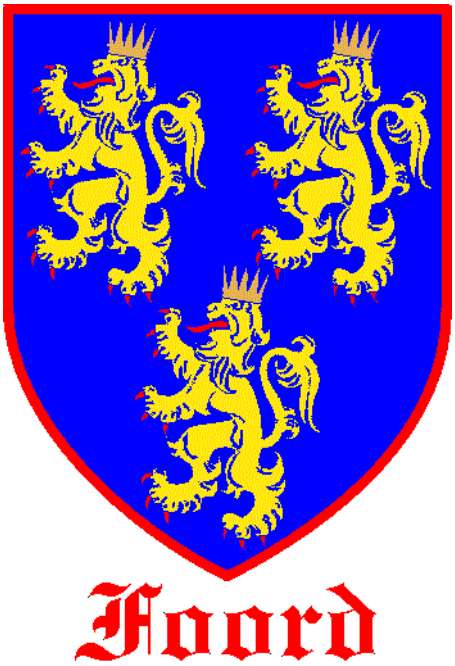
SOPHIA FORD OR FOORD



"By the way have you heard what a strange story there was about Miss Ford, and Henry, Mrs. Brooks said at the convention, a lady came to her and inquired, if it was true, that Miss F. had committed, or was going to commit suicide on account of H_____ Thoreau, what a ridiculous story this is. When it was told to H_____ he made no remark at all, and we cannot find out from him any thing about it, for a while, they corresponded, and Sophia said that she recollected one day on the reception of a letter she heard H_____ say, he shouldn't answer it, or he must put a stop to this, some such thing she couldn't exactly tell what."

— per an undated, unprovenanced letter by Maria Thoreau

AUNT MARIA THOREAU
SOPHIA FOORD
MARY MERRICK BROOKS
HENRY DAVID THOREAU
SOPHIA E. THOREAU

1761

October 30, Friday: James Foord was born in Milton, Massachusetts.

MS. SOPHIA FOORD

MISS SOPHIA FORD

1802

June 8, Tuesday: Sophia Foord was born in Milton, Massachusetts.[1]

1804

January 2, Monday: At 5AM the infant Sophia Foord's father James Foord set out from Milton, Massachusetts, arriving in Boston at 7AM and boarding a stagecoach for Kentucky at 8AM in company with Mr. Thayer of Dorchester. The travelers dined at Mr. William's in Marlboro and took lodgings for the night at the tavern of Mr. Mowers in Worchester.

February 6, Monday: Joseph Priestley died (his burning glass is now on display in the May Morris Room of Dickinson College).

James Foord of Milton, Massachusetts arrived at the destination of his trip west, the office of the Register in Frankfort, Kentucky.

April 12, Thursday: His business in Kentucky completed, James Foord of Milton, Massachusetts began the journey home, generally retracing his westward route except this time passing through Baltimore.

Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

> *About nine o'clock fifth day 12 of 4 M 1804 The aforementioned friends were detained yesterday by the inclemency of the weather & high wind ——But this morning about 6 OClock attempted to get there before meeting —— How they will fare I know not the winds continues a head but as they went away early in a stiff vessel for Wickford am in hopes they may reach the meeting house by meeting time.*
> *I have attended our meeting at home & which was rather small yet to me it afforded a measure of life, tho' I had had struggles between flesh & spirit, life or death & am at a loss to say which gained the Mastery*
> *Oh Lord God Almighty I beseech thee to do away all Sin in me, renew stronger desires & more willingness to resign my beloved lusts as to the Moles & Bats, & follow after the meek & crucified*

1. It is from Professor Walter Roy Harding's "Thoreau's Feminine Foe" (PMLA 69 [1954]: 110-16) that we have learned that Sophia Foord was born in Milton, Massachusetts on June 8, 1802 (page 110) and died on April 1, 1885 in Dedham (page 115). Harding also states that when Fruitlands collapsed in 1844, Foord and Charles Lane began "teaching the Alcott children" in Concord, with "Miss Foord in charge of 'recreations and chares'" (page 112). According to Professor Harding "Lane was sufficiently impressed with her to recommend her several years later for a position in another experimental school that never materialized" (page 112; Harding cites Clara Endicott Sears's BRONSON ALCOTT'S FRUITLANDS. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1915, page 140). Except for the record of a $50 deposit to the Dedham Savings Bank, I have been entirely unable to corroborate details of the life trajectory of Sophia Foord. (There was indeed a Foord family in Dedham, one with 14 children, founded by the farmer and schoolmaster James Foord born in Milton on October 30, 1761 who became Registrar of Deeds for Norfolk County in 1813 and was succeeded in the post at his death on October 15, 1821 by his son Enos Foord, but we have no information about the life trajectories of his wife, or of any of the other 13 their children.)

MISS SOPHIA FORD

MS. SOPHIA FOORD

Saviour——
Altho' my outward appearance is pretty plain & my conduct in a good degree conformable to the principals of Friends, yet, there are some little Foxes that rush in among the tender vines of life in my mind, & sometimes nip them in early bud. this for a long time has been the case, nor do I see much prospect of the Wall's being built sufficiently strong & high to keep them from creeping or leaping in. Much have I suffered from those subtil creatures & much shall I suffer, untill there is a faithful daily labor to remove the rubish rom the door of my House that the water's of life may flow purely unobstructed ————————
I spent the evening at a friends house which concluded rather unprophitably, & I hope to improve from the things that I suffer as I felt before I went that I had better not go.———

———————————————————————

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

May 2, Wednesday: James Foord of Milton, Massachusetts arrived in Baltimore, Maryland from Kentucky, and put up at Stephensons near the bridge on Market Street.

1813

New England was continuing to refuse to support the war against England. Of the $16,000,000 war loan (about $1,600,000,000 in today's money) secured by the national government of the United States of America in that year, from all of New England only $75,000 had been obtained.

James Foord became Registrar of Deeds for Norfolk County, Massachusetts.

1821

October 15, Monday: The publication of three Piano Sonatas op.50 by Muzio Clementi was entered at Stationer's Hall, London.

James Foord died, and would be succeeded as Registrar of Deeds for Norfolk County, Massachusetts by his son Enos Foord.

1831

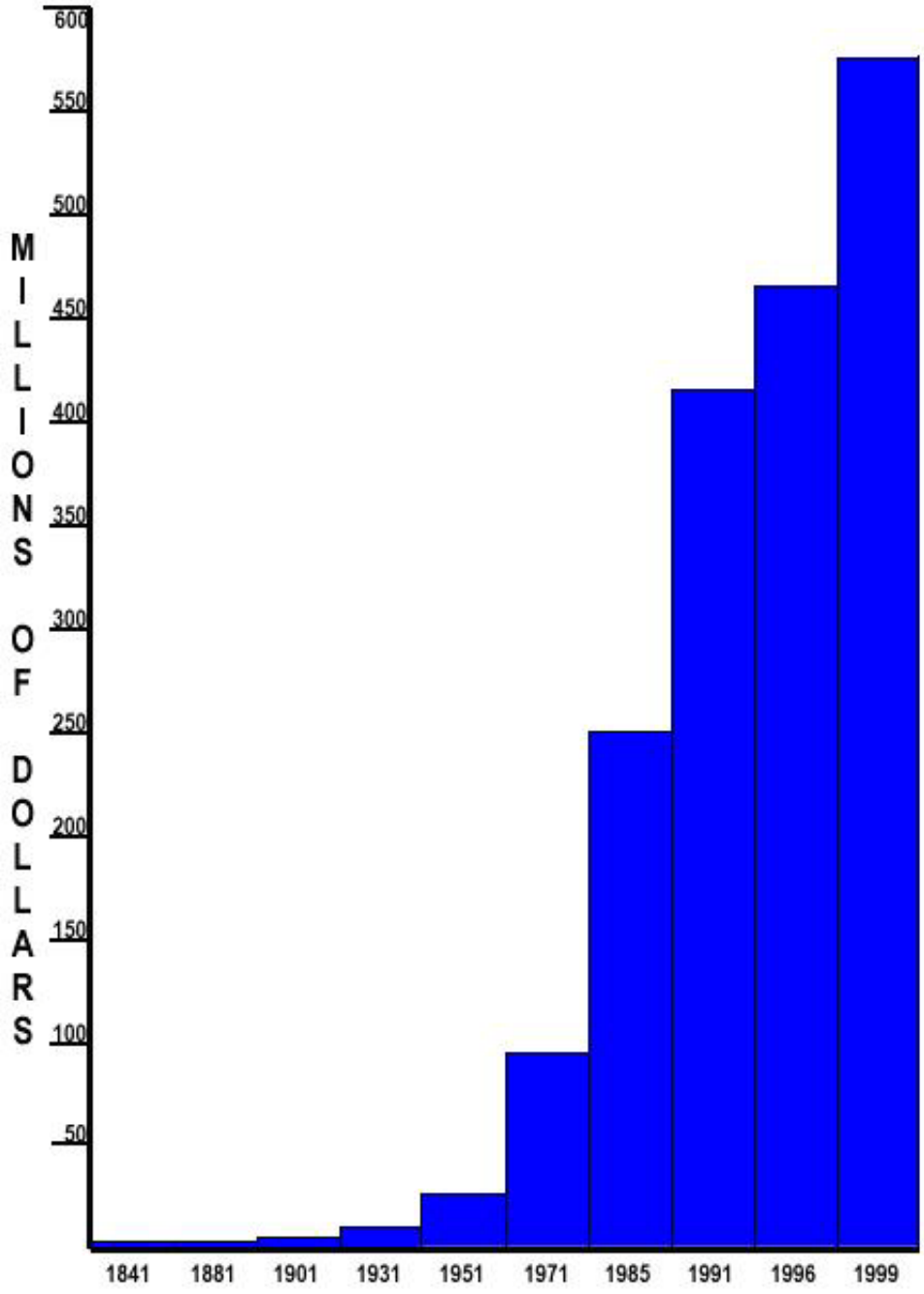
May: Due to mistrust engendered by the failure of a number of commercial banks, a group of Dedham, Massachusetts citizens founded a mutual savings bank, that is, a bank with no stockholders, to be owned by and run for the benefit of depositors. They named this the Dedham Institution for Savings — it still exists. The new institution's 1st depositor was Sophia Foord and the bank preserves the ledger which shows her deposit of $50. After a year the bank would have almost $30,000 on deposit. Growth would be so gradual that it would be a decade before the bank's savings deposits would increase by one power of magnitude, and then a half century before the deposits would increase by another power of magnitude:

MISS SOPHIA FORD

MS. SOPHIA FOORD

- 1841 .....$203,000
- 1881 .....$1,262,006
- 1901 .....$3,287,571
- 1931 .....$10,466,589
- 1951 .....$24,615,468
- 1971 .....$94,010,910
- 1985 .....$250,000,000
- 1991 .....$415,248,425
- 1996 .....$465,306,253
- 1999 .....$574,500,943

The bank's first depositor was a woman named Sophia Foord. The bank still has the original ledger book which shows this deposit. After a year, the bank had almost $30,000 on deposit. Growth was gradual, reflecting the fact that the average depositor was a thrifty saver rather than a rich investor. The bank's deposit growth has been as follows:



1842

June: Brook Farm added the following new recruits:

Name	Birthplace	Birthdate	Occupation
Anna Foord	?	*circa* 1820	student
Abigail Morton	Plymouth MA	*circa* 1820	student
James Hill	?	?	?

1843

April 15, Saturday: Sophia Foord of Dedham registered as a member of the Association of Industry and Education. (We can presume she made the usual investment, or else pledged herself to work off that initial investment by teaching the association's children for free. Her name was entered on the association's ledger as "Foorde." She would be with them for slightly longer than two years, withdrawing on June 12, 1845.)

William James's little brother Henry James, Jr. was born at Washington Place, New-York.

May: Sophia Foord arrived at the Association of Industry and Education. We have a record by her that one ex-slave had been residing temporarily at the Association, and that another one (presumably Stephen C. Rush) was being expected to arrive shortly. The term used by Foord was "rail road under ground." At about this time members of the Association were being overcome with horror as they observed men and boys bathing naked in the Mill River outside Northampton, and laying plans to construct a decent bathhouse ASAP.

COMMUNITARIANISM
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

June 1 (Pentecost Thursday): Joseph Smith, Jr. "got married with" Elvira Anie Cowles.

Go East, 46-year-old black woman, go East: Isabella[2] experienced a command to "go east" and testify, adopted the monicker Sojourner Truth, and departed New-York with but an hour's notice, with two York shillings in her pocket, carrying her worldly belongings in a pillowcase, to move on foot through Long Island and Connecticut, testifying to whatever audiences she was able to attract. –It is the life of a wandering evangelist, is mine. In the course of attending Millerite meetings to testify, she would accommodate to a number of the apocalyptic tenets of that group.

As Louisa May Alcott has reported in later life, on this same day quite another journey was taking place:

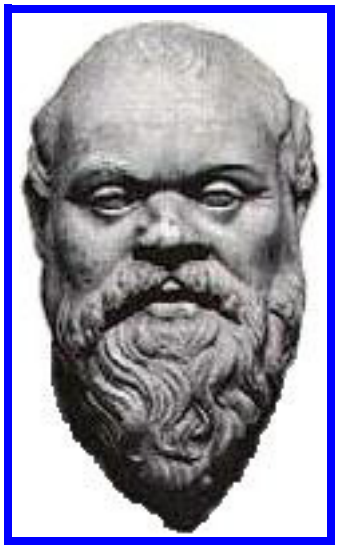
> On the first day of June, 1843, a large wagon, drawn by a small horse and containing a motley load, went lumbering over certain New England hills, with the pleasing accompaniments of wind, rain and hail. A serene man with a serene child upon his knee was driving, or rather being driven, for the small horse had it all his own way. Behind a small boy, embracing a bust of Socrates, was an energetic looking woman, with a benevolent brow, satirical mouth and eyes full of hope and courage. A baby reposed upon her lap, a mirror leaned against her knee, a basket of provisions danced about her feet, and she struggled with a large, unruly umbrella, with which she tried to cover every one but herself. Twilight began to fall, and the rain came down in a despondent drizzle, but the calm man gazed as tranquilly into the fog as if he beheld a radiant bow of promise spanning the gray sky.

The Consociate Family of Bronson Alcott was on its way from Concord to "Fruitlands" on Prospect Hill in

2. Isabella Bomefree van Wagenen, "Bomefree" being the name of her first husband which by virtue of enslavement she had been denied, and "van Wagenen" being the name of the white family which she assumed and used for a number of years. ("Wagener" was a consistent misspelling perpetrated by the printer of the first version of her NARRATIVE in 1850.)

Harvard, Massachusetts, in the district then known politely as “Still River North” and impolitely as “Hog Street,” with its prospect of Wachusett and Mount Monadnock and its prospect of “ideals without feet or

hands” (an apt phrase said to have been created by Waldo Emerson,[3] who himself, if anyone ever metaphorically lacked them, metaphorically lacked feet and hands and other essential body parts), ideals such as “a family in harmony with the primitive instincts of man.” In her fictional account of the journey, Louisa May Alcott invented an additional child and placed it on her father’s knee, obviously where she would have wanted to be, and made it a “serene” child, what she never was but longed to be. The bust of Socrates actually rode between the father Bronson, who was holding the reins, and Charles Lane, on the wagon’s bench. There was no room in this wagon for William Lane or for Anna Alcott, who for all 14 miles of the journey had to walk alongside it.



At this point the Association of Industry and Education had 113 members, a large proportion of whom were children:

3. But we may note that in Bronson Alcott’s journal for Week 45 in November 1837, Alcott had himself termed himself “an Idea without hands.”

MISS SOPHIA FORD

MS. SOPHIA FOORD

COMMUNITARIANISM

Membership

April 1842	41
May 1842	65
End of 1842	83
June 1843	**113**
Winter 1844	120
Spring 1845	120

Having had enough after less than two months of attempting to teach almost entirely without teaching supplies and without adequate classroom space, Sophia Foord threatened to resign as teacher at the Association. (Promises would be made that would keep her teaching while efforts were made to convert a barn into classrooms, but the problem eventually would be resolved by the need of the community to use its children as a cheap source of incessant factory labor. After Miss Foord left Northampton, she became tutor to the children of the Chase family (Elizabeth Buffum Chase) of Valley Falls, Rhode Island; "she taught botany; she walked with the children over the fields … and made her pupils observe the geographical features of the pond and its banks, and carefully taught them to estimate distances by sight.")

