

WILLIAM D. BROWN OF CONCORD

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Thomas Browne and Bridget Browne, some of the earliest immigrants of the name in the New World, were among the original proprietors of Sudbury in 1637 and then relocated to Concord, Massachusetts. Thomas had presumably been born in England in about 1610. He became a freeman there on March 14, 1639. Bridget Browne died on January 5, 1680/1681, having produced Boaz Browne on February 14, 1641/1642, perhaps Jabez Browne during 1644, Mary Browne on March 26, 1646, Eleazer Browne during July 1649, and Thomas Browne during 1651 or 1652. The elder Thomas Browne died in Cambridge on November 3, 1688.

In September 1639 the general court of the Massachusetts Bay colony ordered that a record of every birth, marriage, and death be placed on file in Boston, and in response Simon Willard in 1644 supplied a register "of the berths & burialls in Concord from the yeare 1639 vntill the first month 1644 according to our account." On the 1st page of this register, the 8th entry is: "Boaz the sonne of Thomas Browne was borne the 14 (12) 1641." There is no further record of the progeny of Thomas Browne in this volume but in the Middlesex county registers preserved in the office of the clerk of the court of East Cambridge, we find "Concord Births: Deliuered in, 1650." The 13th and 14th entries in that record evidently refer to later children of the Thomas Browne of Concord: "Mary the daughter of Tho: and Bridget Browne, the (26) 1 mo: 1645. Eliezer the soone of Tho: and Bridget Browne, the (5) mo. 1649."

In 1655 Thomas Browne of Concord owned 14 lots comprising 186 acres. On May 21, 1660 he was a member of the committee that set out the boundaries of the 1,000-acre tract belonging to Major Willard. He took part in the Narragansett campaign in King Phillip's war and in the famous swamp fight which culminated in the attack on the Indian fort at Kingston, Rhode Island on December 19, 1675. Thomas Browne was one of the 11 men marching from Concord and one of the 2 from Concord who got wounded.

Boaz Browne, eldest child of Thomas Browne and Bridget Browne, was born at Concord on the 14th day of the 12th month of 1641 Old Style (New Style, February 14, 1642). On November 8, 1664 he got married with Mary Winchat or Winship and among the products of this union was Thomas Browne. Boaz Browne must have married a 2d time, to an Abigal, for per the register: "mr Boaz Brown husband to Abigal his wife Died April ye 7th: 1724." His

gravestone asserts that he died in his 83d year. In the assignment of the proprietors' lots Boaz Browne is credited with the ownership of 6 lots or 86 acres.

Thomas Browne was born May 12, 1667 at Concord, a son of Boaz Browne and Mary Winchat or Winship Browne, and died there May 13, 1739. In the death record he is recorded as the husband of a Rachel Browne. He was the town clerk of Concord 1689-1701 and again 1704-1710. On February 11 (Old Style 1699) 1700, he was one of the committee that determined the boundary between Concord and Billerica. On May 9, 1710 Ensign Thomas Browne was one of the committee to decide about some matters concerned with the burying-ground, probably the ancient one fronting the old meeting-house on the square. On June 24, 1735 Ephraim Browne drew Lot 8 in Narragansett township for his father, Thomas Browne. This land is in what is now the township of Templeton, Massachusetts and may have been a grant in recognition of some military service. Among the children of Thomas Browne and Rachel Browne was yet another Thomas Browne.

Thomas Browne the son of Thomas Browne and Rachel Browne was born in Concord on December 24, 1707, but his death is not of record. On May 26, 1748 he got married with Mary Flint of Concord, the Reverend Daniel Bliss officiating. The products of this union were Hannah Browne on November 15, 1750, Jonas Browne on December 15, 1752, John Browne on July 28, 1755, Ephraim Browne on March 27, 1758, and Charles Browne on October 13, 1760.

