in Hawaii, went after the first mate, William Beetle, with a knife, but he botched the job. Comstock was left to finish it by placing the axe in the mate's skull. Beetle was left "gurgling in his own blood and brains." Nor was this all. Samuel Comstock, the putative captain now, in the next twelve hours managed to shoot, bayonet, stab, disembowel, and throw overboard a total of five men, including the three mates and a black man, William Humphries, who for good measure was hanged from the foreyard for attempting to aid those who has been brutalized.

The mutineers and the rest of the stunned and stupefied crew then sailed west to what is now Mili Atoll at the southern end of the Marshall Islands. Comstock, in what at this point in the story seems like a workaday chore, was murdered by his co-conspirator, Silas Payne, for bribing the natives with precious provisions from the ship. Less than a week later, six of the innocent crew serendipitously escaped in the *Globe* and managed to sail some 7000 miles across the Pacific to Valparaiso and safety.

Fast forward to Vevay, Indiana, where in 1978 a local book scout, Jay Small, and his younger partner, John Mullins, unearthed a handwritten account dated 1825 by a sailor on board the *Dolphin*,



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

a United States naval vessel. The *Dolphin* had been ordered to sail to the Marshall Islands, at the insistence of no less than Presidents James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, to capture the mutineers and learn of their fate. This journal found its way into the hands of ABAA dealer Owen Kubik, who in turn sold it to Gibson. (It is now at the Kendall Whaling Museum.) It contains an eyewitness account by one Augustus Strong, midshipman, of the rescue of the only two survivors on Mili Atoll, Cyrus Hussey and William Lay, and recounts the story they told on their voyage back to civilization. Gibson's book brings the Augustus Strong account to the public for the first time, and for this reason alone the book will stand as one of the most important scholarly works on the terrible event. But, in fact, this journal occupies a minor part of the story as published, much of the recounting of its surfacing having ended up on the editor's floor. As these two expunged chapters may be of interest to our readers, they will run in concurrent issues of this Newsletter.

Gibson is becoming a seasoned, if not a flashy writer. His sentences move at an even pace, and his style is more that of a four-wheel drive Land Rover than a turbo-charged Ferrari. On the surface the facts of this story are practically unbelievable, but Gibson is very adept at making all the bizarreness and surreality of this debacle of a voyage seem possible – even plausible. He teaches us the ways of the sea and the sailor. The passion and intensity that suffuses *GONE BOY* is not so apparent here, but death on the *Globe* could never be so close and personal. Nonetheless, the recounting of the mutiny itself is gripping, and Gibson fixes it firmly in the historical context of American interests in the Pacific in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The thirty-odd pages of Notes at the back are helpful and informative, and the extensive bibliography attests to Gibson's penchant for meticulous research. If there is a flaw in the book, it may be that it was over-researched. Some of the early chapters, especially those on Quaker mores and the building of the *Globe*, seem a little ponderous, as does the chapter on the management of whaleships and the business of whaling. But my tastes notwithstanding, these arcanæ must be addressed for the mutiny to be understood in full, and Gibson is successful in getting all the essential information on the page with only minor irritation. The illustrations by Erik Ronnberg and Gary Tonkin are appealing, if not striking, and I would have liked to have seen more illustrations from contemporary sources.

1825



52 Norwegian [Quakers](#) arrived in the harbor of New-York aboard the ship *Restoration*.

[Friend](#) David Whippey, a [Nantucket Island](#) whaler, after escaping being eaten by cannibals on an island near Fiji, would go on to become an important member of the local culture. (Whippey's descendants are still important characters in that South Sea island community.)



TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

 June 30, Thursday: Carl Friedrich Zelter oversaw the laying of the cornerstone of the new Berlin Singakademie.

On her 2d visit to London, Maria Szymanowska gave a concert before the royal family.

In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

5th day 30th of 6 M / Yesterday I was Bled & today under the affects of Medicine, which renders me unfit to attend our Moy [Monthly] Meeting at [Portsmouth](#) today – My head has been long out of order & distressingly so for several days -- This eveng our frd Sarah Morris & Catherine W Morris set a while with us – Isaac being unwell did not come, so we walked home with them at 9 OC & set with them a few minutes just to take leave of Isaac & their two daughters, all of them are friends to whom we feel nearly united, tho' our acquaintance has been short. – They leave town in the course of tomorrow for [New Bedford](#) & [Nantucket](#). –

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

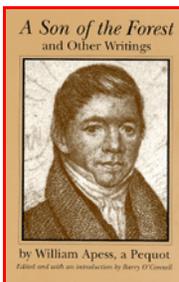
1827

 [Harrison Gray Dyar](#) erected an experimental telegraph wire at a Paumanok Long Island racetrack. He proposed to string a wire between New-York and Philadelphia, across New Jersey, and ran into skepticism from members of the New Jersey legislature who feared Dyar as some sort of “wizard” of deception like the figure that would later appear in the “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz” story by L. Frank Baum. They feared that behind this project there might be some sort of dangerous agenda to send secret communications in advance of the mail.

“Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain!”

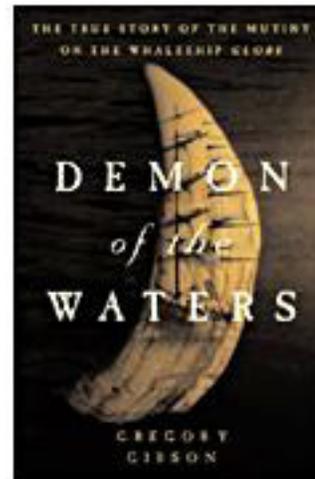
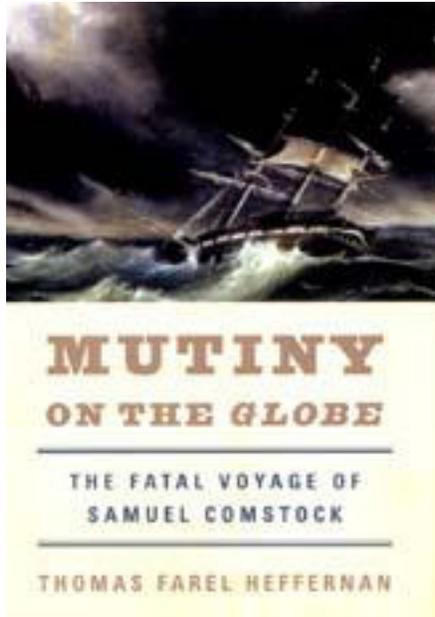
When one of Dyar’s financial backers threatened to accuse him of “conspiracy to send secret communications in advance of the mail” as part of an attempt to get his money back, Dyar fled the country. For many years he would live in Paris where, apparently, he was able to make good money as a chemist.

For the next two or three years William Apess would be an itinerant Methodist exhorter on Paumanok Long Island, in the valley of the Hudson River, on [Martha’s Vineyard](#) and [Nantucket Island](#), and in the cities of [Boston](#) and [New Bedford](#). Much of the work he would be doing, of course, since he was not a white man, would need to be with mixed groups of African-Americans and native Americans. In this timeframe, on [Nantucket Island](#), Friend [Maria Mitchell](#) would have been attending Cyrus Peirce’s School for Young Ladies. (Other than that, and her own self-education, she was mainly being educated by her father, whom she assisted in the checking of chronometers for the local whaling fleet.)



1828

➡ NARRATIVE OF THE GLOBE, BY LAY AND HUSSEY SURVIVORS. A.D. 1828. [Herman Melville](#)(e), in the preface to MOBY-DICK; OR, THE WHALE, would extrapolate from this sad history: “The Whale-ship Globe, on board of which vessel occurred the horrid transactions we are about to relate, belonged to the island of [Nantucket](#).”



SAMUEL B. COMSTOCK

1829

➡ In this year the Nantucket Northern District Monthly Meeting, a group that had been in existence on the northern portion of [Nantucket Island](#) since 1794, was laid down in favor of the monthly meeting that was taking place in the town of [Nantucket](#) itself.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

➡ [Friend William Rotch, Jr.](#) of [New Bedford](#) got married with Lydia Scott, young daughter of the deceased [Quaker](#) mystic [Job Scott](#), although she had in the meanwhile become a Swedenborgian. In consequence, [Friend William Rotch, Jr.](#) was [disowned](#) by his monthly meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.

As an example of [Quaker disownment](#), here is one that was announced in this year at the Somerset monthly meeting:

W.M. Jr. has been guilty of dancing, attending a places of diversion and deviating from the truth and after having been treated with without the desired effect, we disown him from being a member of our religious society.¹⁴



1830

 Summer: Four [Friends](#) from Baltimore MD arrived on the island of Nantucket: [Friend](#) Hannah Wilson, the clerk of the Baltimore Women's Yearly Meeting, her husband, and two traveling companions. Although the visitors were [Hicksite](#) Friends, the Nantucket meeting had never gotten around to disowning the some 87% of its membership who were Hicksite, and thus technically at least the visitors were Friends in good standing, and could not be prevented from entering the meetinghouse for worship. Friend Hannah Wilson, a traveling minister, was therefore forbidden by the elders of the local meeting from making any attempt to address the meeting, and informed in addition that she would not be welcome to seat herself in the ministers' gallery during worship. (Hey, lady, better not attempt to pray in the presence of these holy people! —Nevertheless, Friend Hannah Wilson would speak, in fact for some twenty minutes.) When the visitors were refused permission to use the meetinghouse for a special or "appointed" meeting on an off day, the Methodists of the island offered their place of worship as an alternative venue, which offer was gratefully accepted. Thus, when the Hicksite doctrines were first expounded on [Nantucket Island](#), they were expounded at the Methodist Church! Shortly after this visit of Hicksite Friends from Baltimore, a deputation of Hicksite Friends appeared from the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting of New York state. This was Friend Benjamin Mitchell and Friend William Clark. After a local Orthodox minister, Friend Mary Barker Allen, had held the floor of the meeting for some time, Friend William Clark rose to speak and was ordered to sit down by Elder Friend Samuel Macy. The ritual shaking of hands that ended the meetings for worship was begun, but was interrupted by Friend Benjamin Mitchell, who stated that "the service of the Meeting is not quite over." Most of those present exited the building, but some 40 Nantucket Friends remained and heard the visiting Hicksite ministers from New York. The names of the 40 who remained would be recorded, and they would be disciplined by their Nantucket monthly meeting for having joined in "a disorder in a Meeting for Worship." The first wave of disownments, which occurred within a month, got rid of ten of the members of the island meeting, and by the end of this, the meeting would have lost about a hundred members, forbidden to enter either the vacated meetinghouse of the defunct Northern District Monthly Meeting or the meetinghouse still in use inside the town of Nantucket itself, for any reason. About thirty of these dissenters would unite to form a new Hicksite Monthly Meeting on Nantucket Island.

 July 9, Friday: Stanislaw Moniuszko received a certificate attesting that, through private education, he had attained adequate progress up to the 4th form.

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

6th day 9th of 7 M / Our fr Joseph Bowne from Butternutts in the State of NYork called to see us with Wm Jenkins a little while. — he is on his return from [Nantucket](#) & a few Meetings that way where he has been spending his time Since Yearly Meeting & is now bound to Salem & Lynn to take those Meetings & then to return here & go directly home. — Phebe Field with Anna A Jenkins called at the door a little while in the Afternoon. — After tea I took Jon Slocum a Scholar & at present assistant teacher in the Absence of B B Hussey - & went down to [Moses Browns](#) & spent a little time J Bowne & Phebe Field being there. — it was a pleasant visit & interesting to us all. —

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

 July 18, Sunday: The State of Montevideo became the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

According to a journal kept by Charles Greville, Clerk to the Privy Council, “Everybody expected that the new king would keep the Ministers in office, but he threw himself into the arms of the [Duke of Wellington](#) with the strongest expressions of confidence and esteem. The Duke of Wellington told me he was delighted with him — ‘If I had been able to deal with my late master (George IV) as I do with the present, I should have got on much better’ — that he was so reasonable and tractable, and that he had done more business with him in ten minutes than with the other in as many days.”

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

1st day 18th of 7 M / Before we went into Meeting this Morning the sad intelligence reached us that two promising young men, who went into the river to bathe were drown'd. — Our friend mary B Allen was here on her return from [Nantucket](#) & attended Meeting & was much favoured in testimony - she alluded to the death of a girl at [Nantucket](#) who was formerly a Scholar here who departed this life in great peace & tranquility. — In the Afternoon Wm Almy was here - he alluded in his testimony to the death of the two young men this Morning & was followed by M B Allen & a day of favour it has been, for which I trust we are thankful — Ann Miflin an Elder from Philad was at meeting & in the Afternoon Saml R Wood of Philad & Wm Jenkins was here. —

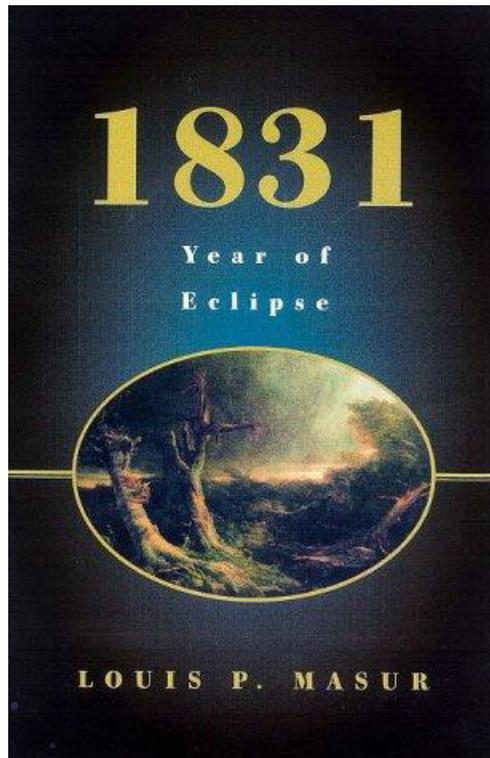
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1831



February 12, Saturday: At this point the Glasgow Skating Club's SKATERS MANUAL contained descriptions of 13 combined skating figures.