Railroad service to Concord began. Preliminary earthmoving crews, and then crossties and rails crews, had reached Concord at the rate of 33 feet per day, filling in Walden Pond's south-west arm to give it its present shape. 1,000 Irishmen were earning $0.$\frac{50}{}$ or $0.$\frac{60}{}$ for bonebreaking 16-hour days of labor. Waldo Emerson was elated because he much preferred riding in the railroad coach to riding in the stage coach which offered a "ludicrous pathetic tragical picture" (his comment from April 15, 1834; I don't know whether he meant that he felt that he presented a ludicrous pathetic tragical appearance while riding on the stage coach or that the view from the stage coach window presented him with a ludicrous pathetic tragical perspective). He found, however, that when a philosopher rides the railroad "Ideal Philosophy takes place at once" as "men & trees & barns whiz by you as fast as the leaves of a dictionary" and this helps in grasping the real impermanence of matter: "hitherto esteemed symbols of stability do absolutely dance by you" and we experience "the sensations of a swallow who skims by trees & bushes with about the same speed" (June 10, 1834). By this time, with the railroad actually in Concord, Emerson had decided that "Machinery & Transcendentalism agree well."[4]

"[The railroad will] only encourage the common people to move about needlessly."
— Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington

4. EMERSON'S JOURNALS AND MISCELLANEOUS NOTEBOOKS 4: 277, 4:296, 8:397.

MS. SOPHIA FOORD

MISS SOPHIA FORD

1845

During this year and the following two years, into 1847, Bronson Alcott would be terracing the wooded slope behind "Hillside" into a "shapely neatness" and constructing a "bower" or "conservatory" or "arbour" of twisted pine branches, osier, and clumps of hazel reed, carried up from the woods, at the top of the ridge behind their home in Concord. It had Gothic columns hung with moss and a thatch roof, and Nathaniel Hawthorne referred to it, hung with flowers and evergreen, as "a work of magic."

Miss Sophia Foord collaborated with Bronson in the creation of a school for Concord children including his own girls. Here are a couple of jottings from Louisa May Alcott's diary of the period:

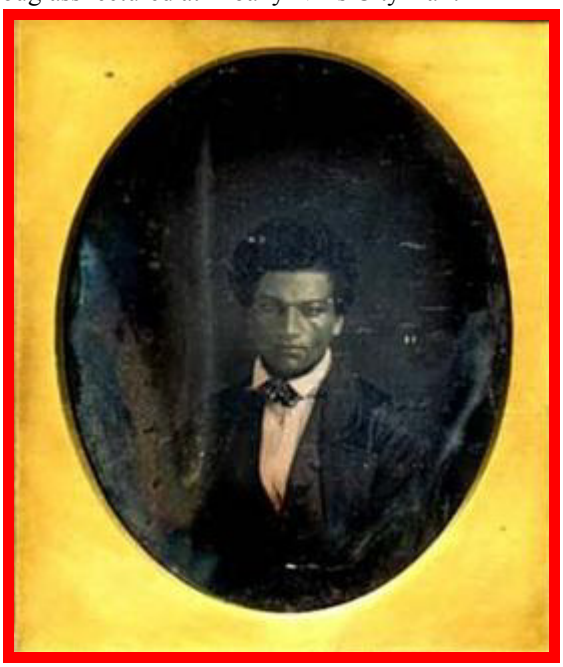
—Read the "heart of Mid-Lothian," and had a very happy day. Miss Ford gave us a botany lesson in the woods. I am always good there. In the evening Miss Ford told us about the bones in our bodies, and how they get out of order. I must be careful of mine, I climb and jump and run so much....

Concord, Thursday: I had an early run in the woods before the dew was off the grass. The moss was like velvet, and as I ran under the arches of yellow and red leaves I sang for joy, my heart was so bright and the world so beautiful. I stopped at the end of the walk and saw the sunshine out over the wide "Virginia meadows."
It seemed like going through a dark life or grave into heaven beyond. A very strange and solemn feeling came over me as I stood there, with no sound but the rustle of the pines, no one near me, and the sun so glorious, as for me alone. It seemed as if I felt God as I never did before, and I prayed in my heart that I might keep that happy sense of nearness all my life.

Unfortunately, this new school would succeed in attracting only a few additional children, not enough to make it a going concern, and Bronson's application to teach at the Concord elementary school would be rejected by the local school board on or prior to September 17, 1848 on account of his not attending a church, and his attempt to speak at the state convention of the Teachers Institute would be intercepted and forbidden by Horace Mann, Sr., the secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education.[5] It was during the period at "Hillside" that Louisa would be beginning to write in earnest. She had a room of her own. Her oeuvre was poems, plays, short stories, and journal, although unfortunately what remains for us of her detailed journal has been twice "edited," first by herself and then by her sister Anna Alcott in conjunction with Ednah Dow Littlehale Cheney, her first biographer.

5. Horace Mann, Sr., an institutionalist and authoritarian, was ever zealous to protect the rights of the state against the importunities of the individual citizen, and had not failed to notice that Bronson Alcott's opinions were, as he succinctly put the matter, "hostile to the existence of the State."

June 12, Thursday: Frederick Douglass lectured at Albany NY's City Hall.



Sophia Foord withdrew as a member of the Association of Industry and Education in Florence, a suburb of Northampton, Massachusetts. (Her name had been entered on the association's ledger as "Foorde." She had been with them for slightly longer than two years, teaching their children.)

MISS SOPHIA FORD

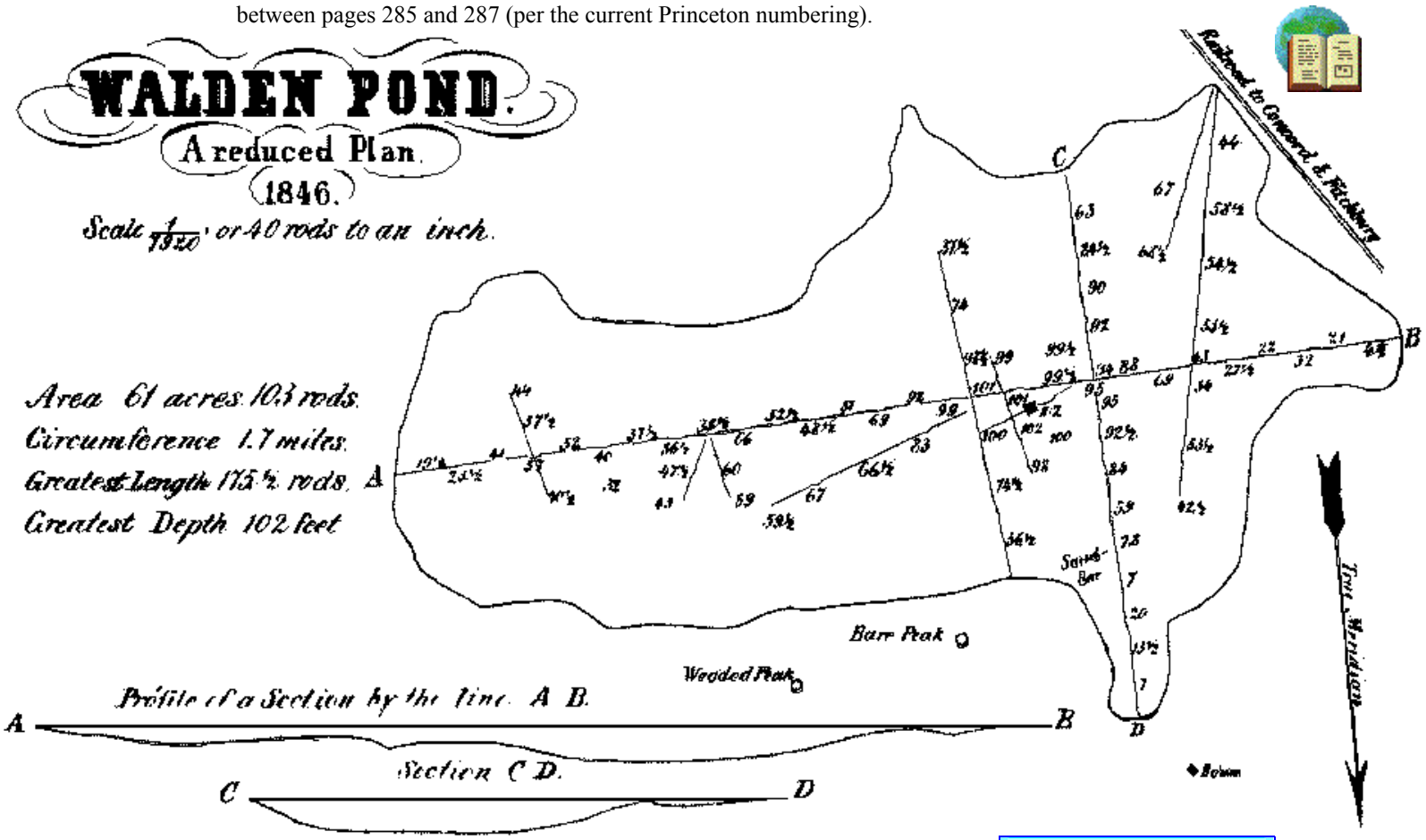
MS. SOPHIA FOORD

1846

Waldo Emerson asked Henry Thoreau to add a chimney to the Emerson barn, as part of creating a schoolroom and sleeping chamber for Sophia Foord while she was tutoring the Emerson and Alcott children.