Jonas Browne, eldest son of Thomas Brown and Mary Flint Brown born at Concord on December 15, 1752 relocated from Concord to Temple, New Hampshire in 1780 and died there on July 13, 1834 while receiving a Revolutionary veteran's pension of \$117.33. He had during the Revolution risen to the rank of ensign: "That is to say, from the 1st of January, 1775, to the 1st of May I was enlisted as a minute-man (being a native and resident of Concord, Mass.), under Capt. Buttrick, of the Militia, and trained twice a week, and with the rest of the company, kept guard most of the time over the public stores, roads and bridges in Concord. Early on the 19th of April, an alarm was given that the enemy were coming from Boston to Concord, and our company was paraded about daylight, and kept under arms most of the time, until the enemy arrived, and destroyed military stores and provisions, and set a guard at the Bridge, and I was ordered with others, to rout them, which we did, when several were killed on both sides, and the enemy retreated, and we pursued to Menotomy (West Cambridge), had various skirmishing on the road, and I returned to Concord. Capt. Buttrick went to Cambridge, and several times sent for his company. I went twice or three times and returned next day. On the 1st of May, 1775, I entered the service as a corporal, under Capt. Abisha Brown, in the regiment commanded by Col. Jono. Nickson, Lt. Col. Thomas Nickson, and Maj. Jno. Buttrick in the Massachusetts Line, and served eight months at Cambridge, Charlestown, &c.; was in the battle of Bunker Hill, on the 17th of June, and was dismissed 1st of January, 1776. Again the militia was called for, and on the 1st of Feb., 1776, I enlisted as volunteer for two months, under Capt. Abel Wheeler, in the Regiment commanded by Col. Jonathan Reed, in the Mass. Line, in the Brigade destined for Canada, in which Regt was Lt. Col. Brown, and Major Fletcher. I marched from Concord to Keene, N.H., thence by way of Charlestown, N.H.,

Otter Creek, and Shrewsbury, Vt., where he took boats and went down Lake Champlain, to Ticonderoga, and joined the army under Gen'ls Gates, Arnold and Waterbury, and Gen. Brickett of Mass. was there. I was at Ticonderoga when Arnold and Waterbury went down the Lake with a fleet of gondolas (flat-boats) which were mostly destroyed. I remained at Ticonderoga until about the middle of Dec., 1776, when I entered my name to serve during the war, as a Lt. under Capt. Monroe, of Lexington, Mass., and had leave to return to Concord, until called for. I did so, and about the middle of March, I was called upon to take my appointment as Lt. I obeyed the call, and went to the Capt., who told me there were others who would like to take my chance, and I resigned it and was excused from any further service, making eight months in which I was under orders as an Ensign."

In Concord, Massachusetts Abishai Brown (1717-1766) got married in 1735 with Mary Farrar and this union produced Abishai Brown (II) (1746-1799), who got married with Jerusha ----- which union produced James Brown (1771-1817) and Abishai Brown (III) (1777-1838). The Reuben Brown house in Concord was either built in 1725 by the town saddler, Reuben Brown, or extensively rebuilt. Mary E. Brown was the daughter of New England Farmer editor Simon Brown (1802-1873) and Ann Caroline French Brown (1808-1898), and she got married in 1854 with George Keyes. Helen Dawes Brown was born in Concord in 1857.

Nowhere in the records do I find a trace of the family origins of this William D. Brown. My surmise would be therefore that he must have arrived in Concord more recently from elsewhere and was related to the Browns and Brownes of Concord only by virtue of name. In addition, I have been unable to determine the middle name that the "D." stands for. I have no birth date, no death date, no grave, and no indication of the name of a wife or the names of any children.

1854

December 4, Monday: In the afternoon walked along the Fitchburg Railroad tracks to Walden Pond.