According to Chapter I of the history of this year by Professor Louis P. Masur, titled 1831: YEAR OF ECLIPSE (Hill and Wang, 2001. ISBN: 0-8090-4118-9), everyone, presumably even Nat Turner, even the recreational skaters on the frozen Delaware River, knew that an eclipse was coming:



Everyone knew it was coming. "THE GREAT ECLIPSE OF 1831 will be one of the most remarkable that will again be witnessed in the United States for a long course of years," alerted ASH'S POCKET ALMANAC. One editor reported that the February 12 eclipse would even surpass historic occasions when "the darkness was such that domestic fowls retired to roost" and "it appeared as if the moon rode unsteadily in her orbit, and the earth seemed to tremble on its axis." On the day of the eclipse, from New England through the South, Americans looked to the heavens. One diarist saw "men, women and children ... in all directions, with a piece of smoked glass, and eyes turn'd upward." The Boston Evening Gazette reported that "this part of the world has been all anxiety ... to witness the solar eclipse.... Business was suspended and thousands of persons were looking at the phenomena with intense curiosity." "Every person in the city," noted the Richmond Enquirer, "was star gazing, from bleary-eyed old age to the most bright-eyed infancy."

Unlike previous celestial events, thought some commentators, the



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

eclipse of 1831 would not produce superstitious dread that the world would end. "Idle fears and gloomy forebodings of evil formerly raised by the appearance of phenomena caused by the regular operation of natural laws," one writer claimed, "have yielded to pleasing admiration; a change which the march of science and general diffusion of knowledge have largely contributed to effect." Another writer mocked the notion that eclipses were "signs or forerunners of great calamities." Eclipses, he thought, "necessarily result from the established laws of the planetary revolution, and take place in exact conformity with those laws.... Those who entertain the opinion that eclipses of the sun are tokens of the Divine displeasure can produce no warrant from scripture for their irrational belief. If we would look for the signs of the displeasure of God towards a nation, we can see them, not in eclipses, but in national sins and depravity of morals."

Rational explanations of atmospheric events, however, offered little solace to most Americans. In many, "a kind of vague fear, of impending danger -a prophetic presentiment of some approaching catastrophe"- was awakened, and "the reasonings of astronomy, or the veritable deductions of mathematical forecast," did little to diminish the anxiety. One correspondent reported that an "old shoe-black accosted a person in front of our office, the day previous to the eclipse, and asked him if he was not afraid. For, said he, with tears in his eyes, the world is to be destroyed to-morrow; the sun and moon are to meet ... and a great earthquake was to swallow us all! - Others said the sun and the earth would come in contact, and the latter would be consumed. Others again, were seen wending their ways to their friends and relations, covered with gloom and sadness; saying that they intended to die with them!" The day after the eclipse, preachers employed LUKE 21:25 as the text for their sermons: "there shall be signs in the sun." "In strict propriety of language," one minister observed, "it is not the sun that is eclipsed. Not the slightest shadow is cast upon the least portion of his broad disk. His beams are shot forth precisely the same. It is over us only that the momentary darkness is spread, and it is truly the earth that is eclipsed."

The spectacle, however, proved anticlimactic. "The darkness being less visible than generally expected," the heaven-gazers felt "bamboozled." "At the moment of greatest obscuration," reported one paper, "a foolish feeling of disappointment was generally prevalent and this was expressed by many in such terms as they might have used after having been taken in by the quacking advertisement of an exhibitor of fireworks or phantasmagoria. It was not half as dark as they expected." "The darkness was that of a thunder gust," snorted one observer: "The light of the sun was sickly, but shadows were very perceptible." "The multitude have been sadly disappointed," reported one editor. "They looked for darkness and the shades of light; they expected to drink in horrors, and feel the power of superstition without its terrors or apprehensions; they expected to work by candlelight, see cows come home, and poultry go ultimately to roost -to count the stars and tell them by their names; in short, to see something that they might talk about now and hereafter-

something to tell their children and grandchildren."



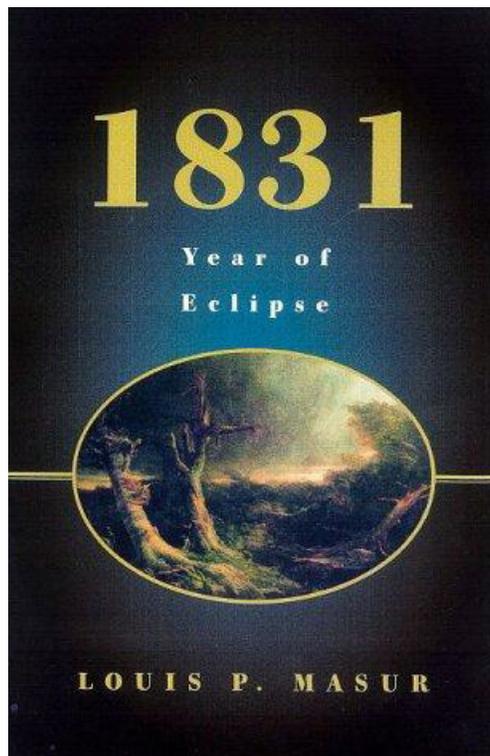
With the anticipation more disturbing than the event, some sought to cast blame. Almanac makers and newspaper editors were chastised for their extravagant predictions of darkness and glowing descriptions of the wonders that would be seen. Some thought the astronomers deserved condemnation for offering elaborate calculations that fizzled. Others blamed regional temperaments for the heightened expectations. "Our Yankee proneness to exaggeration," thought the Boston Patriot, "was manifested in a ludicrous manner on the occasion of the late eclipse." Southerners agreed: "Our eastern brethren are, as usual, up in arms about the matter – they talk of a convention. Truth to say, expectations were scarcely realized. On such occasions, people now-a-day show a shockingly morbid appetite – they look for portentous signs, for ghastly gleanings of fiery comets, the rushing up, with dire intimations of the 'northern lights,' and expect to see 'clouds of dark blood to blot the sun's broad light, / And angry meteors shroud the world in night.'" "

However much the eclipse disappointed, it served as metaphor and omen. Edward Everett, senator from Massachusetts, reported that "a motion was made in the House of Representatives to adjourn over till Monday in consequence of the darkness which was to prevail." The motion did not pass, and Everett quipped, "After sitting so frequently when there is darkness inside the House, it would be idle I think to fly before a little darkness on the face of the heavens." The United States Gazette, which feverishly opposed the re-election of President Andrew Jackson, joked that "the solar eclipse has not attracted as much attention here, as the late curious obscuration of one of the smaller stars in the constellation, Jupiter Jackson." With greater sobriety, the editor of the Philadelphia Gazette

observed that "the affairs of the Eastern hemisphere ... have reached a thrilling and portentous crisis. An irresistible spirit of reform seems burning with occult but mighty energy among the nations.... An eclipse in Europe at the present time might be considered as an omen. In this country, where it has lately occurred, the sunshine of regulated freedom appears alone to rest."

Unmoved by editorial, ministerial, astronomical, or political pronouncements and predictions, on the day of the eclipse some Philadelphians went ice-skating. The coldest winter in decades had frozen the Delaware River, and thousands of citizens chose to pass the day in recreation. The Saturday Bulletin reported, "It is probable that fifteen thousand persons were amusing themselves by sliding and skating on the river, while the numerous booths, or travelling dram-shops which were located at short distances apart, throughout the whole city front, were observed to do a brisk business in hot punch, smoked sausages, crackers, and ten-for-a-cent cigars. Sober citizens, whom we have observed never exceed a regular dog-trot, while walking our streets, were now capering around with the agility of a feather in a whirlwind."

One artist drew the scene. On February 12, Edward William Clay set up his easel by the Delaware River and produced an image of citizens at play. Men of all classes slip and swirl, some into one another's arms, as they skate the day away. To the right, a rough-hewn citizen warms himself with a drink; a woman looks on contentedly. A black man, in stereotypical comic fashion, slides helplessly away, his hat lost. All is movement and motion, energy and action. But the sky is gray, the light is pale, and dusk is approaching.





TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

Louis P. Masur titled his book 1831: YEAR OF ECLIPSE: That's apparently short for 1831: YEAR OF THE ECLIPSED ECLIPSE. Now is somebody going to write a history book titled 1957: YEAR OF THE THIRD WORLD WAR THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN AS EXPECTED?

Although nothing whatever was visible to the naked eye at any point north of the Gulf Coast (where a brief minor "nibble" might possibly have been noted by some extraordinarily attentive observer), [Maria Mitchell](#), age 12, assisted her father in his attempts to use his amateur astronomical equipment to view the moon as it passed, invisible to the naked eye, close by but at no point touching upon the disk of the sun. Although it is of record that this attempt was made (they were attempting to determine the exact longitude of [Nantucket Island](#)), I very much doubt that –so close to the solar brilliance– they would have been able by the use of available instruments to make any readings at all.

Louis P. Masur to the contrary notwithstanding, here are the salient events that might have (but did not) create scholarly monographs entitled perhaps 1806: YEAR OF ECLIPSE or perhaps 1868: YEAR OF ECLIPSE:

Date	Type	Size	Length	Name
May 3, 1375 BCE	Total	1.029	02m05s	Ugarit Eclipse
June 5, 1302 BCE	Total	1.080	06m24s	Early Chinese Eclipse
April 16, 1178 BCE	Total	1.060	04m34s	Homer's "Odyssey"
April 20, 899 BCE	Annular	0.959	03m05s	China's "Double-Dawn" Eclipse
June 15, 763 BCE	Total	1.060	04m59s	Assyrian Eclipse
April 6, 648 BCE	Total	1.069	05m02s	Archilochus's Eclipse
May 28, 585 BCE	Total	1.080	06m05s	Herodotus/Thales Eclipse (Medes vs. Lydians)
May 19, 557 BCE	Total	1.026	02m22s	The Siege of Larisa
October 2, 480 BCE	Annular	0.932	07m58s	Xerxes's Eclipse
August 3, 431 BCE	Annular	0.984	01m04s	Peloponnesian War
March 21, 424 BCE	Annular	0.943	04m38s	8th Year of Peloponnesian War
November 24, 29 CE	Total	1.022	01m59s	Crucifixion of Christ?
March 19, 33 CE	Total	1.058	04m06s	Crucifixion of Christ?
April 30, 59 CE	Total	1.019	01m50s	Plinius's Eclipse
March 20, 71 CE	Hybrid	1.007	00m35s	Plutarch's Eclipse
June 6, 346 CE	Total	1.059	03m58s	no name
July 19, 418 CE	Total	1.046	03m52s	no name
November 24, 569 CE	Total	1.036	03m17s	Eclipse Preceding Birth of Mohammad
January 27, 632 CE	Annular	0.984	01m40s	Death of Mohammad's Son Ibrahim
December 7, 671 CE	Annular	0.924	10m18s	no name
May 5, 840 CE	Total	1.076	05m46s	Emperor Louis's Eclipse (Treaty of Verdun)
May 14, 1230	Total	1.060	03m17s	Major European Eclipse
May 3, 1715	Total	1.063	04m14s	Edmund Halley's Eclipse



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

August 5, 1766	Annular	0.943	05m15s	Captain Cook's Eclipse
June 16, 1806	Total	1.060	04m55s	Tecumseh's Eclipse
August 18, 1868	Total	1.076	06m47s	King of Siam's Eclipse
July 29, 1878	Total	1.045	03m11s	Pike's Peak Eclipse
January 22, 1879	Annular	0.970	03m03s	Zulu War Eclipse
April 17, 1912	Hybrid	1.000	00m02s	The "Titanic" Eclipse
May 29, 1919	Total	1.072	06m51s	Einstein's Eclipse (Test of General Relativity)
January 24, 1925	Total	1.030	02m32s	NYC's Winter Morning Eclipse
August 31, 1932	Total	1.026	01m45s	Great Maine Eclipse

 May: [Friend](#) Joseph Macy, a New-Yorker although born on [Nantucket Island](#), and two Hicksites from the midwest, guided the formation of a new 30-member [Hicksite](#) Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends on [Nantucket Island](#).

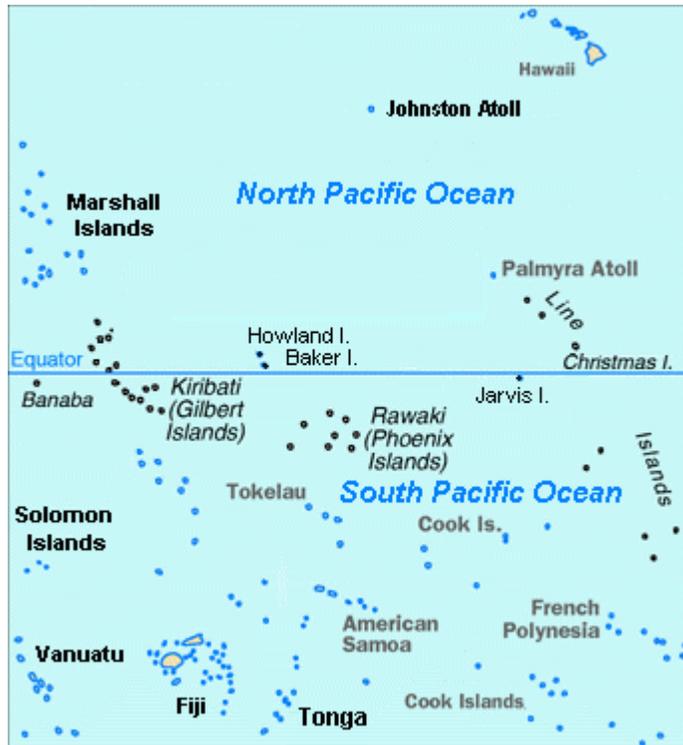
 December 8, Thursday: 1st Meeting for Worship of the new [Hicksite](#) branch of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on [Nantucket Island](#), in their new meetinghouse.

The committee overseeing the Royal Academy of Music forbade Dr. William Crotch to instruct female students (he had kissed one of the lasses whom he considered to be doing excellent work in harmony).

1832



Captain Michael Baker of the whaler Gideon Howard was the first westerner to sight what would become Baker Island. He marked it on a map and named it “New [Nantucket Island](#).” He also sighted Jarvis Island, claiming both for the United States of America.