Thoreau surveyed Walden Pond, indicating Bare Peak, Wooded Peak, Sandbar, and the site of his shanty. The area of the pond is listed as 61 acres and 3 rods, its circumference as 1.7 miles, its greatest length as 175½ rods, and its greatest depth as 102 feet. The Concord Free Public Library now has three copies of this. It is the plot which he would have tipped into his bound volume of his lyceum lectures, WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS,

between pages 285 and 287 (per the current Princeton numbering).



TIMELINE OF WALDEN

There's an interesting little factoid about this survey being tipped into the WALDEN volume. It wasn't all that usual, in this time period, for books to be illustrated in such a manner! Such an inclusion, in the period, amounted to "multimedia high tech"! –Take a moment and think about that![6]

> Most of the works published by Ticknor and Fields during the 1840s and 1850s were not illustrated in any way, but illustrations did play an important role in some. Two groups of publications from the 1850s are especially notable for their illustrations – juvenile works and literary works by the firm's most respected authors. The more lavishly illustrated were juvenile works, which might contain as many as twelve relief wood engravings, while many literary works were regularly issued with an expensive intaglio steel-engraved frontispiece portrait. The illustrations in juveniles were usually based on the text and made the work more vivid and appealing to a young audience, whereas the portrait frontispieces in the second group served to dignify and assert the literary merit of the works they produced.
> Other works published by the firm during these decades were also illustrated or decorated in some way. These included textbooks:

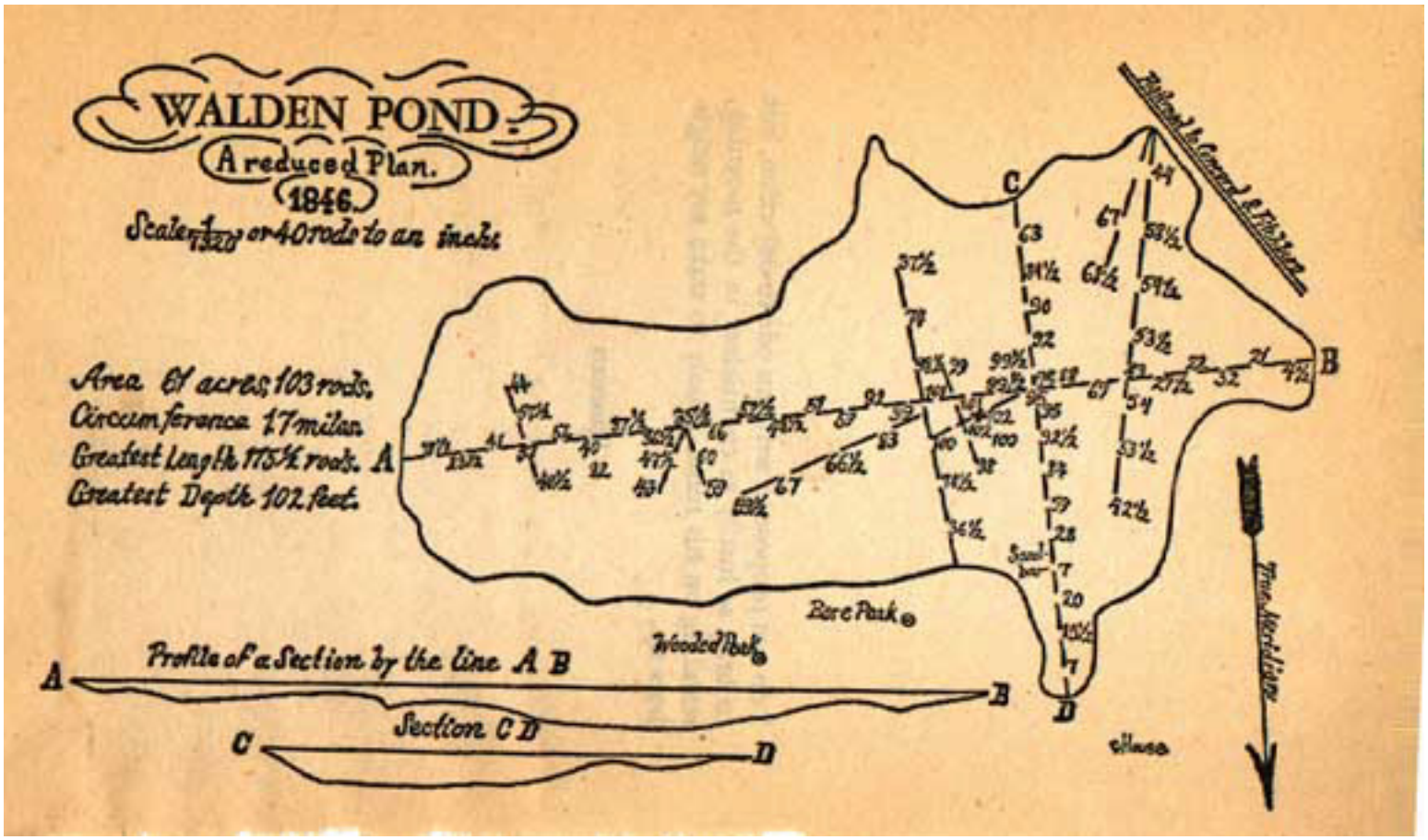
6. Winship, Michael. AMERICAN LITERARY PUBLISHING IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY: THE BUSINESS OF TICKNOR AND FIELDS. Cambridge, England; NY: Cambridge UP, 1995.

the two primary school readers by Josiah F. Bumstead each had an inserted woodcut frontispiece; and the first part of Thomas H. Palmer's THE MORAL INSTRUCTOR had small vignettes and type ornaments printed throughout the text. Several scientific and medical works —such as Wendell Phillips's AN ELEMENTARY TREATISE ON MINERALOGY and J. Mason Warren's edition of Walter H. Walshe's THE ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY, PATHOLOGY, AND TREATMENT OF CANCER— depended on the illustrations to transmit information. In addition, a number of the firm's literary works, especially poetry, were pleasantly decorated with small vignettes or type ornaments. Longfellow's THE GOLDEN LEGEND had a single small vignette of a cross, designed by Hammatt Billings, on the title page; Oliver W. Holmes's POEMS and Richard H. Stoddard's SONGS OF SUMMER have numerous decorative vignettes and ornamental head- or tailpieces throughout the text.