The Berg Collection of the New York Public Library has a file "Letters to John and and ." This includes a letter bearing this date from in Concord to , both of whom who were qualified to vote in Concord in the election of 1856. This letter contains the information that a source for the Thoreau family's ground graphite was Francis Monroe, and that this graphite was being ground by :

Concord Dec 4th 1854

Mr W^m D. Brown

I have sold to Mr Thoreau the Black Lead belonging to me that you have ground, for 27 cents pr pound, provided he takes it within ten days from the above tate [sic]. You will please weigh it, receive the cash for it on delivery, and remit me the amount by Mail, directed to Manchester V.T. When I am next in town I will settle with you for grinding &c.

Respectfully yours

Francis Monroe

1856

would write, "I hear that some of the inhabitants of Ashby sold \$2000 worth of huckleberries in '56."

Was it the of Concord whose land Thoreau surveyed, who supplied the article on grapes for this year's , pages 271-4, printed in Boston by William White, Printer to the State? The article praises Concord's *Vitis labrusca* or fox grape as superior to its "too tender Syrian brothers." Was this "a coded reference to Semitic/Jewish degeneracy," as has been suspected by — or was this merely practical horticulture?

The terrible oideum is infecting all the wine districts of Europe ... this is the third year of failure ... vineyards of Madeira are said to be nearly exterminated.... It is written that the Old World shall find its rejuvenescence [sic] in the New. Is it not possible that she will find among our American grapes the alternative for his too tender Syrian brothers, some vigorous congener [sic] which shall laugh to scorn oideum and all other grape-like weaknesses and debilities? ... Our New England climate is not adapted to the foreign grape; our summers are too short, our winters too severe.

1858

April 10, Saturday: was being written to by Richard Warner in Boston about some surveying of a piece of land he had purchased from .

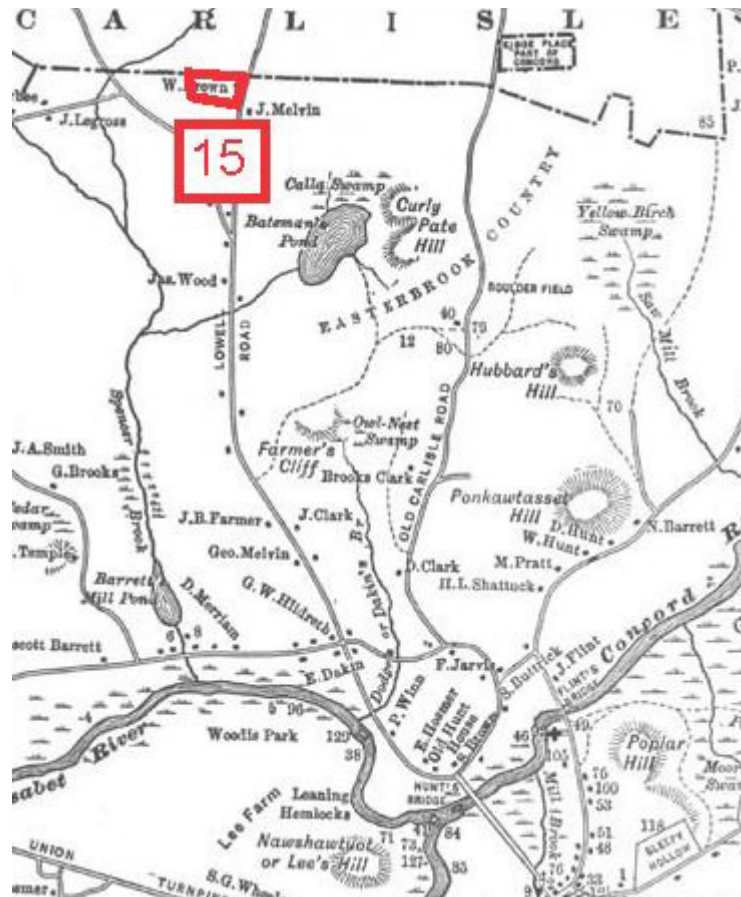
*Boston April 10 1858
 Mr Henry. D Thoreau
 Sir
 I wish you
 would go & masure the pice
 of land that I bought of Mr
 Brown immeatly if you
 will call at my mill & tell
 Mr Smith to let Thom [Sullivan]
 go with you & [S]hew th lines
 I [S]hell be up nxt week
 wednesday or Saturdy if you
 get th land masurd before
 you will [S]end th masur to me
 by mail
 yours Truly
 R Warner*

recited a poem of more than 400 lines before an audience at the Tremont Temple in Boston on the centennial birth-day of Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, another homœopathic physician. Then there was a banquet.¹