1833

In a voyage to the islands of the South Seas, Friend Milo Calkins of the Nantucket Island whaler Independence had his mind opened up to an entirely different conception of the past, the present, and the future of humankind. "Many of my preconceived notions imbibed from my sectarian teachings were swept away and my faith in others badly shaken," he would write with frankness.



Spring: Friend Lucretia Mott began her travels as a "Public Friend" by making a speaking trip through the Quaker meetings of New York State, then took a boat to Providence, Rhode Island with a stop-over at her original home on Nantucket Island, then traveled up through Bedford, Lynn, and Salem speaking in the various monthly meetings.¹⁵



RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

(I dont' have a record that Nathaniel Hawthorne was at all interested in Mott's visit to Salem. In June, however, when President Jackson also visited Salem, Hawthorne would be present in the crowd, and cheering.)

15. I do not know whether she made it to Boston or to Concord on this trip — but I would like to know.

1835

➡ Friend [Lucretia Mott](#), who had been born a Coffin on [Nantucket Island](#), held four appointed meetings and two meetings for worship on the island. For one of these appointed meetings, all island blacks were specifically invited to attend.



[Friend John Greenleaf Whittier](#) was elected to the Massachusetts legislature.

➡ May 17, Sunday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

1st day 16th [sic] Rode into Hudson & attended their Meeting, which tho' small was a solid good on[e] A Short testimony by Abigail Hall & another encouraging one by Rachael Gardner of [Nantucket](#) who with her Husband Benj Gardner & Elizabeth Mitchell were there on a visit from [Nantucket](#) - We returned to Stockport & dined -towards night we took a walk to Columbiaville, an interesting village, where are Manufacturings for Cotton &c so round by Joseph Marshalls House. -

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1836

➡ From this year until 1842, [Maria Mitchell](#) would function as the 1st librarian of the Nantucket Atheneum (in its original building, the one in which [Frederick Douglass](#) would lecture on August 11, 1841, the building which, along with most of its contents, would be destroyed in the great [Nantucket](#) fire of 1846).

1837

[Edgar Allan Poe](#) used the theory of Captain John Cleves Symmes to facilitate the plot of his THE NARRATIVE OF ARTHUR GORDON PYM OF [NANTUCKET](#).

1841

July: David Ruggles refused to sit in the “Blacks Only” section of the steamboat [STEAMBOAT](#) to [Nantucket Island](#), and was of course ejected.



August 9, Monday: The Lake Erie steamboat *Erie* departed from Buffalo, New York, heading for [Chicago](#). When it caught on fire off Silver Creek, 215 people perished.

At the Liberty Hall in [New Bedford](#), William C. Coffin heard [Frederick Douglass](#) speak briefly at the annual meeting of the Bristol County Anti-Slavery Society, and invited him to come along to the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society convention that was to take place the next day on [Nantucket Island](#). (Others at this meeting: George Bradburn, John A. Collins, Parker Pillsbury, Edmund Quincy.)



In his journal [Henry Thoreau](#) mused “If I am not I — who will be?” (He would transcribe this in 1842.)



August 9: It is vain to try to write unless you feel strong in the knees.

Any book of great authority and genius seems to our imagination to permeate and pervade all space. Its spirit, like a more subtle ether, sweeps along with the prevailing winds of the country. Its influence conveys a new gloss to the meadows and the depths of the wood, and bathes the huckleberries on the hills, as sometimes a new influence in the sky washes in waves over the fields and seems to break on some invisible beach in the air. All things confirm it. It spends the mornings and the evenings.¹⁶

Everywhere the speech of Menu demands the widest apprehension and proceeds from the loftiest plateau of the soul. It is spoken unbendingly to its own level, and does not imply any contemporaneous speaker.

I read history as little critically as I consider the landscape, and am more interested in the atmospheric tints and various lights and shades which the intervening spaces create than in its groundwork and composition. It is the morning now turned evening and seen in the west, - the same sun, but a new light and atmosphere. Its beauty is like the sunset; not a fresco painting on a wall, flat and bounded, but atmospheric and roving, or free. But, in reality, history fluctuates as the face of the landscape from morning to evening. What is of moment if it is its hue and color. Time hides no treasures - we want not its *then* - but its *now*. We do not complain that the mountains in the horizon are blue and indistinct — they are the more like the heavens...

Of what moments are facts that can be lost. — which need to be commemorated? The monument of death will outlast the memory of the dead. The Pyramids do not tell the tale confided to them. The living fact commemorates itself- Why look in the dark for light- look in the light rather. Strictly speaking, the Societies have not recovered one fact from oblivion, but they themselves are instead of the fact that is lost. The researcher is more memorable than the researched. The crowd stood admiring the mist and the dim outline of the trees seen

16. A WEEK, page 157; Riv. 195.



through it, and when one of their number advanced to explore the phenomenon, with fresh admiration all eyes were turned on his dimly retreating figure. Critical acumen is exerted in vain to uncover the past; the *past* cannot be *presented* – we cannot know what we are not– But one veil hangs over past– present– and future– and it is the province of the historian to find out not what was, but what is. When a battle has been fought you will find nothing but the bones of men and beasts — where a battle is being fought there are hearts beating.¹⁷ We will sit on a mound and muse, and not try to make these skeletons stand on their legs again. Does nature remember, think you, that they *were* men, or not rather that they *are* bones?

Ancient history has an air of antiquity. It should be more modern. It is written as if the spectator should be thinking of the back side of the picture on the wall, as if the author expected the dead would be his readers, and wished to detail to them their own experience. Men seem anxious to accomplish an orderly retreat through the centuries –earnestly rebuilding the works behind as they are battered down by the incroachments of time– but while they loiter — they and their works both fall a prey to the enemy.

Biography is liable to the same objection — it should be autobiography. Let us not leave ourselves empty that so vexing our bowels — we may go abroad and be somebody else to explain him– If I am not I– who will be?– As if it were to dispense justice to all– But the time has not come for that.¹⁸

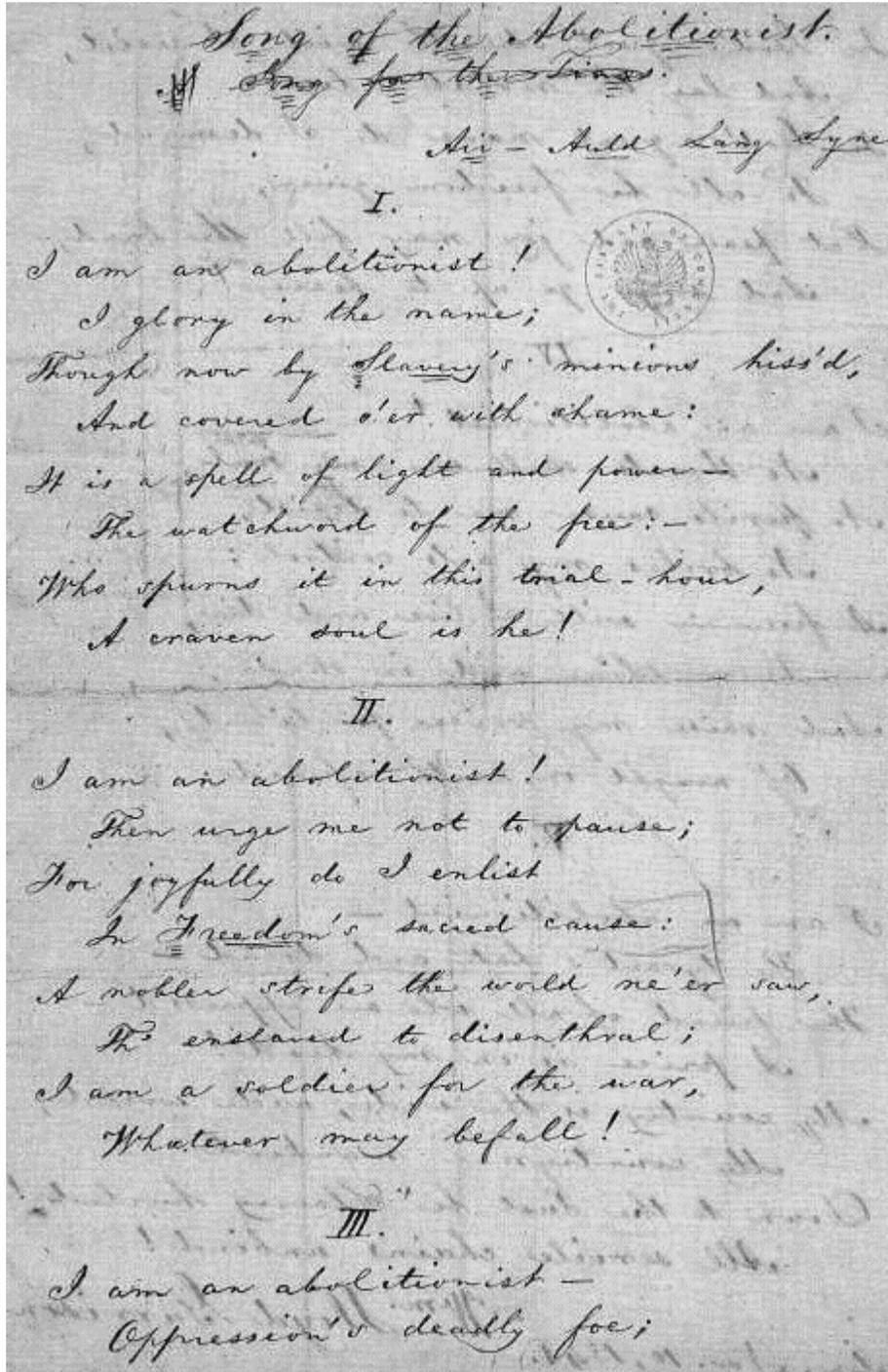
17.The poet W.H. Auden has in 1962 brought forward a snippet from this day’s entry as:

THE VIKING BOOK OF APHORISMS, A PERSONAL SELECTION BY W.H. AUDEN...

Pg	Topic	Aphorism Selected by Auden out of Thoreau
238	History	It is the province of the historian to find out, not what was, but what is. Where a battle has been fought, you will find nothing but the bones of men and beasts; where a battle is being fought, there are hearts beating.

18. A WEEK, pages 161-63; Riv. 200-04.

August 10, Tuesday: William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, [Frederick Douglass](#), Parker Pillsbury, and John A. Collins, as members of a “promiscuous” (that is, “integrated”) group totaling about 45, boarded the steamboat to [Nantucket Island](#) from which David Ruggles had been ejected in July, and held an antislavery meeting in the “Blacks Only” section. Possibly, they sang (to the tune of “Auld Lang Syne” all six stanzas of the following song, which was composed by Garrison during this year:



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

August 11: [Waldo Emerson](#) presented an oration “The Method of Nature” before the Society of the Adelphi at Waterville College in Maine. This would be printed, initially in Boston by Samuel G. Simpkins, and then at the back of the 1841 volume of the issues of [THE DIAL](#). Henry Thoreau would have a copy in his personal library.

AUGUST 11, 1841
THE DIAL, 1841

On this day and the following one, there would be two perspectives presented at an anti-slavery convention at the Atheneum Hall on [Nantucket Island](#). First, that of William Lloyd Garrison:¹⁹



NARRATIVE
➔



I attended an anti-slavery convention in Nantucket, at which it was my happiness to become acquainted with FREDERICK DOUGLASS.... I shall never forget his first speech at the convention – the extraordinary emotion it excited in my own mind – the powerful impression it created upon a crowded auditory, completely taken by surprise – the applause which followed from the beginning to the end of his felicitous remarks.... I rose, and declared that Patrick Henry of revolutionary fame, never made a speech more eloquent in the cause of liberty.... I reminded the audience of the peril which surrounded this self-emancipated young man.... I appealed to them, whether they would ever allow him to be carried back into slavery....

PATRICK HENRY

19. You will recognize this portrait: it hangs on the wall of the amalgamated home portrayed in that offensive cartoon.

Then that of [Frederick Douglass](#):



I had not long been a reader of the "Liberator," before I got a pretty correct idea of the principles, measures and spirit of the anti-slavery reform. I took right hold of the cause.... I seldom had much to say at the meetings, because what I wanted to say was said so much better by others. But, while attending an anti-slavery convention at Nantucket, on the 11th of August, 1841, I felt strongly moved to speak, and was at the same time much urged to do so by Mr. William C. Coffin, a gentleman who had heard me speak in the colored people's meeting at New Bedford. It was a severe cross, and I took it up reluctantly. The truth was, I felt myself a slave, and the idea of speaking to white people weighed me down. I spoke but a few moments, when I felt a degree of freedom, and said what I desired with considerable ease. From that time until now, I have been engaged in pleading the cause of my brethren - with what success, and with what devotion, I leave those acquainted with my labors to decide.



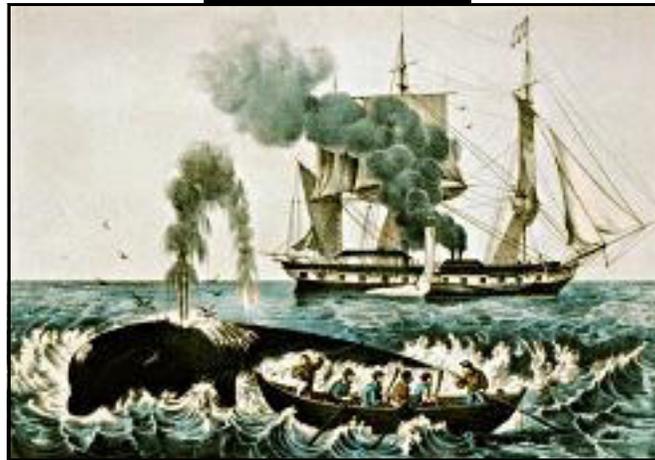
NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

1842

August 10, Wednesday: [Frederick Douglass](#) spoke in The Great Hall at the Atheneum of [Nantucket Island](#), at an Anti-Slavery Convention.

November: Having only recently been imprisoned for a period in Tahiti for having participated in the revolt aboard an Australian whaler, and upon release having spent some time exploring the fauna and flora of Tahiti and Eimeo, [Herman Melville](#) signed aboard the [Charles & Henry](#), a [Nantucket Island](#) whaler.