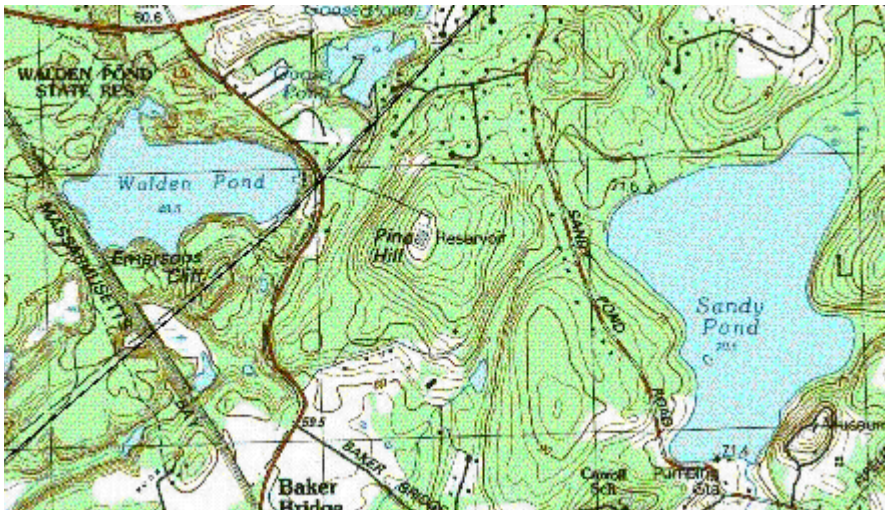
The illustrations and decorations in the publications of Ticknor and Fields were reproduced by three methods. The most common used blocks produced in relief. Small vignettes and ornaments produced by this method were printed with the text, as occasionally were full-page illustrations, but more commonly relief wood engravings were printed on separate leaves and inserted during binding. The portrait frontispieces in the firm's literary works were produced by a second method, using intaglio metal plates. Intaglio printing is done on a rolling press, separately from the text, and these frontispieces were always printed on inserted leaves. Illustrations reproduced by a third method, lithography, appeared only rarely in works published by Ticknor and Fields before 1860. In the 1840s lithography was used for the technical illustrations in a few medical and scientific works published by the firm, and in the 1850s only the engraved map in Henry D. Thoreau's WALDEN and the illuminated paper wrapper used on some copies of William H.C. Hosmer's THE MONTHS —a commission work— were lithographed. Again, lithographic illustrations were printed separately from the text on a special press and inserted during binding.

MS. SOPHIA FOORD

MISS SOPHIA FORD

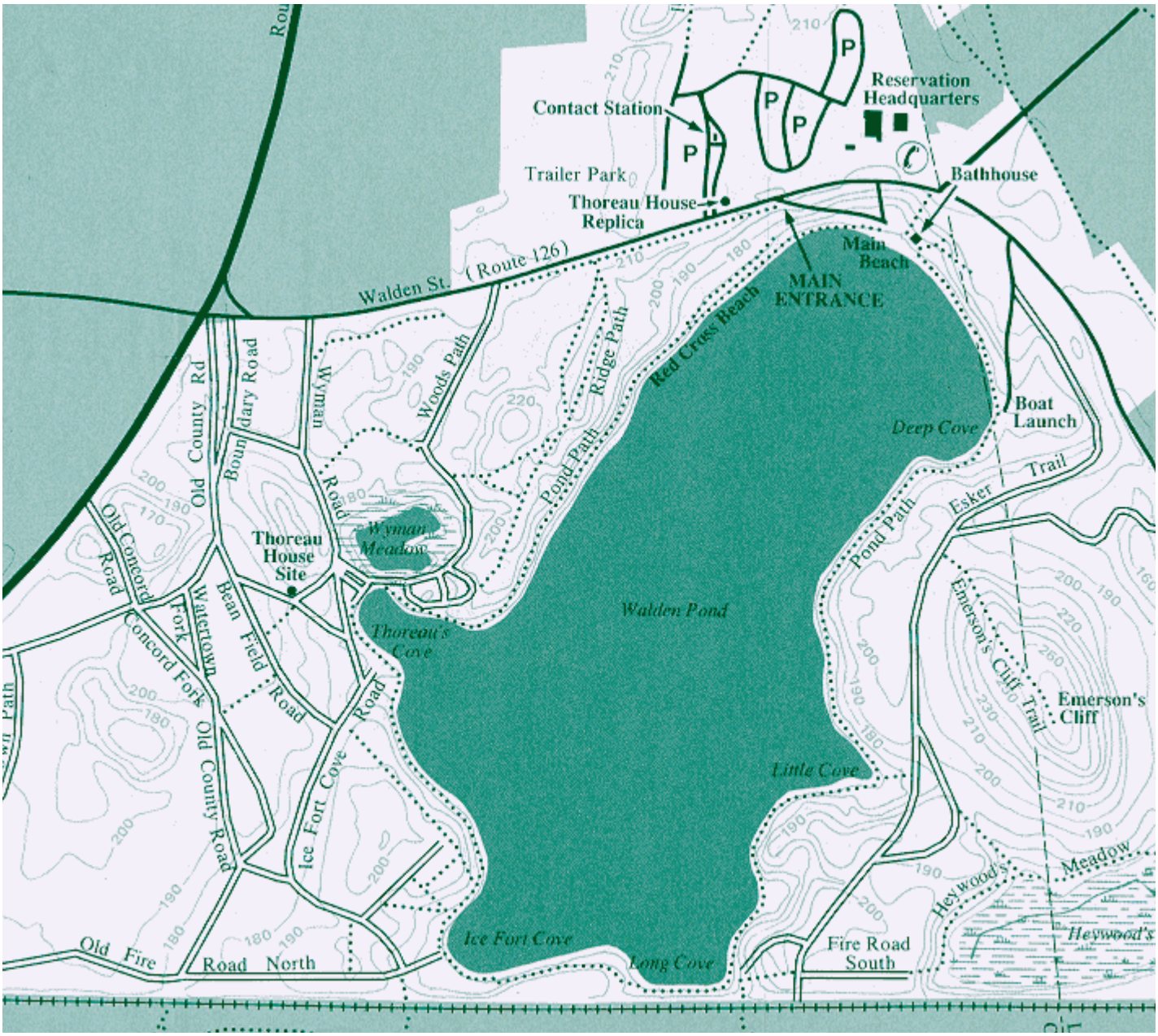


That is worth repeating. In the 1850s **only** the engraved map in WALDEN and the illuminated paper wrapper used on **some** copies of **one** other book were lithographed! **Such lithography was at that point the very high-tech cutting edge of publication technology. It was, in that period, everything that multimedia amounted to.** We might miss such a fact nowadays, if it were not forcefully brought to our attention, but what a **novel** thing that survey map of Walden Pond tipped into the volume actually was!



MS. SOPHIA FOORD

MISS SOPHIA FORD



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

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

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

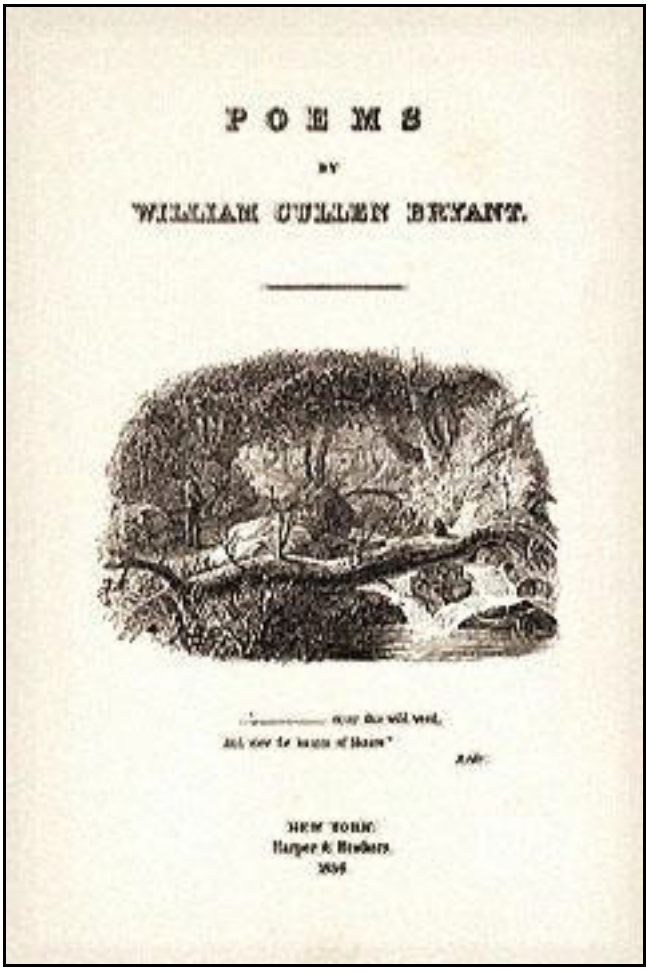
View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/137.htm

WALDEN: One afternoon I amused myself by watching a barred owl (*Strix nebulosa*) sitting on one of the lower dead limbs of a white-pine, close to the trunk, in broad daylight, I standing within a rod of him. He could hear me when I moved and cronched the snow with my feet, but could not plainly see me. When I made most noise he would stretch out his neck, and erect his neck feathers, and open his eyes wide; but their lids soon fell again, and he began to nod. I too felt a slumberous influence after watching him half an hour, as he sat thus with his eyes half open, like a cat, winged brother of the cat. There was only a narrow slit left between their lids, by which he preserved a peninsular relation to me; thus, with half-shut eyes, looking out from the land of dreams, and endeavoring to realize me, vague object or mote that interrupted his visions. At length, on some louder noise or my nearer approach, he would grow uneasy and sluggishly turn about on his perch, as if impatient at having his dreams disturbed; and when he launched himself off and flapped through the pines, spreading his wings to unexpected breadth, I could not hear the slightest sound from them. Thus, guided amid the pine boughs rather by a delicate sense of their neighborhood than by sight, feeling his twilight way as it were with his sensitive pinions, he found a new perch, where he might in peace await the dawning of his day.