...for now an hundred times the Sun,
 Around the radiant belt his circling course has run,
 Since first Therapeia's glorious morning dawn began,
 And hosts of waiting spirits welcom'd Hahnemann!

1. Dr. Preston would soon depart, to begin a practice of homœopathy in St. John, New Brunswick.

April 12, Monday: paid \$3.⁰⁰ to survey an Acton woodlot near Damon's Factory. Part of this lot was cut during 1857-1858 and the lot was sold to Richard Warner.



View 's personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

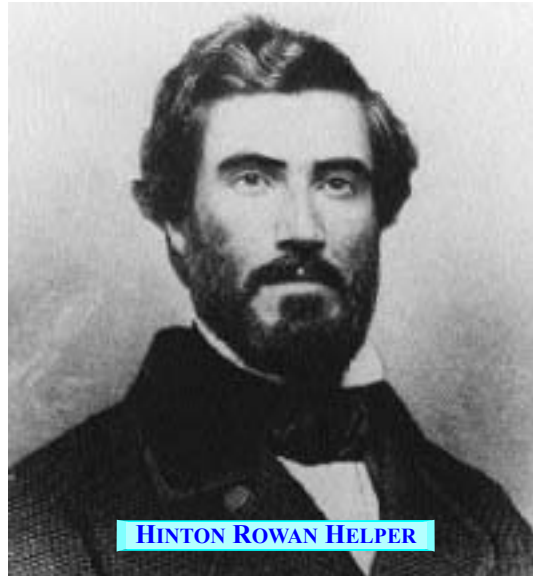
http://www.concordlibrary.org/collect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm

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

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

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/15.htm

Hinton Rowan Helper sought to assault Senator Asa Biggs of his home state of North Carolina for having accused him, on April 5th on the floor of the US Senate, of having changed his name from “Helper” and of having committed petty theft. However, his Colt revolver and Bowie knife were confiscated and he was taken under arrest. A number of the prominent Republican legislators, amused at the sight of one of their Southern Democratic colleagues being assaulted by one of his constituents, raised a fund of \$1,000 and posted bail for this racist abolitionist Southern Republican.



(Cassius M. Clay, who would become a Major General of the US Volunteers in the civil war, was at this point an enthusiastic supporter and distributor of Helperist literature. –As was Senator Andrew Johnson, who would become in 1865 the President of the United States.)



April 12, 1858: A. M. — Surveying part of William P. Brown’s wood-lot in Acton, west of factory. Returning on the railroad, the noon train down passed us opposite the old maid Hosmer’s house. In the woods just this side, we came upon a partridge [**Ruffed Grouse***Bonasa umbellus* (~~Partridge~~)] standing on the track, between the rails over which the cars had just passed. She had evidently been run down, but though a few small feathers were scattered along for a dozen rods beyond her, and she looked a little ruffled, she was apparently more disturbed in mind than body.

I took her up and carried her one side to a safer place. At first she made no resistance, but at length fluttered out of my hands and ran two or three feet. I had to take her up again and carry and drive her further off, and left her standing with head erect as at first, as if beside herself. She was not lame, and I suspect no wing was broken. I did not suspect that this swift wild bird was ever run down by the cars. We have an account in the newspapers of every cow and calf that is run over, but not of the various wild creatures who meet with that accident. It may be many generations before the partridges learn to give the cars a sufficiently wide berth.



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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: July 15, 2017

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.

Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in

the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place requests with <kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.