(After being discharged from this whaler in Honolulu sometime during 1842 or 1843 or 1844, Melville would live as a beachcomber for a few months before signing aboard the frigate [USS United States](#).)

1843

Friend [Maria Mitchell](#), an astronomer, had stopped wearing clothing made of cotton in protest against human slavery. She was disowned by her [Nantucket Island](#) monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) for “questioning” upon acknowledging that her “mind was not settled on religious subjects.” Eventually she would affiliate as a [Unitarian](#).



“It seems to me that if anything would make me an infidel, it would be the threats lavished against unbelief.”

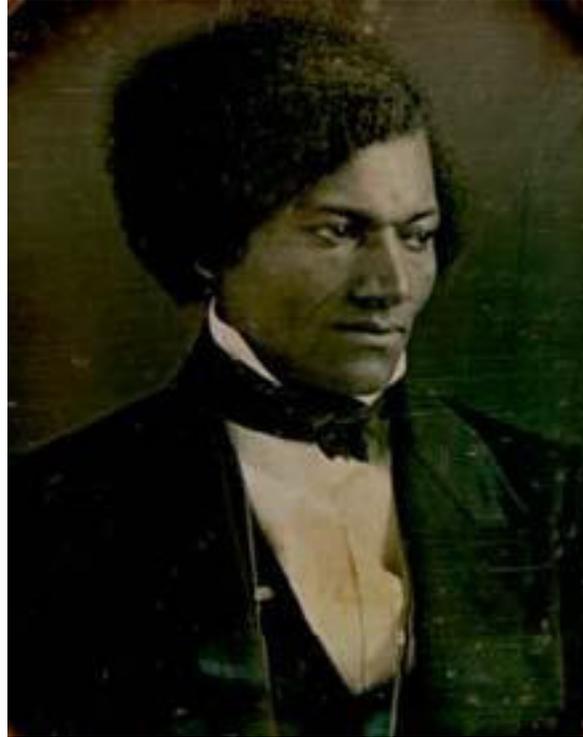
– Professor [Maria Mitchell](#)



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

June 23, Friday-25, Sunday: [Frederick Douglass](#) was attending an Anti-Slavery Convention in Atheneum Hall in [Nantucket](#).



On the 23rd, [Isaac Hecker](#) wrote to the Reverend [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#):

I have returned this afternoon from Alcott's and am as much pleased with the people and spirit there as I anticipated.... I do not know but that my mind will lead me to make at least a trial at Fruitland as they call their place. Mr Alcott seemed very desirous that I should come and perhaps may. I made a visit to the Shakers while there and a lesson of Self-denial I did receive from them. I had an intimate and interesting conversation with them. I go to Brook Farm this afternoon.



1844

In this year, an eleven-year campaign to racially integrate the public schools of [Boston](#) began.²⁰

Complaints were being made against the principal of the black [Smith School](#) in [Boston](#), Abner Forbes, by black parents, that he was cruel in his punishment of their children while under his care and that he was, anyway, incompetent to teach them simply because he was utterly convinced of their mental inferiority to himself and other whites. His prejudice and prejudgment rendered him ineffective as an educator. The school board exonerated Forbes but announced that eventually he would be transferred to a white school the capabilities of the children of which he would be able to respect.

John A. Collins wrote in [The Social Pioneer and Herald of Progress](#), of [Boston](#), that the aim was “not to free Negro slaves alone, but to remove the cause which makes us all slaves.”

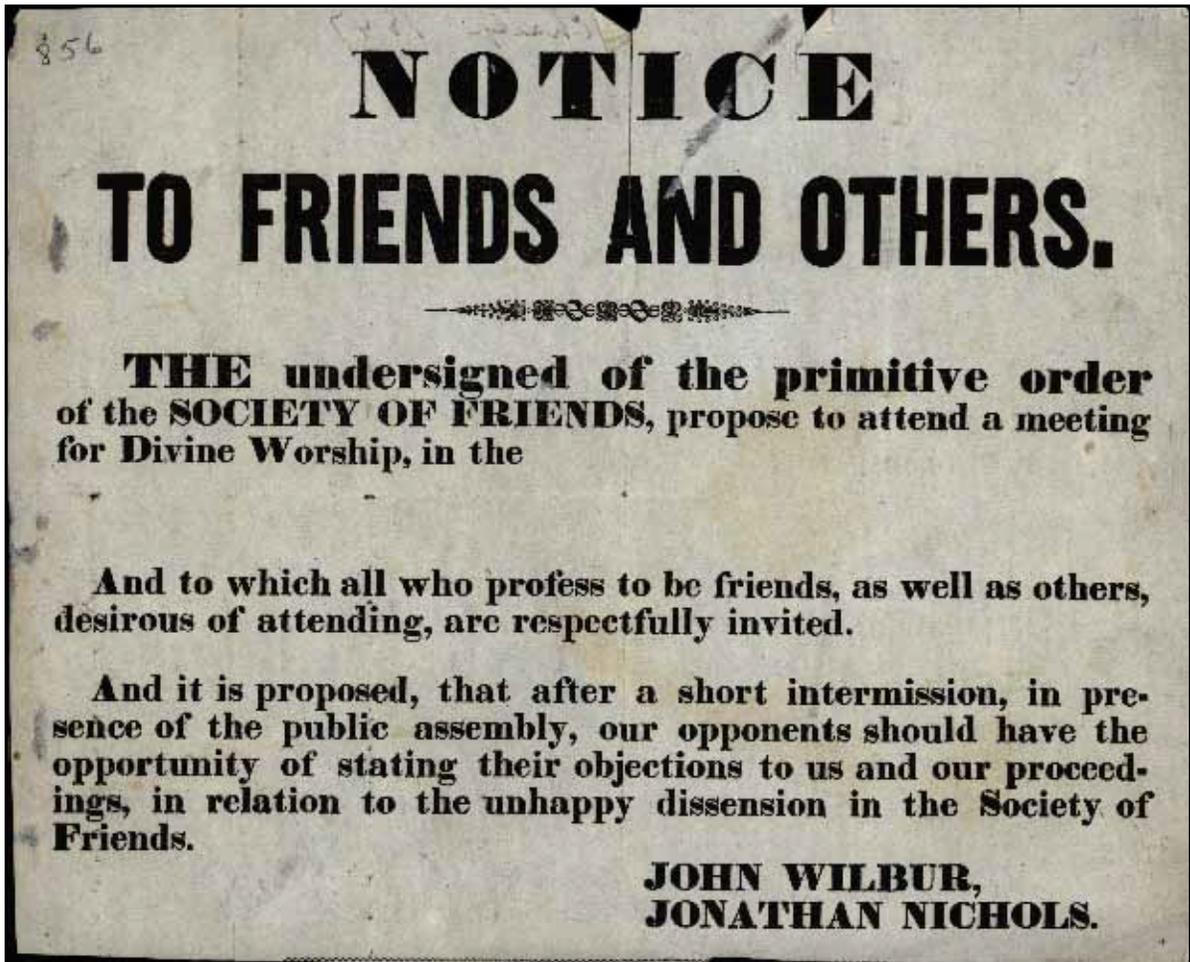
An ongoing boycott by the black parents of Salem had caused the enrollment in the racially segregated public school there to decline from a peak of about 100 to a low of 20 to 25 pupils. At this point Salem desegregated its school system.

On [Nantucket Island](#), the school board expelled all black children from all its public schools save one, which they then would designate as their Negro school. The black citizens of the island would boycott this segregated school.

20. The desegregation of the schools of [Boston](#), Salem, and [Nantucket Island](#) would first be fully described in 1968. Prior to that date, historians had tended to assign historical influence only to leaders who were white, and had tended to entirely ignore the existence of the “Friends of Equal School Rights” group and in general the fact that blacks were boycotting the segregated school system.

1845

The Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends was split by the great Wilburite schism of 1844, having to do with the message of Friend John Wilbur, a Rhode Island farmer and traveling Friend (minister). At the New England Yearly Meeting they disowned, not only Friend John, but his entire monthly meeting as well. (These separated Friends formed a separate body which they called the "New England Yearly Meeting of Friends" to distinguish it from the "Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England," or simply "the smaller body" in distinction from "the larger body," the Gurneyite bolsheviks – adherents of the English evangelical Friend Joseph John Gurney– claiming 8,136 adherents, the Wilburite mensheviks claiming only 629. One group, the Wilburites, became the Providence Monthly Meeting of North Providence/Pawtucket. This meeting would be laid down in 1881, its members joining to South Kingstown Monthly Meeting and worshiping until 1892 as the Pawtucket Worship Group.)



As the Yearly Meeting School affiliated with the Gurneyite grouping, letting the Wilburites depart, its enrollment plunged to 55 resident young scholars.

Friends Olney Thompson and Lydia Thompson came to the school as superintendents.



Superintendents.

1819-1824.	Purinton, Matthew and Betsy.
1824-1835.	Breed, Enoch and Lydia.
1829-1835.	Gould, Stephen and Hannah, Asst. Supts.
1835-1836.	Davis, Seth and Mary.
1837.	Breed, Enoch and Lydia.
1838-1839.	Rathbun, Rowland and Alice.
1840-1844.	Wing, Allen and Olive.
1845-1846.	Thompson, Olney and Lydia.
1847.	Congdon, Jarvia and Lydia.
1847-1852.	Cornell, Silas and Sarah M.

The Monthly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on [Nantucket Island](#) declared itself to be a Wilburite meeting, following the teachings of Friend [John Wilbur](#) in regard to the ongoing divine inspiration provided by an Inner Light. With the Gurneyite split among the [Quakers](#), some of the former members of the disbanded [Hicksite](#) meeting on [Nantucket Island](#) joined this new Gurneyite meeting.

READ ALL ABOUT IT

1846

On [Nantucket Island](#), the voters were electing a new school board to bring to an end their 2-year experiment in racially segregated schooling.

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

July 13, Monday: A fire broke out in a hat store on Main Street in downtown [Nantucket](#), and within a few hours many of the town’s homes and businesses, including the Athenaeum at which [Maria Mitchell](#) had been librarian and at which Frederick Douglass had lectured –along with most of its contents– were consumed. In a few years, when the California gold rush would begin, there would be no reason why a quarter of the town’s male occupants should not go there to try to rebuild their fortunes. By 1850 many of the vessels of the once-great Nantucket whaling fleet would lie rotting along the banks of the San Francisco harbor, providing a beginning to the extension of the town into the Tenderloin flats along the waterfront to the east of Telegraph Avenue. Even today, when a new foundation is begun in this district, often the timbers of a Nantucket whaler are disclosed. In the whaling industry, with the arrival of the railroad there in the 1840s, [New Bedford](#) harbor would become preminent.

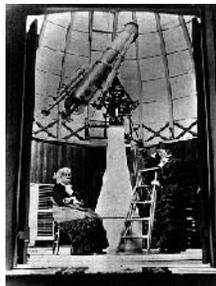
1847

October 1, Friday: On [Nantucket Island](#), the parents of former Friend [Maria Mitchell](#), who had been read out of her monthly [Quaker](#) meeting in 1843 at the age of 25 on account of her tendency toward “questioning,” had a noisy party going with their friends and Maria couldn’t sleep, so she went up onto the roof of the Pacific National Bank of which her dad was head cashier, to look at the sky through her telescope. Five degrees from Polaris, the north star, she detected a spot which did not belong on the standard star map. She had discovered a telescopic [comet](#) (Comet 1847 VI, the modern designation of which is C/1847 T1). The only previous woman to discover a comet had been Caroline Herschel, who had noticed one that was visible to the naked eye. Maria would be honored in America and Europe, with the King of Denmark presenting her with a gold medal.

ASTRONOMY

1848

[Maria Mitchell](#) of [Nantucket Island](#), who had in the previous year discovered a new comet, was selected to become a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Boston — she would be the 1st woman to be so honored.²¹



(Almost a century would pass before a 2d woman would make the grade.)

21. But when push would come to shove, upon her installation in 1850 at the Charleston meeting, she would discover on the document that she was merely an “honorary” member of the society. Is an honorary member a real member? –No, not exactly.

\$200 Reward.

RANAWAY from the subscriber, on the night of Thursday, the 30th of September,

FIVE NEGRO SLAVES,

To-wit: one Negro man, his wife, and three children.

The man is a black negro, full height, very erect, his face a little thin. He is about forty years of age, and calls himself *Washington Reed*, and is known by the name of Washington. He is probably well dressed, possibly takes with him an ivory headed cane, and is of good address. Several of his teeth are gone.

Mary, his wife, is about thirty years of age, a bright mulatto woman, and quite stout and strong.

The oldest of the children is a boy, of the name of FIELDING, twelve years of age, a dark mulatto, with heavy eyelids. He probably wore a new cloth cap.

MATILDA, the second child, is a girl, six years of age, rather a dark mulatto, but a bright and smart looking child.

MALGOLM, the youngest, is a boy, four years old, a lighter mulatto than the last, and about equally as bright. He probably also wore a cloth cap. If examined, he will be found to have a swelling at the navel.

Washington and Mary have lived at or near St. Louis, with the subscriber, for about 15 years.

It is supposed that they are making their way to Chicago, and that a white man accompanies them, that they will travel chiefly at night, and most probably in a covered wagon.

A reward of \$150 will be paid for their apprehension, so that I can get them, if taken within one hundred miles of St. Louis, and \$200 if taken beyond that, and secured so that I can get them, and other reasonable additional charges, if delivered to the subscriber, or to THOMAS ALLEN, Esq., at St. Louis, Mo. The above negroes, for the last few years, have been in possession of Thomas Allen, Esq., of St. Louis.

WM. RUSSELL.

ST. LOUIS, Oct. 1, 1847.



1850

After July 1: x



After July 1: {*Twenty-seven leaves missing*} passenger sees & remembers—he suddenly taken aback with surprise and exclaimed— What is that?— Why have you been aboard the steamers a year said we & never saw that before! It was even so— somebody has said that sailors never look over the side of their vessel—nor know how long they have been out.