CAT

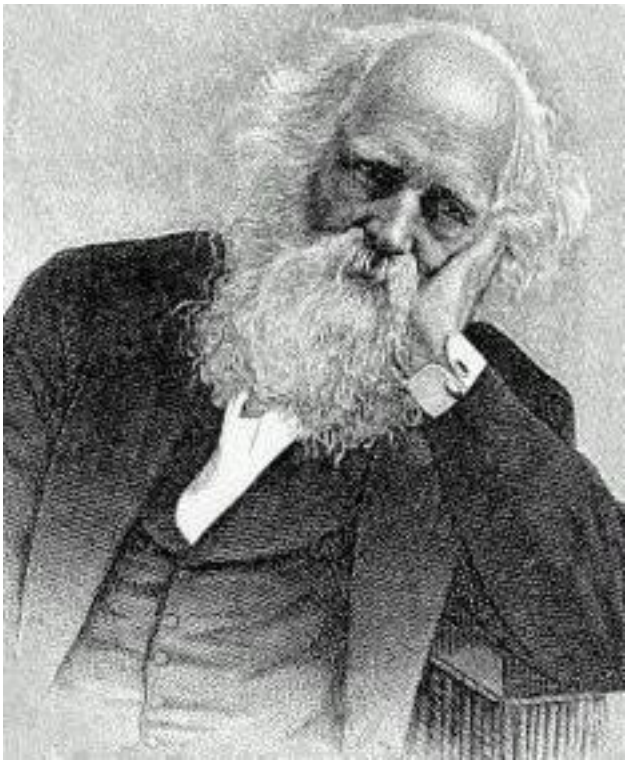
Publication of a new collection of William Cullen Bryant's poems, illustrated.



MISS SOPHIA FORD

MS. SOPHIA FOORD

(Here is an illustration of the poet, weary of trying to find another rhyme for “moon” and “June.”)



October: Sophia Foord gave up her teaching due to illness.

1847

March: Sophia Foord left Concord. (Here’s something Thoreau had written about a special female someone in 1846: “I know a woman who possesses a restless and intelligent mind — interested in her own culture & that of the family and earnest to enjoy the highest possible advantages. I meet her with pleasure as a natural person who a little provokes me — & I suppose is stimulated in turn by myself. Yet our acquaintance plainly does not attain that degree of confidence & sentiment — which women — which all — covet. I am glad to help her, as I am helped by her, I like very well to know her with a sort of strangers privilege — and hesitate to visit her often like her other friends. My nature pauses here and I do not well know why. Perhaps she does not make the highest demand on me-not a religious demand…. If this person would conceive that without willfulness I associate with her as far as our destinies are coincident — as far as our good geniuses permit — and still value such intercourse it would be a grateful assurance to me. And more I require…etc If you would not stop to look at me — but look whither I am looking and further — then my education could not dispense with thy company.”)

Fall: The 30-year-old Henry Thoreau worked on "KTAADN," on relationship to government, and, abstractly, on relationship to others. He firmly rejected, however, the advances of 45-year-old Sophia Foord, who had been living in the barn at the Waldo Emersons while tutoring the Emerson and Alcott children until she had become ill in October 1846 and had left Concord in March 1847.[7]

> *"By the way have you heard what a strange story there was about Miss Ford, and Henry, Mrs. Brooks said at the convention, a lady came to her and inquired, if it was true, that Miss F. had committed, or was going to commit suicide on account of H_____ Thoreau, what a ridiculous story this is. When it was told to H_____ he made no remark at all, and we cannot find out from him any thing about it, for a while, they corresponded, and Sophia said that she recollected one day on the reception of a letter she heard H_____ say, he shouldn't answer it, or he must put a stop to this, some such thing she couldn't exactly tell what."*
> — per an undated, unprovenanced letter by Maria Thoreau

AUNT MARIA THOREAU
SOPHIA FOORD
MARY MERRICK BROOKS
SOPHIA E. THOREAU

7. Nevertheless, Ms. Sophia Foord or Ford, formerly associated with the Association of Industry and Education in Northampton, would love Henry all her life from a distance, and would remain in contact with his friend and neighbor Louisa May Alcott to be kept up to date about this man she loved. The fact that she loved Thoreau all his life shows the Edward Dahlberg rendition –that Thoreau's refusal of Miss Foord's advances must have been "orgiastic and savage"– to be a superficial reading perhaps motivated more by Mr. Dahlberg's personal situation in the world than by a familiarity with the historical materials. We may note that Mr. Dahlberg was also troubled that Professor Kant had been guilty of masturbation, or perhaps troubled at Professor Kant's having acknowledged that he masturbated.

Immanuel Kant embraced godhead, the universe, the abstract Man, and, as he himself confessed, masturbated!

November 14, Sunday: Henry Thoreau, living in the Emerson home in Emerson's absence, wrote to Waldo Emerson terming himself a transplanted hermit:

> *It is a little like joining a community -this life- to such a hermit as I am - and as I dont keep the accounts I dont know whether this experiment will succeed or fail finally. At any rate, it is good for society- & I do not regret my transient - nor my permanent share in it.*

Thoreau included news of the beanfield and Emerson's shanty, and of Hugh Whelan:

> *Hugh still has his eyes on the Walden agellum, and orchards are waving there in the windy future for him. That's-the-where-I'll- go-next thinks he—but no important steps are yet taken. He reminds me occasionally of this open secret of his with which the very season seems to labor, and affirms sincerely that as to his wants, wood, stone, or timber—I know better than he. That is a clincher which I shall have to consider how to avoid to some extent, but I fear* [see MS page for drawing] *that it is a wrought nail and will not break. Unfortunately the day after Cattle-show—the day after small beer, he was among the missing, but not long this time. The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots—nor indeed Hugh his—Hugh.*

(Eventually, after the shanty would tip backward into the cellar hole that Hugh had dug, cracking its plaster, this man would be seen on the road out of town — and he would be crying.)

Thoreau described an encounter with Sophia Foord which would be suppressed by Franklin Benjamin Sanborn

when it was initially printed in The Atlantic Monthly:

> *I have had a tragic correspondence, for the most part all on one side, with Miss Ford. She did really wish to—I hesitate to write—marry me—that is the way they spell it. Of course I did not write a deliberate answer—how could I deliberate upon it? I sent back as distinct a No, as I have learned to pronounce after considerable practice, and I trust that this No has succeeded. Indeed I wished that it might burst like hollow shot after it had struck and buried itself, and make itself felt there. There was no other way. I really had anticipated no such foe as this in my career.*

We note that this letter, which is often quoted simply because it reveals a titillating love incident, more importantly reveals also a positive interest by Thoreau in abstract science, and in particular with the astronomical discoveries that were being made with the assistance of the powerful new telescope at the Harvard Observatory:

[Perez Blood] *and his company have at length seen the stars through the great telescope, and he told me that he thought it was worth the while.* [Professor Benjamin Peirce] *made them wait till the crowd had dispersed (it was a Saturday evening) & then was quite polite. He conversed with him & showed him the Micrometer &c— He said that Mr* [Blood]*'s glass was large enough for all ordinary astronomical work.* [The Reverend Barzillai Frost] *&* [*Dr. Josiah Bartlett*] *seemed disappointed that there was no greater difference between the Cambridge glass and the Concord one. They used only a power of four hundred. Mr* [Blood] *tells me that he is too old to study the Calculus or higher mathematics They think that they have discovered traces of another satellite to Neptune— They have been obliged to exclude the public altogether at last — the very dust which they raised "which is filled with minute crystals &c &c" as professors declare, having to be wiped off the glasses, would ere long wear them away. It is true enough. Cambridge college is really beginning to wake up and redeem its character & overtake the age. I see by the new catalogue that they are about establishing a Scientific school in connexion with the University — at which any one above eighteen, on paying one hundred dollars annually — (Mr Lawrence's 50000 will probably diminish this sum) may be instructed in the highest branches of Science — in Astronomy theoretical and practical, with the use of the instruments — so the great Yankee Astronomer may be born without delay — in Mechanics and Engineering to the last degree —* [Professor Louis Agassiz] *will ere long commence his lectures in the zoological department — a Chemistry Class has already been formed, and is under the direction of* [Professor Eben N. Horsford] *— A new and adequate building for these purposes is already being erected.*