—He had never chanced to empty his scuppers just there before— No child could make the voyage once without watching for half an hour so conspicuous or interesting an object.

Sand Plateau from 20 to 50 rods in width.

Des. E C C Barn. says of Monomoy Beach “above 3 miles have been added to it during the past 50 years” 1802 In a note on the beach pea in the Hist Col. 1802 it is said “In 1555, during a time of great scarcity, the people about Orford in Sussex were preserved from perishing by eating the seeds of this plant, which grew there in great abundance upon the sea coast. Cows, horses, sheep, & goats eat it.” but the writer who quotes this could not learn that the experiment was ever tried in Barn. County

Disappearance of Webbs’ Island between Cape Cod & [Nantucket](#) v p 147

Black birds still attack the corn, I saw them at it, & the scare crows which I mistook for men set to frighten them away. Yet they plant but 3 or 4 kernels in a hill & let fewer plants remain than we do

Beach grass propagated both by roots & seeds.

Lots in Prov. “transferred by quit claim deeds” Hist col 1802

A cow wanting salt will sometimes lick out all the soft part of a cod on the flakes with her tongue. Might live there all my days and never see it done.

“Not a single brook”? in Truro.

“Wells dug near the shore are dry at low water, or rather at what is called young flood, but are replenished with the flowing of the tide.” ac. of Truro. p 198.

Roger Williams says that “for the English swine dig & root these clams, wheresoever they come, & watch the low water, as the Indian women do; therefore of all the English cattle the swine, as also because of their filthy disposition, are most hateful to all the natives; and they call them filthy cut-throats.”

Dewey says *Psamma arenaria* “2-4 feet high, of a sea-green color;

“It is widely diffused over the world. In the Hebrides it is formed into ‘mats for pack saddles, bags, hats,’ &c Lind.” paper exten. made at Dorch.

Beach Pea *pisum maritimum*.

Hudsonia ericoides—or heath-like 2nd kind.

The scallop shell

It is remarkable that the Pilgrims in the account of their journey down the cape do not speak of the Atlantic or appear to have been aware of the narrowness of the Cape though they must once at least have been within a few rods of it—& must have heard the sound of the surf if it had not been drowned perchance by the sough of the wind among the pines which proves how densely wooded comparatively the Cape must have been then. By the sea they mean the Bay By the Bay Cape Cod Harbor.

He remembered well when gulls were taken in the gull-house—but the English he said robbed their nests now down east and there were few or none came here—and when small birds were caught with the frying pan at night—that his father once lost a valuable colt from this cause. A party from Wellfleet having lighted their fire for this purpose one dark night on Billingsgate island 20 fine horses which were pastured there & this colt among them became frightened & endeavoring in the dark to cross the passage which separated them from the neighboring beach which was fordable at night were swept into the sea & drowned. Many horses are at present pastured all summer on the islands & beaches in Wellfleet & Eastham & Orleans

But these are only the disadvantages of a fire. It is without doubt an advantage on the whole. It sweeps and ventilates the forest floor, & makes it clear and clean. It is nature's besom. By destroying the punier underwood it gives prominence, it gives prominence to the larger & sturdier trees, & makes a wood in which you can go & come

I have often remarked with how much more comfort & pleasure I could walk in wood through which a fire had run the previous year. It will clean the forest floor like a broom—perfectly smooth & clear—no twigs left to crackle under foot—the dead & rotten wood removed & thus in the course of 2 or 3 years new huckleberry fields are created for the town—for birds & men.

When the lightning burns the forest its director make no apology to man—and I was but his agent. Perhaps we owe to this accident partly some of the noblest natural parks. It is inspiring to walk amid the fresh green sprouts

TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

of grass & shrubbery pushing upward through the charred surface with more vigorous growth
 –Wherever a man goes, men will pursue & paw him with their dirty institutions.
 Sometimes an arrow-head is found with the mouldering shaft still attached– V. Ch. Hubbard. A little boy from Compton R.I. told me that his father found an arrowhead sticking in a dead tree & nearly buried in it Where is the hand that drew that bow? The arrow shot by the Indian is still found occasionally sticking in the trees of our forest.
 It is astonishing how much information is to be got out of very unpromising witnesses. A wise man will avail himself of the observation of all Every boy and simpleton has been an observer in some field–so many more senses they are, differently located. Will inquire of eyes what they have seen of ears What they have herd of hands what they have done of feet where they have been.

October 23: According to Elizabeth Cady Stanton, speaking retrospectively in 1870,
 “The movement in England, as in America, may be dated from the first National Convention, held at Worcester, Mass., October, 1850.”



FEMINISM

Although [Angelina Emily Grimké Weld](#) was elected to be a member for this vital convention, it would turn out that she would be unable to attend.

Why was it that Stanton, and also Susan B. Anthony, [Friend Lucretia Mott](#), and other pioneers regarded this 1850 Convention in Worcester as the beginning of the crusade for woman’s equality? Why had it not been the 1848 meeting at Seneca Falls for which Stanton had drafted the celebrated Declaration of Sentiments and in which Mott had played such a leading role?

- The gathering at Seneca Falls had been largely a local affair as would be several others that followed, whereas by way of radical contrast this Worcester convention had attracted delegates from most of the northern states.
- Seneca Falls had sparked discussion but it was not clear in its aftermath that there was a national constituency ready to take up the cause. The attendance in response to this Worcester meeting’s Call of those who wanted to see a woman’s rights movement, and the positive reaction to its published proceedings both here and in Europe, showed that a sufficient number of women, and some men, were indeed ready.

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

- This 1850 convention eventuated in a set of standing committees which marked the beginnings of organized work for woman's rights.

The records of the convention may be studied at:

<http://www.wvhp.org/Resources/WomensRights/proceedings.html>

[Waldo Emerson](#) declined to address this convention, and continued to decline such invitations until the 1855 convention in [Boston](#), saying "I do not think it yet appears that women wish this equal share in public affairs," meaning of course "I do not think it yet appears that we wish to grant women this equal share in public affairs."



Were I in a sarcastic mood, I would characterize this attitude by inventing a news clipping something like the following:

His Excellency, Hon. Ralph W. Emerson, Representative of the Human Race, treated with the woman, Mrs. James Mott, for purposes of pacification and common decency.

At the beginning of the meeting a Quaker male, [Friend](#) Joseph C. Hathaway of Farmington, New York, was appointed President *pro tem*. As the meeting was getting itself properly organized, however, [Paulina Wright Davis](#) was selected as President, with [Friend](#) Joseph sitting down instead as Secretary for the meeting. At least three New York Quakers were on the body's Central Committee — Hathaway, [Friend](#) Pliny Sexton and [Friend](#) Sarah H. Hallock, and we immediately note that although this Central Committee was by and large female, two of the three Quakes in this committee were male.

During the course of this convention [Friend Lucretia Mott](#) had occasion to straighten out Wendell Phillips, and he later commented that "she put, as she well knows how, the silken snapper on her whiplash," that it had been "beautifully done, so the victim himself could enjoy the artistic perfection of his punishment."



Now here is a news clipping from this period, equally legitimately offensive, which I **didn't** make up.²²



His Excellency, Gov. Ramsey and Hon. Richard W. Thompson, have been appointed Commissioners, to treat with the Sioux for the lands west of the Mississippi.

The list of the “members” of this Convention is of interest in that it includes [Sophia Foord](#) of Dedham MA, [Sojourner Truth](#) of [Northampton](#), [Elizabeth Oakes Smith](#) the lyceum lecturer, etc. The newspaper report described Truth’s appearance as dark and “uncomely.” [Friend Lucretia Mott](#), a leader at the convention, described Truth more charitably as “the poor woman who had grown up under the curse of Slavery.” Those on the list, those who officially registered as “members” of the Convention, some 267 in all, were only a fraction of the thousands who attended one or more of the sessions. As J.G. Forman reported in the New-York [Daily Tribune](#) for October 24, 1850, “it was voted that all present be invited to take part in the discussions of the Convention, but that only those who signed the roll of membership be allowed to vote.” The process of signing probably meant that people who arrived together or sat together would have adjacent numbers in the sequence that appears in the Proceedings. This would explain the clustering of people by region and by family name:

- 1 Hannah M. Darlington Kennett Square, Pennsylvania
- 2 T.B. Elliot [Boston](#)
- 3 Antoinette L. Brown Henrietta NY
- 4 Sarah Pillsbury Concord NH
- 5 Eliza J. Kenney Salem MA
- 6 M.S. Firth Leicester MA
- 7 Oliver Dennett Portland ME
- 8 Julia A. McIntyre Charlton MA
- 9 Emily Sanford Oxford MA
- 10 H.M. Sanford Oxford MA
- 11 C.D.M. Lane Worcester
- 12 Elizabeth Firth Leicester MA
- 13 S.C. Sargent [Boston](#)
- 14 C.A.K. Ball Worcester
- 15 M.A. Thompson Worcester
- 16 Lucinda Safford Worcester
- 17 S.E. Hall Worcester
- 18 S.D. Holmes Kingston MA
- 19 Z.W. Harlow Plymouth MA
- 20 N.B. Spooner Plymouth MA
- 21 Ignatius Sargent [Boston](#)
- 22 A.B. Humphrey [Hopedale](#)
- 23 M.R. Hadwen Worcester
- 24 J.H. Shaw [Nantucket Island](#)
- 25 Diana W. Ballou [Cumberland](#) RI
- 26 Olive Darling Millville MA
- 27 M.A. Walden [Hopedale](#)
- 28 C.M. Collins Brooklyn CT
- 29 A.H. Metcalf Worcester
- 30 P.B. Cogswell Concord NH
- 31 Sarah Tyndale Philadelphia
- 32 A.P.B. Rawson Worcester
- 33 Nathaniel Barney [Nantucket Island](#)
- 34 Sarah H. Earle Worcester MA

22. From the [Dakota Tawaxitku Kin](#), or [The Dakota Friend](#), St. Paul, Minnesota, November 1850. This word “Sioux,” incidentally, is a hopelessly offensive and alienating term, for it is short for the Ojibwa term “*nadouessioux*” or “enemy.” A better term would be “Dakota,” which in the Dakota language means “union” or “ally.” It tells you a lot about the patronizing attitude of these missionaries, that they would be willing to use an offputting term like “Sioux” in this newspaper.



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

- 35 Parker Pillsbury Concord NH
- 36 Lewis Ford Abington MA
- 37 J.T. Everett Princeton MA
- 38 Loring Moody Harwich MA
- 39 [Sojourner Truth](#) Northampton
- 40 [Friend](#) Pliny Sexton Palmyra NY
- 41 Rev. J.G. Forman W. Bridgewater MA
- 42 Andrew Stone M.D. Worcester
- 43 Samuel May, Jr. Leicester MA
- 44 Sarah R. May Leicester MA
- 45 Frederick Douglass Rochester NY
- 46 Charles Bigham Feltonville MA
- 47 J.T. Partridge Worcester
- 48 Eliza C. Clapp Leicester MA
- 49 Daniel Steward East Line MA
- 50 E.B. Chase Valley Falls MA
- 51 [Sophia Foord](#) Dedham MA
- 52 E.A. Clark Worcester
- 53 E.H. Taft Dedham MA
- 54 Olive W. Hastings Lancaster, Pennsylvania
- 55 Rebecca Plumly Philadelphia
- 56 S.L. Hastings Lancaster, Pennsylvania
- 57 Sophia Taft
- 58 Anna E. Ruggles Worcester
- 59 Mrs. A.E. Brown Brattleboro VT
- 60 Janette Jackson Philadelphia
- 61 Anna R. Cox Philadelphia
- 62 Cynthia P. Bliss [Pawtucket](#), Rhode Island
- 63 R.M.C. Capron [Providence](#)
- 64 M.H. Mowry [Providence](#)
- 65 Mary Eddy [Providence](#)
- 66 Mary Abbott [Hopedale](#)
- 67 Anna E. Fish [Hopedale](#)
- 68 C.G. Munyan [Hopedale](#)
- 69 Maria L. Southwick Worcester
- 70 Anna Cornell Plainfield CT
- 71 S. Monroe Plainfield CT
- 72 Anna E. Price Plainfield CT
- 73 M.C. Monroe Plainfield CT
- 74 F.C. Johnson Sturbridge MA
- 75 Thomas Hill Webster MA
- 76 Elizabeth Frail Hopkinton MA
- 77 Eli Belknap Hopkinton MA
- 78 M.M. Frail Hopkinton MA
- 79 Valentine Belknap Hopkinton MA
- 80 Phebe Goodwin West Chester, Pennsylvania
- 81 Edgar Hicks Brooklyn NY
- 82 Ira Foster Canterbury NH
- 83 Effingham L. Capron Worcester
- 84 Frances H. Drake Leominster MA
- 85 Calvin Fairbanks Leominster MA
- 86 E.M. Dodge Worcester
- 87 Eliza Barney [Nantucket Island](#)
- 88 Lydia Barney [Nantucket Island](#)
- 89 Alice Jackson Avondale, Pennsylvania
- 90 G.D. Williams Leicester MA



TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

- 91 Marian Blackwell Cincinnati OH
- 92 Elizabeth Earle Worcester
- 93 [Friend](#) Joseph C. Hathaway Farmington NY
- 94 E. Jane Alden Lowell MA
- 95 Elizabeth Dayton Lowell MA
- 96 Lima H. Ober [Boston](#)
- 97 Mrs. Lucy N. Colman Saratoga Springs NY
- 98 Dorothy Whiting Clintonville MA
- 99 Emily Whiting Clintonville MA
- 100 Abigail Morgan Clinton MA
- 101 Julia Worcester Milton NH
- 102 Mary R. Metcalf Worcester
- 103 R.H. Ober [Boston](#)
- 104 D.A. Mundy [Hopedale](#)
- 105 Dr. S. Rogers Worcester
- 106 Jacob Pierce PA
- 107 Mrs. E.J. Henshaw W. Brookfield MA
- 108 Edward Southwick Worcester
- 109 E.A. Merrick Princeton MA
- 110 Mrs. C. Merrick Princeton MA
- 111 Lewis E. Capen PA
- 112 Joseph Carpenter New-York
- 113 Martha Smith Plainfield CT
- 114 Lucius Holmes Thompson CT
- 115 Benj. Segur Thompson CT
- 116 C.S. Dow Worcester
- 117 S.L. Miller PA
- 118 Isaac L. Miller PA
- 119 Buel Picket Sherman CT
- 120 Josiah Henshaw W. Brookfield MA
- 121 Andrew Wellington Lexington MA
- 122 Louisa Gleason Worcester
- 123 Paulina Gerry Stoneham MA
- 124 [Lucy Stone](#) West Brookfield MA
- 125 Ellen Blackwell Cincinnati OH
- 126 Mrs. Chickery Worcester
- 127 Mrs. F.A. Pierce Worcester
- 128 C.M. Trenor Worcester
- 129 R.C. Capron Worcester
- 130 Wm. Lloyd Garrison [Boston](#)
- 131 Emily Loveland Worcester
- 132 Mrs. S. Worcester Worcester
- 133 Phebe Worcester Worcester
- 134 Adeline Worcester Worcester
- 135 Joanna R. Ballou MA
- 136 Abby H. Price [Hopedale](#)
- 137 B. Willard MA
- 138 T. Poole Abington MA
- 139 M.B. Kent [Boston](#)
- 140 D.H. Knowlton
- 141 E.H. Knowlton Grafton MA
- 142 G. Valentine MA
- 143 A. Prince Worcester
- 144 Lydia Wilmarth Worcester
- 145 J.G. Warren Worcester
- 146 Mrs. E.A. Stowell Worcester



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

- 147 Martin Stowell Worcester
- 148 Mrs. E. Stamp Worcester
- 149 C. M. Barbour Worcester
- 150 Daniel Mitchell [Pawtucket](#), Rhode Island
- 151 Alice H. Easton
- 152 Anna Q.T. Parsons [Boston](#)
- 153 C.D. McLane Worcester
- 154 W.H. Channing [Boston](#)
- 155 Wendell Phillips [Boston](#)
- 156 Abby K. Foster Worcester
- 157 S. S. Foster Worcester
- 158 [Paulina Wright Davis](#) [Providence](#)
- 159 Wm. D. Cady Warren MA
- 160 Ernestine L. Rose New-York
- 161 Mrs. J. G. Hodgden Roxbury MA
- 162 C.M. Shaw [Boston](#)
- 163 Ophelia D. Hill Worcester
- 164 Mrs. P. Allen Millbury MA
- 165 Lucy C. Dike Thompson CT
- 166 E. Goddard Worcester
- 167 M.F. Gilbert West Brookfield MA
- 168 G. Davis [Providence](#)
- 169 A.H. Johnson Worcester
- 170 W.H. Harrington Worcester
- 171 E.B. Briggs Worcester
- 172 A.C. Lackey Upton MA
- 173 Ora Ober Worcester
- 174 A. Barnes Princeton RI
- 175 Thomas Provan [Hopedale](#)
- 176 Rebecca Provan [Hopedale](#)
- 177 A.W. Thayer Worcester
- 178 M.M. Munyan Millbury MA
- 179 W.H. Johnson Worcester
- 180 Dr. S. Mowry [Chepachet](#) RI
- 181 George W. Benson [Northampton](#)
- 182 Mrs. C.M. Carter Worcester
- 183 H.S. Brigham Bolton MA
- 184 E.A. Welsh Feltonville MA
- 185 Mrs. J.H. Moore Charlton MA
- 186 Margaret S. Merrit Charlton MA
- 187 Martha Willard Charlton MA
- 188 A.N. Lamb Charlton MA
- 189 Mrs. Chaplin Worcester
- 190 Caroline Farnum
- 191 N.B. Hill Blackstone MA
- 192 K. Parsons Worcester
- 193 Jillson Worcester
- 194 E.W.K. Thompson
- 195 L. Wait [Boston](#)
- 196 Mrs. Mary G. Wright CA
- 197 F.H. Underwood Webster MA
- 198 Asa Cutler CT
- 199 J.B. Willard Westford MA
- 200 Perry Joslin Worcester
- 201 [Friend](#) Sarah H. Hallock Milton NY
- 202 Elizabeth Johnson Worcester



TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

- 203 Seneth Smith Oxford MA
- 204 Marian Hill Webster MA
- 205 Wm. Coe Worcester
- 206 E.T. Smith Leominster MA
- 207 Mary R. Hubbard
- 208 S. Aldrich Hopkinton MA
- 209 M.A. Maynard Feltonville MA
- 210 S.P.R. Feltonville MA
- 211 Anna R. Blake Monmouth ME
- 212 Ellen M. Prescott Monmouth ME
- 213 J.M. Cummings Worcester
- 214 Nancy Fay Upton MA
- 215 M. Jane Davis Worcester
- 216 D.R. Crandell Worcester
- 217 E.M. Burleigh Oxford MA
- 218 Sarah Chafee Leominster MA
- 219 Adeline Perry Worcester
- 220 Lydia E. Chase Worcester
- 221 J.A. Fuller Worcester
- 222 Sarah Prentice Worcester
- 223 Emily Prentice Worcester
- 224 H.N. Fairbanks Worcester
- 225 Mrs. A. Crowl Worcester
- 226 Dwight Tracy Worcester
- 227 J.S. Perry Worcester
- 228 Isaac Norcross Worcester
- 229 M.A.W. Johnson Salem OH
- 230 Mrs. C.I.H. Nichols Brattleboro VT
- 231 Charles Calistus Burleigh Plainfield CT
- 232 E.A. Parrington Worcester
- 233 Mrs. Parrington Worcester
- 234 Harriet F. Hunt [Boston](#)
- 235 Chas F. Hovey [Boston](#)
- 236 [Friend Lucretia Mott](#) Philadelphia
- 237 Susan Fuller Worcester
- 238 Thomas Earle Worcester
- 239 Alice Earle Worcester
- 240 Martha B. Earle Worcester
- 241 Anne H. Southwick Worcester
- 242 Joseph A. Howland Worcester
- 243 Adeline H. Howland Worcester
- 244 O.T. Harris Worcester
- 245 Julia T. Harris Worcester
- 246 John M. Spear [Boston](#)
- 247 E.J. Alden
- 248 E.D. Draper [Hopedale](#)
- 249 D.R.P. Hewitt Salem MA
- 250 L.G. Wilkins Salem MA
- 251 J.H. Binney Worcester
- 252 Mary Adams Worcester
- 253 Anna T. Draper
- 254 Josephine Reglar
- 255 Anna Goulding Worcester
- 256 Adeline S. Greene
- 257 Silence Bigelow
- 258 A. Wyman



NANTUCKET ISLAND

- 259 L.H. Ober
- 260 Betsey F. Lawton
- 261 Emma Parker
- 262 Olive W. Hastings
- 263 Silas Smith
- 264 Asenath Fuller
- 265 Denney M.F. Walker
- 266 Eunice D.F. Pierce
- 267 Elijah Houghton

TUCKERNUCK

[Chepachet](#) RI
Philadelphia
Lancaster MA (error?)
IO



1853

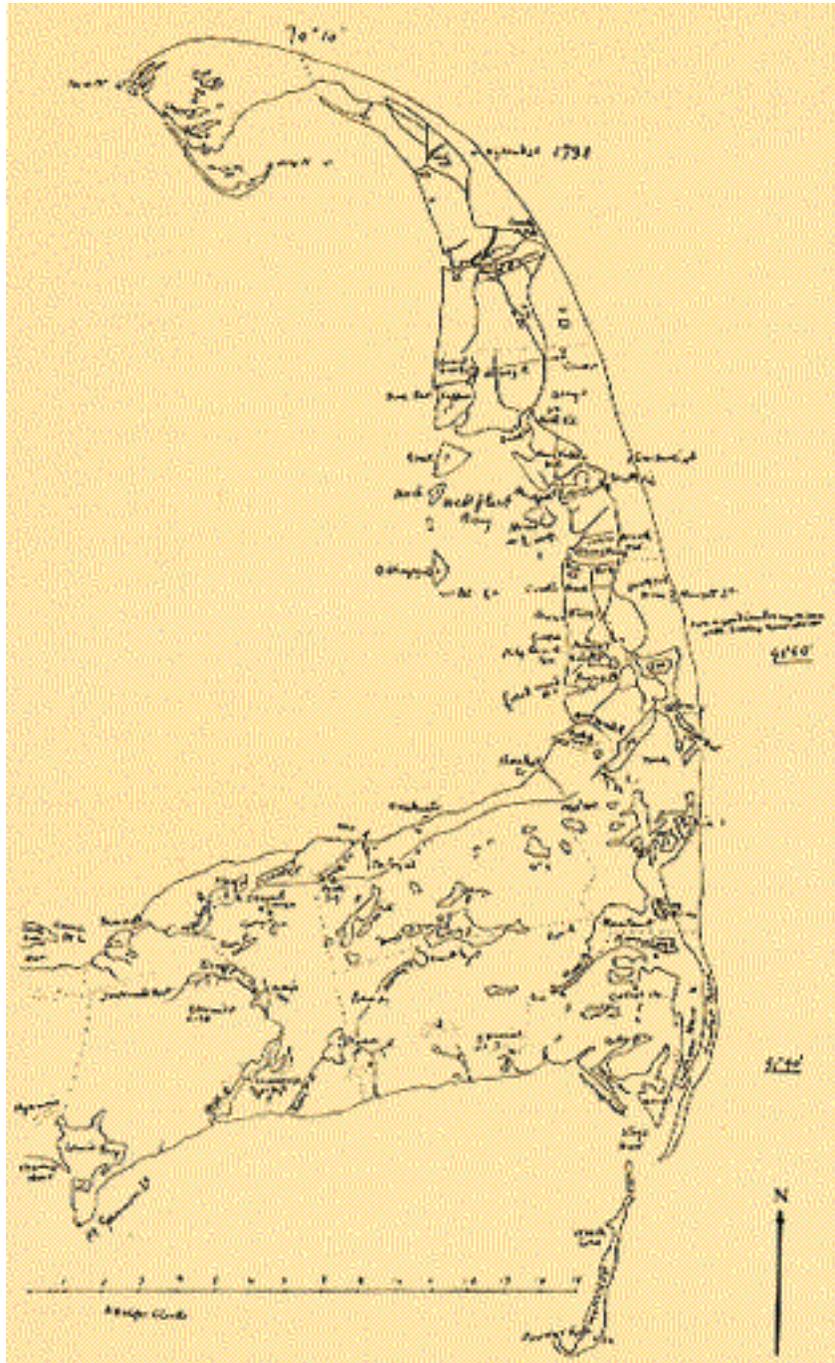
September 5, Monday: [Waldo Emerson](#) to his journal, on Cape Cod:

Went to Yarmouth Sunday 5; to Orleans Monday, 6th; to Nauset Light on the back side of Cape Cod. Collins, the keeper, told us he found obstinate resistance on Cape Cod to the project of building a light house on this coast, as it would injure the wrecking business. He had to go to Boston, & obtain the strong recommendation of the Port Society. From the high hill in the rear of Higgins's, in Orleans, I had a good view of the whole cape & the sea on both sides. The Cape looks like one of the Newfoundland banks just emerged, a huge tract of sand half-covered with poverty grass, & beach grass & for trees abele & locust & plantations of pitchpine. Some good oak, & in Dennis & Brewster were lately good trees for shiptimber & still are well wooded on the east side. But the view I speak of looked like emaciated orkneys - Mull, Islay, & so forth, made of salt dust, gravel, & fishbones. They say the Wind makes the roads, &, as far as [Nantucket](#), a large part of the real estate was freely moving back & forth in the air. I heard much of the coming railroad which is about to reach Yarmouth & Hyannis, &, they hope, will come to Provincetown. I fancied the people were only waiting for the railroad to reach them in order to evacuate the country. For the starknakedness of the country could not be exaggerated. But no, nothing was less true. They are all attached to what they call **the soil**. Mr Collins had been as far as Indiana; but, he said, hill on hill - he felt stifled, & longed for the Cape, "where he could see out." And whilst I was fancying that they would gladly give away land to anybody that would come & live there, & be a neighbor: no, they said, all real estate had risen, all over the Cape, & you could not buy land at less than 50 dollars per acre. And, in Provincetown, a lot on the Front street of forty feet square would cost 5 or 600 dollars.

Still I saw at the Cape, as at Nantucket, they are a little tender about your good opinion: for if a gentleman at breakfast, says, he don't like Yarmouth, all real estate seems to them at once depreciated 2 or 3 per cent.

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK



It would appear that this was traced by Thoreau himself.

December 28, Wednesday: [Michael Flannery](#)'s predicament was still on [Henry Thoreau](#)'s mind, for he wrote in his journal:



E.W., who got the premium on farms this year, keeps twenty-eight cows, which are milked before breakfast, or 6 o'clock, his hired men rising at 4.30 A.M.; but he gives them none of the milk in their coffee.

A year later Thoreau would use a slightly revised version of this passage about local farmer "E.W." or Elijah Wood Jr. in a lecture he delivered before the [Nantucket](#) Athenaeum, "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" as one of several illustrations of money-grubbing.

[Paragraph 14] I know another farmer who keeps twenty-eight cows—whose hired man and boy rise daily at half past four in mid winter, and milk the cows before breakfast, which is at six o'clock by candlelight—and they get none of the milk in their coffee.

(The boy mentioned was in all likelihood [Michael](#)'s son [Johnny Flannery](#).)

THOREAU ON THE IRISH

1854

December 13, Wednesday: Sometime prior to this date [Henry Thoreau](#) had accepted Andrew Whitney's invitation to deliver his "What Shall It Profit?" lecture at the Nantucket Atheneum on December 28th (below), because on this date an advertisement in the [Nantucket Island Inquirer](#) (page 3, column 7) announced such an appearance.

December 19, Tuesday: George Washington Briggs stocked [Louisa May Alcott](#)'s FLOWER FABLES on the shelves of his bookstore on Washington Street in Boston in time for the [Christmas](#) season, as a potential child's [Christmas](#) gift item. He placed an advertisement for it in the Boston [Evening Transcript](#):²³

Flower Fables. this day published by Geo. W. Briggs & Co. the most beautiful Fairy book that has appeared for a long time, written when in her sixteenth year, by Louisa May Alcott, a young lady of Boston. It will be the most popular juvenile issued this season.

THE ALCOTT FAMILY

23. The young author would be rather disappointed with the cash proceeds of authorship: "I only got a very small sum for them owing to Mr Briggs' dishonesty." There seems to be no reason to suspect dishonesty, as the gross for the 550 copies that the book sold would have been approximately \$340 and [Louisa](#)'s cut would have been 10% or \$34, approximately what she did in fact receive from George Washington Briggs.



In approximately this year of 1854 the Children's Aid Society was being founded and a Newsboy's Lodging House was being created so that the abandoned boys who were forced to hawk newspapers on the streets, referred to at the time as "newsies," would not have to find their night shelter on the street during the winters. This evidently began a tradition of treating newsboys with great kindness and consideration, as useful citizens of the commonwealth — as witness the following corporate communication from the pages of the Editor & Publisher:

Treat them well, that is, entertain them, give them help when they need it, and invite them to Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners and they will show their gratitude by selling your papers in preference of all others.



Henry Thoreau wrote to his new correspondent, Friend Daniel Ricketson to accept the hospitality of his home "Brooklawn" in New Bedford while lecturing there, and to ask his host to "warn Mr Mitchell that I accepted at once his invitation to lecture on the 26th of this month."

Concord Mass. Dec 19th 1854.

Dear Sir,

I wish to thank you again for your sympathy. I had counted on seeing you when I came to New Bedford, though I did not know exactly how near to it you permanently dwelt; therefore I gladly accept your invitation to stop at your house.

I am going to lecture at Nantucket the 28th, and as I suppose I must improve the earliest opportunity to get there from New Bedford, I will endeavor to come on Monday that I may see yourself and New Bedford before my lecture.

I should like right well to see your ponds, but that is hardly to be thought of at present. I fear that it is impossible for me to combine such things with the business of lecturing. You cannot serve God and Mammon. However perhaps I shall have time to see something of your country. I am aware that you have not so much snow as we.

There has been excellent sleighing here ever since the 5th ult.

Mr Cholmondeley has left us; so that I shall come alone.

Will you be so kind as to warn Mr Mitchell that I accepted at once his invitation to lecture on the 26th of this month, for I do not know that he has got my letter.

Excuse this short note from Yours truly

Henry D. Thoreau.

Thoreau also wrote a nice long letter to H.G.O. Blake:

Concord Mass. Dec. 19th 1854.

Mr. Blake,

I suppose you have heard of my truly providential meeting with Mr Brown — providential because it saved me from the suspicion that my words had fallen

NANTUCKET ISLAND



*altogether on stoney ground, when it turned
out that there was some Worcester soil
there. You will allow me to consider that
I correspond with him thro you.
I confess that I am a very bad cor-
respondent, so far as promptness of
reply is concerned, but then I am sure
to answer sooner or later. The longer
I have forgotten you, the more I re-
member you. For the most part
I have not been idle since I saw you.
How does the world go with you? or
rather, how do you get along without
it? I have not yet learned to live,
that I can see, and I fear that I shall
not very soon. I find however, that in
the long run things correspond to my
original idea—that they correspond
to nothing else so much,—and thus a
man may really be a true prophet*

Page 2

*without any great exertion. [The day]
is never so dark, nor the night even,
but that the laws, at least, of light
still prevail, and so may make it
light in our minds if they are open to
the truth. There is considerable danger
that a man will be crazy between
dinner and supper—but it will not
directly answer any good purpose
that I know of, & it is just as
easy to be sane. We have got to know
what both life and death are before
we can begin to live after our own
fashion. Let us be learning our
a b c s as soon as possible. I never
yet knew the sun to be knocked down
and rolled thro' a [mud puddle]; he comes
out honor bright from behind every
storm. Let us then take sides with the
sun—seeing we have so much leisure[]
[!]et us not put all we prize into
a foot-ball to be kicked, when a bladder
will do as well.
When an Indian is burned, his body [may be]
broiled, it may be no more than a beef-*

steak. What of that? They may broil his heart, but they do not therefore broil his courage,—his principles. Be of good courage! That is the main thing.

Page 3

this cold winter to pay for the fuel that will be required to warm them? I suppose I have burned up a pretty good sized tree to-night—& for what? I settled with Mr Tarbell for it the other day—but that was'nt the final settlement.

I got off cheaply from him. At last, One will say— “Let us see, how much wood did you burn, Sir? And I shall shudder to think that the next question will be, “What did you do while you were warm?”— Do we think the ashes will pay for it?— that God is an ash-man? It is a fact that we have got to render [an] an account for the deeds done in the body.

Who knows but we shall be better the next year than we have been the past? At any rate, I wish you a really new year—commencing from the instant you read this,—and happy or u[n]happy according to your deserts.

Henry D. Thoreau

Dec. 19, 1854.

In the afternoon he enjoyed his “first tolerable skating” of the winter, going half a mile up the Assabet River past Clamshell Bank or Hill (Gleason 23/G5) and there walking to the foot of Fair Haven Hill (Gleason H7).



Off Clamshell I heard and saw a large flock of *Fringilla linaria* [Common Redpoll]  *Carduelis flammæa* over the meadow no doubt it as these I saw on the 9th. (But I saw then, and on the 10th, a larger and whiter bird also; may have been the bunting.) Suddenly they turn aside in their flight and dash across the river to a large white birch fifteen rods off, which plainly they had distinguished so far. I afterward saw many more in the Potter swamp up the river. They were commonly brown or dusky above, streaked with yellowish white or ash and more or less white or ash beneath. Most had a crimson crown or frontlet. and a few crimson neck and breast. very handsome. Some with a bright-crimson crown and clear-white breasts. I suspect that these were young males. They keep up an incessant twittering, varied from time to time with some mewling notes and occasionally for some unknown reason, they will all suddenly dash away with that universal loud note (twitter) like a bag of nuts They are busily clustered in the tops of the birches picking the seeds out of the catkins! and sustain themselves in all kinds of attitudes, sometimes head downwards. while about this. Common as they are now, and were winter before last. I saw none last winter.

December 27, Wednesday: [Thomas Wilson Dorr](#) died in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).



[Henry Thoreau](#) took a steamer out of Hyannis port for [Nantucket Island](#), and there he spent the night at the home of Captain Edward W. Gardiner. The [New Bedford Evening Standard](#) (page 2, column 2) observed that the previous night's lecture, which it had advertised as being on the subject of "Getting a Living,"

displayed much thought, but was in some respects decidedly peculiar.



[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) would later write to [Thoreau](#) to advise that he had

heard several sensible people speak well of your lecture

but would conclude that the lecture

was not generally understood.

[Friend Daniel](#)'s attitude was shared by Charles W. Morgan, who had been present for the lecture and who afterward wrote in his journal:



evening to the Lyceum where we had a lecture from the eccentric Henry J. [sic] Thoreau— The Hermit author very caustic against the usual avocations & employments of the world and a definition of what is true labour & true wages— audience very large & quiet—but I think he



December 28, Thursday: Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#), back from the Pacific, had expected to be greeted as a hero, and that hadn't happened, or at least hadn't happened to Perry's satisfaction. —So he had turned to [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), the big-name ghostwriter of the era, asking for a book about the incredible intrepidity of his intimidation of the [Japanese](#), casting himself as the great white hope. On this day Hawthorne commented in his journal, "It would be a very desirable labor for a young literary man, or for that matter, an old one; for the world can scarcely have in reserve a less hackneyed theme than Japan." (Hawthorne, strangely reluctant to explore the mentality of the Great White Shark, would sic the stuffed-shirt wannabee on [Herman Melville](#), his transparent excuse being that Melville was great at writing that Pacific stuff, and then this commodious Commodore would attempt to himself author this book about himself — excreting what has been said to be a wooden monstrosity.)

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

On [Nantucket Island](#): Captain Gardiner carried [Henry Thoreau](#) in his carriage to Siasconset and they went up to the top of the lighthouse at Sancoty Head and then visited the Athenaeum's museum, seeing the "various South Sea implements, etc. etc., brought home by the whalers." In the evening Thoreau delivered "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" before the Athenaeum.

THOREAU'S SERMON

[Various versions of "LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE", variously titled, would be delivered:

- "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" on December 6, 1854 at Railroad Hall in [Providence](#)
- "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" on December 26, 1854 in the [New Bedford](#) Lyceum
- "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" on December 28, 1854 at the Athenaeum on [Nantucket Island](#)
- On January 4, 1855 in the [Worcester](#) Lyceum, as "The Connection between Man's Employment and His Higher Life"
- "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" on February 14, 1855 in the [Concord](#) Lyceum
- "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" on November 16, 1856 for the [Eagleswood](#) community
- "Getting a Living" on December 18, 1856 in the vestry of the Congregational Church of Amherst, New Hampshire
- "LIFE MISSPENT" on Sunday morning, October 9, 1859 to the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)'s 28th Congregational Society in Boston Music Hall
- "LIFE MISSPENT" on Sunday, September 9, 1860 at Welles Hall in Lowell.]

December 29, Friday: At 7:30 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) left [Nantucket Island](#) on the return boat, heading back toward Concord.

**1855**

January 1, Monday: 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



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

January 6, Saturday: A combined force of French and Imperial Chinese troops attacked [Shanghai](#), held by the Small Sword Society. Though the struggle was furious, the attackers were driven back.

[CHINESE CIVIL WAR](#)

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#). Friend Ricketson learned of Thoreau's good experience, lecturing on [Nantucket Island](#):

*Concord Mass Jan 6th
1855*

Mr Ricketson,

I am pleased to hear from the shanty whose inside and occupant I have seen. I had a very pleasant time at Brooklawn, as you know,—and thereafter at Nantucket. I was obliged to pay the usual tribute to the sea, but it was more than made up to me by the hospitality of the Nantucketers. Tell Arthur that I can now compare notes with him, for though I went neither before nor behind the mast, since we had n't any—I went with my head hanging over the side all the way. In spite of all my experience I persisted in reading to the Nantucket people the lecture which I read at New Bedford, and I found them to be the very audience for me. I got home Friday night after being lost in the fog off Hyannis.

I have not yet found a new jacknife but I had a glorious skating with channing the other day on the skates found long ago.

Mr Cholmondeley sailed for England direct in the America on the 3^d—after spending a night with me. He thinks even to go to the east & enlist!

Last night I returned from lecturing in Worcester—

I shall be glad to see you when you come to Boston, as will also my mother & sister who know something about you as an abolitionist.

Come directly to our house.

Please remember me to Mrs Ricketson, & also to the

{One-half page missing}

young folks

Yrs

Henry D Thoreau

[Giacomo Costantino Beltrami](#) died in the large palazzo on his Azienda estate in Filottrano, Ancona, [Italy](#) at the age of 76. The various knick-nacks that he had brought back from his travels in Minnesota and [Mexico](#) are now on display in the glass cases of the Beltrami Museum in Filottrano, for what they are worth. A bronze bust has been sculpted by Vittorio Morelli:



1857

August 28, Friday



August 28, 1857: Polygonum Pennsylvanicum by bank, how long?
R.W.E. says that he saw Asclepias tuberosa abundant and in bloom on Naushon last week; also a sassafras stump three feet across. The deer escape by running to the mainland, and in winter cross on the ice. The last winter they lost about one hundred and fifty sheep, whose remains have never been found. Perhaps they were

NANTUCKET ISLAND

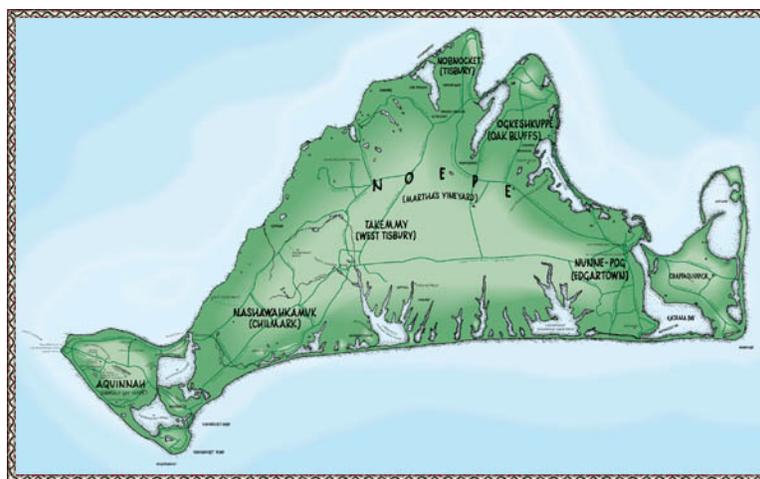
TUCKERNUCK

carried off on the ice by the sea. Looking through a glass, E. saw vessels sailing near Martha’s Vineyard with full sails, yet the water about them appeared perfectly smooth, and reflected the vessels. They thought this reflection a mirage, i. e. from a haze.

As we were riding by Deacon Farrar’s lately, E. Hoar told me in answer to my questions, that both the young Mr. Farrars, who had now come to man’s estate, were excellent young men, –their father, an old man of about seventy, once cut and corded seven cords of wood in one day, and still cut a double swath at haying time, and was a man of great probity, –and to show the unusual purity of one of them, at least, he said that, his brother Frisbie, who had formerly lived there, inquiring what had become of a certain hired man whom he used to know, young Mr. Farrar told him that he was gone, “that the truth was he one day let drop a prophane word, and after that he thought that he could not have him about, and so he got rid of him.” It was as if he had dropped some filthy thing on the premises, an intolerable nuisance, only to be abated by removing the source of it. I should like to hear as good news of the New England farmers generally. It to some extent accounts for the vigor of the father and the successful farming of the sons.