Concord Nov 14th 1847.
Dear Friend,
I am but a poor neighbor to you here — a very poor companion am I— I understand that very well — but that need not prevent my writing to you now. I have almost never written letters in my life, yet I think I can write as good ones as I frequently see, so I shall not hesitate to write this such as it may be, knowing that you will welcome anything that reminds you of Concord.
I have banked up the young trees against the winter and the mice, and I will look out in my careless way to see when a pale is loose, or

a nail drops out of its place. The broad gaps at least I will occupy. I heartily wish that I could be of good service to this household — but I who have used only these ten digits so long to solve the problem of a living — how can I? This world is a cow that is hard to milk—

Life does not come so easy — and ah! how thinly it is watered ere we get it— But the young bunting calf — he will get at it. There is no way so direct. This is to earn one's living by the sweat of his brow. It is a little like joining a community –this life– to such a hermit as I am — and as I dont keep the accounts I dont know whether this experiment will succeed or fail finally. At any rate, it is good for society –& I do not regret my transient– nor my permanent share in it.

Lidian and I make very good housekeepers — she is a very dear sister to me— Ellen & Edith & Eddy & Aunty Brown keep up the tragedy & comedy & tragi-comedy of life as usual. The two former have not forgotten their old acquaintance — even Edith carries a young memory in her head, I find. Eddie can teach us all how to pronounce. If you should discover any new and rare breed of wooden or pewter horses I have no doubt he will know how to appreciate it. He occasionally surveys mankind from my shoulders as widely & wisely as ever Johnson did. I respect him not a little, though it is I that lift him up there so unceremoniously— And sometimes I have to set him down again in a hurry, according to his "mere will & good pleasure." He very seriously asked me the other day— "Mr Thoreau — will you be my father?" I am occasionally Mr Rough-and-Tumble with him — that I may not miss <u>him</u>, and lest he should miss you too much — so you must come back soon, or you will be superseded. Alcott has heard that I laughed & so set the people a laughing at his arbor, though I never laughed louder than when on the ridge pole. But now I have not laughed for a long time, it is so serious. He is very grave to look at. But not knowing all this I strove innocently enough the other day to engage his attention to my mathematics. "Did you ever study geometry?"— "The relation of straight lines to curves — the transition from the finite to the infinite?"— "Fine things about it in Newton & Leibnitz."— But he would hear none of it.—

Men of taste preferred the natural curve— Ah! he is a crooked stick himself. He is getting on now so many <u>knots</u> an hour— There is one knot at present occupying the <u>point</u> of highest elevation —the present highest point— and as many knots as are <u>not</u> handsome, I presume, are thrown down & cast into the pines. Pray show him this if you meet him anywhere in London, for I cannot make him hear much plainer words here. He forgets that I am neither old, nor young, nor anything in particular, and behaves as if I had still some of the animal heat in me. As for the building I feel a little oppressed when I come near it, it has so great a disposition to be beautiful. It is certainly a wonderful structure on the whole, and the fame of the architect will endure as long— —as it shall stand. I should not show

you this side alone if I did not suspect that Lidian had done ample justice to the other.
Mr Hosmer has been working at a tannery in Stow for a fortnight, though he has just now come home sick— It seems that he was a tanner in his youth—& So he has made up his mind a little at last. This comes of reading the New Testament. Was'nt one of the apostles a tanner? Mrs Hosmer remains here, and John looks stout enough to fill his own shoes and his father's too.
Mr. Blood and his company have at length seen the stars through the great telescope, and he told me that he thought it was worth the while. Mr Peirce made them wait till the crowd had dispersed (it was a Saturday evening) & then was quite polite. He conversed with him & showed him the Micrometer &c— He said that Mr B's glass was large enough for all ordinary astronomical work. Mr Frost & Dr Bartlett seemed disappointed that there was no greater difference between the Cambridge glass and the Concord one. They used only a power of four hundred. Mr B tells me that he is too old to study the Calculus or higher mathematics
They think that they have discovered traces of another satellite to Neptune— They have been obliged to exclude the public altogether at last — the very dust which they raised "which is filled with minute crystals &c &c" as professors declare, having to be wiped off the glasses, would ere long wear them away. It is true enough. Cambridge college is really beginning to wake up and redeem its character & overtake the age. I see by the new catalogue that they are about establishing a Scientific school in connexion with the University — at which any one above eighteen, on paying one hundred dollars annually — (Mr Lawrence's 50000 will probably diminish this sum) may be instructed in the highest branches of Science — in Astronomy theoretical and practical, with the use of the instruments — so the great Yankee Astronomer may be born without delay — in Mechanics and Engineering to the last degree— Agassiz will ere long commence his lectures in the zoological department — a Chemistry Class has already been formed, and is under the direction of Prof. Horsford— A new and adequate building for these purposes is already being erected. They have been foolish enough to put at the end of all this earnest the old joke of a diploma. Let every sheep keep but his own skin, I say.
I have had a tragic correspondence, for the most part all on one side, with Miss Ford. She did really wish to — I hesitate to write — marry me — that is the way they spell it. Of course I did not write a deliberate answer — how could I deliberate upon it? I sent back as distinct a <u>No</u>, as I have learned to pronounce after considerable practice, and I trust that this No has succeeded. Indeed I wished that it might burst like hollow shot after it had struck and buried itself, and make itself felt there. <u>There was no other way</u>. I really had anticipated no such foe as this in my career.

I suppose you will like to hear of my book — though I have nothing worth writing about it — indeed for the last month or two I have forgotten it — but shall certainly remember it again. Wiley & Putnam — Munroe — The Harpers — & Crosby & Nichols — have all declined printing it with the least risk to themselves — but Wiley & Putnam will print it in their series — and any any of them anywhere at my risk. If I liked the book well enough I should not delay, but for the present I am indifferent. I believe this is after all the course you advised — to let it lie.

I do not know what to say of myself. I sit before my green desk in the chamber at the head of the stairs — and attend to my thinking, sometimes more, sometimes less distinctly. I am not unwilling to think great thoughts if there are any in the wind, but what they are I am not sure. They suffice to keep me awake while the day lasts, at any rate. Perhaps they will redeem some portion of the night ere long. —I can imagine you astonishing — bewildering — confounding and sometimes delighting John Bull with your Yankee notions — and that he begins to take a pride in the relationship at last — introduced to all the stars of England in succession after the lectures, until you pine to thrust your head once more into a genuine & unquestionable nebula — if there be any left. I trust a common man will be the most uncommon to you before you return to these parts. I have thought there was some advantage even in death, by which we "minghle with the herd of common men."

Hugh still has his eyes on the Walden agellum, and orchards are waving there in the windy future for him. That's-the-where-I'll- go-next thinks he — but no important steps are yet taken. He reminds me occasionally of this open secret of his with which the very season seems to labor, and affirms sincerely that as to his wants, wood, stone, or timber — I know better than he. That is a clincher which I shall have to consider how to avoid to some extent, but I fear [see MS page for drawing] *that it is a wrought nail and will not break. Unfortunately the day after Cattle-show — the day after small beer, he was among the missing, but not long this time. The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots — nor indeed Hugh his — Hugh.*

As I walked over Conantum the other afternoon I saw a fair column of smoke rising from the woods directly over my house that was, as I judged, and already began to conjecture if my deed of sale would not be made invalid by this. But it turned out to be John Richardson's young wood on the S E of your field— It was burnt nearly all over & up to the rails and the road. It was set on fire no doubt by the same Lucifer that lighted Brooks' lot before. So you see that your small lot is comparatively safe for this season, the back fires having been already set for you.