I read the other day in the Tribune that a man apparently about seventy, and smart at that, went to the police in New York and asked for a lodging, having been left by the cars or steamboat when on his way to Connecticut. When they asked his age, native place, etc., he said his name was McDonald; he was born in Scotland in 1745, came to Plymouth, Mass., in 1760, was in some battles in the Revolution, in which he lost an eye; had a son eighty-odd years old, etc.; but, seeing a reporter taking notes, he was silent. Since then I heard that an old man named McDonald, one hundred and twelve years old, had the day before passed through Concord and was walking to Lexington, and I said at once he must be a humbug. When I went to the post office to-night (August 28), G. Brooks asked me if I saw him and said that he heard that he told a correct story, except he said that he remembered Braddock’s defeat! He had noticed that Dr. Heywood’s old house, the tavern, was gone since he was here in the Revolution. Just then Davis, the postmaster, asked us to look at a letter he had received. It was from a Dr. Curtis of Newton asking if this McDonald belonged about Concord as he said, and saying that his story appeared to be a correct one. Davis had never heard of him, and, as we presumed him to be a humbug, we advised Davis to write accordingly. But I afterward remembered reading nearly a year ago of a man of this name and age in St. Louis, who said he had married a wife in Concord before the Revolution, and then began to think that his story might be all true. So it seems that a veteran of a hundred and twelve, after an absence of eighty-seven years, may come back to the town where he married his wife in order to hunt up his relatives, and not only have no success, but be pronounced a humbug!!²⁴

NAUSHON ISLAND
NANTUCKET ISLAND
MARTHA’S VINEYARD



24. These last two paragraphs appear in the manuscript journal under date of July 28, having been written at the time when he was writing up his recent Maine excursion. The date in the second paragraph indicates this as their proper place.



1863

A migrating flock of the Eskimo curlew, *Numenius borealis*, “the greatest delicacy because of their great amounts of fat,” flew over Nantucket Island. The locals stopped blasting the skies only when the island’s total supplies of shot and gunpowder were exhausted — some 7,000 or 8,000 of the “doughbird” carcasses were collected (the last confirmed sighting of this bird would occur in 1974).²⁵

1865

FAMILIAR LETTERS FROM EUROPE put in sequence the various missives of Cornelius Conway Felton between April 1853 and March 1854 during his great adventure in tourism.

Nantucket Island, home to but a single industry, the inhumanly brutal extraction industry known as whaling,²⁶ had been suffering hard times ever since the 1840s. Many substitutes had become available for sperm oil, newer deeper harbors such as that at New Bedford had become easier to navigate from, and anyway, the sperm whale had been killed off to such a point that they were becoming more and more hard to find. An entire Nantucket crew had been lost to gold lust when a whaler had stopped in San Francisco in 1849 during the great gold rush. Whereas during the best years, as many as 85 vessels at a time had been at sea out of Nantucket, by 1853 only 15 had been sailing from that port. The island’s population had been declining and declining as various prominent families had voted with their feet. From a peak of 10,000 residents, by 1880 the island would reach a low point of only 3,500 residents. The last whaling ship would leave the island on its final whaling voyage in 1869 — departing from a rotting wharf adjoining an empty street. However, during this year the foundation of a new industry for the island was laid, tourism, when the editors of the Nantucket Inquirer and Mirror, Henry D. Robinson and Roland B. Hussey, printed a 3-page pamphlet aimed at the Boston resident with money to burn. Come to the “Beautiful Island of Nantucket,” the pamphlet suggested, where you will find unsurpassed “Pure Sea Air” and inhabitants eager to serve your every need. Meanwhile the newspaper was urging island inhabitants to change their thinking: “We have something to sell; that something is health, comfort, and pleasure.”

Frederick Law Olmsted submitted a “Preliminary Report upon the Yosemite and Big Tree Grove” to the Commissioners of California’s new Yosemite park (this 1st systematically establishes the philosophical justification for public preservation of great natural scenery on the basis of its unique capacity to enhance human psychological, physical, and social health, and extract moolah from the serried ranks of the tourists).

CONSERVATIONISM

John Burroughs published his 1st nature essay, “With the Birds,” in The Atlantic Monthly.²⁷

25. Quaker attitudes toward God’s creatures seem to have—in a manner we somehow don’t often get around to talking about—“drifted” over the centuries.

26. Quaker attitudes toward God’s creatures seem to have—in a manner we somehow don’t often get around to talking about—“drifted” over the centuries.



1869

A decade after the opening of the fossil oil fields of Pennsylvania, the last whaler sailed from [Nantucket Island](#).

27. The [conservation](#) movement was little more than a shabby fraud. From the historical record, these early environmental technocrats were intent not on solving our ecological crisis but on destroying the earth as quickly as possible. Their net impact has been negative: we would have been better off had we never had a conservation movement, to teach us how to manage our looting so that we looted with greater and greater effectiveness and economy. According to Samuel P. Hays's EXPLORATIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY: ESSAYS BY SAMUEL P. HAYS (Pittsburgh PA: U of Pittsburgh P, 1998), these men were mere pawns of the powers that be, careerists bought by their careers:

Conservation, above all, was a scientific movement, and its role in history arose from the implications of science and technology in modern society. Conservation leaders sprang from such fields as hydrology, forestry, agrostology, geology, and anthropology. Vigorously active in professional circles in the national capital, these leaders brought the ideals and practices of their crafts into federal resource policy. Loyalty to these professional ideals, not close association with the grass-roots public, set the tone of the Theodore Roosevelt conservation movement. Its essence was rational planning to promote efficient development and use of all natural resources. The idea of efficiency drew these federal scientists from one resource task to another, from specific programs to comprehensive concepts. It molded the policies which they proposed, their administrative techniques, and their relations with Congress and the public. It is from the vantage point of applied science, rather than of democratic protest, that one must understand the historic role of the conservation movement. The new realms of science and technology, appearing to open up unlimited opportunities for human achievement, filled conservation leaders with intense optimism. They emphasized expansion, not retrenchment; possibilities, not limitations.... They displayed that deep sense of hope which pervaded all those at the turn of the century for whom science and technology were revealing visions of an abundant future.... Conflicts between competing resource users, especially, should not be dealt with through the normal processes of politics. Pressure group action, logrolling in Congress, or partisan debate could not guarantee rational and scientific decisions. Amid such jockeying for advantage with the resulting compromise, concern for efficiency would disappear. Conservationists envisaged, even though they did not realize their aims, a political system guided by the ideal of efficiency and dominated by the technicians who could best determine how to achieve it.

1882

Edward Godfrey, a guidebook author, sensing the desperation of a neglected [Nantucket Island](#), pled with his fellow islanders: “Make [Nantucket] a watering-place, make her a manufacturing town, make her an agricultural town, make her all three, but in heaven’s name make her something!”

TOURISM

1899

[Nantucket](#)’s Surfside Hotel collapsed, sending its [tourist](#) industry went into a tailspin.

1908

The [Maria Mitchell](#) Observatory was created at [Nantucket](#).





NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

1916

October 8, Sunday: At about 5:30 AM, Captain Hans Rose's U-53 surfaced off [Nantucket Island](#) to intercept a freighter, the *Kansan*. When the freighter attempted to telegraph its plight, the U-boat jammed the transmission. One of the officers of the *Kansan* produced the ship's American papers, whereupon this vessel was allowed to proceed. At about 6:00 AM, however, the U-boat encountered the British passenger ship *Stratheden* and advised its crew and passengers to abandon ship. As soon as the crew and passengers were clear of the vessel, it was torpedoed. At 10:45 AM this was repeated the British steamship *SS West*. All told, in a period of 15 hours the U-53 would sink a total of 9 non-US vessels in international waters just off the American coast, setting 256 persons adrift. One of these vessels, a Dutch one, had been carrying gasoline to London, and another, the *Blommersdyk*, contained "absolute and conditional contraband." Although a flotilla of 16 US destroyers came out from [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#), the United States and [Germany](#) were not at war so all they could do was attempt to get in between the submarine and the international shipping. Captain Rose entered into his log that "though it would have been very desirable to extend our activities off the American coast as long as possible, yet any further delay would have endangered the whole enterprise because of the fuel supply."

WORLD WAR I

October 8, Sunday-9, Monday: President Woodrow Wilson, acting on the resolution of Congress, proclaimed these two days "Armenian Relief Days."

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE



TUCKERNUCK

NANTUCKET ISLAND

1935

September: Ample consideration was given to the runic rock that had been discovered on the beach of No Man's Land Island, three miles south of [Nantucket Island](#), and it was concluded that the inscription could only be a 20th-Century one lacking in historical cogency, and that such an inscription was congruent with the sort of effect that a sculptor known to have visited the island, [Walton Ricketson](#), might easily have achieved — either in

NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

tribute or as a prank.

STUDY THE EVALUATION



(The inscription, which over time has become less legible, has here been chalked in to make it readable, in 1927.)



1946

Writing under the *nom de plume* "Spirit of 1775," Wallace B. Conant pointed out that nobody who had any sense at all would want the United Nations, an "international organization," to place its headquarters in [Concord](#). Concord was all about nationalism and militarism, which is the very opposite of internationalism and diplomacy. Like, duh.

Mary Ogden Abbott was of the opinion that anyone who was opposed to the location of the headquarters of the United Nations in [Concord](#) would be a reactionary, or a Tory, or a rejector of Emersonian humanitarianism.

Gertrude Rideout penned a poem "The Host" about the possibility that the UN might come to bucolic [Concord](#), and according to Leslie Perrin Wilson of the Concord Free Public Library, the first stanza of this effort was

"If Jesus came to Concord Town,
We would not let him in,
Because some wise men in our midst
Believe that change is sin."

[Robert Lowell](#)'s LORD WEARY'S CASTLE (NY: Harcourt, Brace & World):

CONCORD

Ten thousand Fords are idle here in search
Of a tradition. Over these dry sticks—
The Minute Man, the Irish Catholics,
The ruined bridge and Walden's fished-out perch—
The belfry of the Unitarian Church
Rings out the hanging Jesus. Crucifix,
How can your whited spindling arms transfix
Mammon's unbridled industry, the lurch
For forms to harness Heraclitus' stream!
This Church is Concord — Concord where Thoreau
Named all the birds without a gun to probe
Through darkness to the painted man and bow:
The death-dance of King Philip and his scream
Whose echo girdled this imperfect globe.

The opening of Lowell's poem "[The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket](#)" in this volume, his elegy for his cousin 1st Lieutenant Warren Winslow who had been killed when his destroyer blew up in New York harbor on January 3, 1944 during WWII, is, almost verbatim, what appeared in [Henry Thoreau](#)'s description in [CAPE COD](#) of the bodies on the beach after the wreck of the *St. John*.

READ ALL ABOUT IT
READ THE POEM ITSELF

TIMELINE OF CAPE COD



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

CAPE COD: The brig St. John, from Galway, Ireland, laden with emigrants, was wrecked on Sunday morning; it was now Tuesday morning, and the sea was still breaking violently on the rocks. There were eighteen or twenty of the same large boxes that I have mentioned, lying on a green hill-side, a few rods from the water, and surrounded by a crowd. The bodies which had been recovered, twenty-seven or eight in all, had been collected there. Some were rapidly nailing down the lids, others were carting the boxes away, and others were lifting the lids, which were yet loose, and peeping under the cloths -for each body, with such rags as still adhered to it, was covered loosely with a white sheet. I witnessed no signs of grief, but there was a sober despatch of business which was affecting. One man was seeking to identify a particular body, and one undertaker or carpenter was calling to another to know in what box a certain child was put. I saw many marble feet and matted heads as the cloths were raised, and one livid, swollen and mangled body of a drowned girl -who probably had intended to go out to service in some American family- to which some rags still adhered, with a string, half concealed by the flesh, about its swollen neck; the coiled-up wreck of a human hulk, gashed by the rocks or fishes, so that the bone and muscle were exposed, but quite bloodless -merely red and white- with wide-open and staring eyes, yet lustreless, dead-lights; or, like the cabin windows of a stranded vessel, filled with sand. Sometimes there were two or more children, or a parent and child in the same box, and on the lid would perhaps be written with red chalk, "Bridget such-a-one, and sister's child." The surrounding sward was covered with bits of sails and clothing. I have since heard, from one who lives by this beach, that a woman who had come over before, but had left her infant behind for her sister to bring, came and looked into these boxes, and saw in one, -probably the same whose superscription I have quoted- her child in her sister's arms, as if the sister had meant to be found thus; and, within three days after, the mother died from the effect of that sight.

1968

The Loines Observatory was added to the [Maria Mitchell](#) Observatory at [Nantucket](#).



2000

June 11, Sunday: In the [New York Times Book Review](#), Paul Theroux was allowed to place a derogation of [Henry Thoreau](#), on page 13, that will be found of interest, by those of us who find this sort of thing of interest. In the course of reviewing a new book on the history of Cape Cod, [Martha's Vineyard](#), and [Nantucket Island](#), a book entitled THE ENDURING SHORE, Theroux found occasion to instance Thoreau's [CAPE COD](#) as having been by way of contrast "one of the thinner books," having been merely "a posthumous compilation of sardonic lectures and articles he produced in order to make a living." The famous village-of-Concord resident author of this thin sardonic CAPE COD was characterized by Theroux as not having been a real scholar. Instead of being one of the "few real scholars" who have dealt with Cape history, Thoreau was caricatured as having been merely one of the "many village explainers."

Takes one to know one, guy!



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK



COPYRIGHT NOTICE: In addition to the property of others, such as extensive quotations and reproductions of images, this "read-only" computer file contains a great deal of special work product of Austin Meredith, copyright ©2013. Access to these interim materials will eventually be offered for a fee in order to recoup some of the costs of preparation. My hypercontext button invention which, instead of creating a hypertext leap through hyperspace –resulting in navigation problems– allows for an utter alteration of the context within which one is experiencing a specific content already being viewed, is claimed as proprietary to Austin Meredith – and therefore freely available for use by all. Limited permission to copy such files, or any material from such files, must be obtained in advance in writing from the "Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project, 833 Berkeley St., Durham NC 27705. Please contact the project at <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.

"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: September 2, 2013

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, upon someone's request we have pulled it out of the hat of a pirate that has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (depicted above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of data modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture. This is data mining. To respond to such a request for information, we merely push a button.



NANTUCKET ISLAND

TUCKERNUCK

Commonly, the first output of the program has obvious deficiencies and so we need to go back into the data modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and do a recompile of the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process which 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 your requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.
Arrgh.