They have been choosing between John Keyes & Sam Staples if the world wants to know it as representatives of this town — and Staples

is chosen. The candidates for Governor –think of my writing this to you– were Gov. Briggs & Gen Cushing — & Briggs is elected, though the Democrats have gained. Aint I a brave boy to know so much of politics for the nonce? but I should'nt have known it if Coombs[8] had'nt told me. They have had a Peace meeting here—

I should'nt think of telling you of it if I did'nt know that anything would do for the English market, and some men —Dea Brown at the head– have signed a long pledge swearing that they will "treat all mankind as brothers" henceforth. I think I shall wait and see how they treat me first. I think that nature meant kindly when she made our brothers few. However, my voice is still for peace.

So Good-bye and a truce to all joking — My Dear Friend — from H.D.T.

LOUIS AGASSIZ

8. This was probably not Eseek Coombs, but perhaps was his father or some other relative.

1850

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.
- 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.wwhp.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:[9]

> 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

9. 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.

MISS SOPHIA FORD

MS. SOPHIA FOORD

34	Sarah H. Earle	Worcester MA
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
- 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
- 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 Ophilia 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
- 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	
• 259	L.H. Ober	
• 260	Betsey F. Lawton	Chepachet RI
• 261	Emma Parker	Philadelphia
• 262	Olive W. Hastings	Lancaster MA (error?)
• 263	Silas Smith	IO
• 264	Asenath Fuller	
• 265	Denney M.F. Walker	
• 266	Eunice D.F. Pierce	
• 267	Elijah Houghton	

DATE: Sophia Foord became governess for an abolitionist family, the Chases, in Valley Falls, Rhode Island. The children recalled her later as having been dark-complexioned and pudgy-featured — not a very flattering description. Apparently she never married.

1856

November 23, Sunday: On his last worship day at the Eagleswood community on the New Jersey shore, Henry Thoreau rose during Quaker First Day morning silent worship and spoke, and someone wrote down his words,[10] and I would like to suggest here the reason why his words were written down. I submit that they were written down so they could be carried and presented to the Miss Sophia Foord who was known to love him from a distance.

> Sunday forenoon, I attended a sort of Quaker meeting at the same place– (The Quaker aspect & spirit prevails here– Mrs Spring says "–does thee not?") where it was expected that the spirit would move me (I having been previously spoken to about it) & it, or something else, did, an inch or so. I said just enough to set them by the

10. It is not **entirely** without precedent, that what someone says during the Quaker silent worship should be recorded, as witness the following singular publication from the turn of the 19th Century: However, it must again be emphasized how utterly exceptional this was (unless, as has been in the case once upon a time in Adolf Hitler's 3d Reich and at the present time in George W. Bush's America, a Quaker meeting was infiltrated by a paid informer).

Savery, William (1750-1804). SEVEN SERMONS AND A PRAYER PREACHED AT THE MEETINGS OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, IN AMERICA AND ENGLAND. Philadelphia: Benjamin C. Buzby, 1808.

> The Quaker speakings recorded in this volume had been offered by traveling ministers and were taken down in shorthand at various monthly meetings at or just prior to the turn of the century during "silent" meeting for worship.

Wells, John I. ESSAY ON WAR. 52 pages, 1808.

> This Quaker was against war — except of course where, as in the OLD TESTAMENT, this had been ordered by a wrathful God Almighty himself.

ears & make it lively.

> *Quality, fineness, durability, is the test of unity. Thus it is like attracts like; thus it is, friends, in my ever-seeking, everyearning for truth, I have chanced to intrude upon your quiet retreat, and the path is so clear, so crystal in its attraction, I slipped into recognition. It is a pleasure to me as exquisite as when I chanced to meet some friendly moss or lichen, that answered to the vacant spot in my soul on earth….*

> *O friends, to such, with pure, noble, truthful spirits, the world is a vast field of action; too large to admit languor or repining, too glorious to be an aimless labor. I love your blessed spirit, and quietly I will withdraw, lest I become overpowered by the delicious calmness and unity, and forget to leave my guest. But I shall come again, and hope you will greet me kindly.*

I had excused myself by saying that I could not adapt myself to a particular audience, for all the speaking & lecturing here has reference to the children, who are far the greatest part of the audience, & they are not so bright as N.E. children Imagine them sitting close to the wall all around a hall with old Quaker looking men & women here & there.... Some of them I suspect are very worthy people.... On Sunday evening, I read the moose-story to the children to their satisfaction.[11]

11. Here is a contemporary photograph in which two men are mourning the recent death of a moose (one of the two was willing to pay $3,450 to the other of the two, in a jet boat at Chilko Lake BC, to lead him to this moose so he could off it):

It seems to me to be utterly phenomenal, and exceptional, that someone wrote down what Henry Thoreau said. We are aware of very few other occasions on which such a thing has happened in a Quaker silent worship, unless, as has been in the case once upon a time in Adolf Hitler's 3d Reich and at the present time in George W. Bush's America, a Quaker meeting was infiltrated by a paid informer. Quakers not only don't write down what someone else has said during silent worship, they also don't write down what they themselves have said during silent worship. When God spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, of course Moses sat right down and wrote it down: "I am that I am." And, of course, the ten commandments, and again, ten commandments. So one would suppose that in a group which believes that the Holy Spirit speaks through them during the silence, would you not expect there to be official recorders, pen poised, and official records? Would the voice of the Holy Spirit not be the substance, or at least a major portion, of what is recorded in the meeting's minutes book? But no. What you typically find, in the journal entry of a Friend, on First Day evening, one who has that day spoken during silent worship, one who may have preached for even an hour during silent worship, is — "Truth prevailed," or perhaps "We had a favored meeting" or even "We had a precious meeting." Something about the manner in which these things occur makes them peculiar to the discrete group and the particular circumstance, and creates no desire to extend them beyond the discrete and the particular. Thoreau was adhering to Quaker tradition when we find, in his journal, and in his letter to his sister, no record of what he had said. Who-ever wrote down what he said, however, was not adhering to Quaker tradition, and such a deviation is utterly phenomenal and utterly unexplained.

Unless, of course, there is, as I suggested above, a personal explanation. Could some woman present have written this down because they were intimate friends with Sophia Foord, –and knew how she had been loving Henry from a distance though her love was rejected, –and wanted to convey this slip of paper to her, unknown to him, as a personal memento of him? Oh, rankest speculation. About all that could be said that such a hypothesis has going for it is that it does not contradict any of the known facts of the situation.

But is that sort of supposition not preferable to inaccuracy? On the following page, by way of contrast, is the utterly inappropriate manner in which Henry Thoreau can be presented in a book that is allegedly "Quaker history,"[12] by relying primarily upon the Canby biography for the background of his life.

12. This is from pages 100-1 of George A. Sellick's QUAKERS IN BOSTON 1656-1964: THREE CENTURIES OF FRIENDS IN BOSTON AND CAMBRIDGE, published in Cambridge MA by the Friends Meeting at Cambridge, 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge MA 02138; printed Boston MA by the Thomas Todd Company, in 1979. My underlining is for emphasis on the inaccuracies.

My Interpretation is not the Only One Possible

Edward Dahlberg came up with an interesting comment in 1941, which may indicate that many people who encounter Henry Thoreau's letter to the absent Waldo Emerson about Ms. Sophia Foord's proposal do so through a self-imposed lens of what may perhaps be legitimately characterized as sexism. I will first paraphrase Dahlberg's attitude toward the Thoreau/Foord affair, and then quote at length from his book in substantiation of my paraphrase: My paraphrase of Dahlberg's rant would be that although we can safely acknowledge that Thoreau was making a stab at being an ethical metaphysician, or at least a moral teacher, his stab was a total failure because his egregious distaste for humans tainted all his efforts to set an example and tainted all his efforts to give good advice. Thoreau, so earnest and truthful, was just another one of those rationalists deficient in blood pigmentation. Which is to say, the man wasn't a real man: his emotionality was deficient. Thus although Thoreau was an adept in the humanity cult, he was blocked in arriving at his love for humankind directly through his emotionality, and was forced to arrive at it through the multiplication-tables, that is, by way of bloodless categories created in the mind. Celibate Thoreau, in order to be PURE, cast out demons, but in so doing – like Adam after the Fall– he hid in quagmire, mud and fen, and so in effect it was he himself who entered the swine, or, to change the idiom: he turned his snorting hot-blooded steed Pegasus into a sneaking cold-souled cat. Thoreau's very life was his disgrace, a devil's nuptial of man and pond. When the man fell in love, it was but with a scrub oak. We should consider, as an example of this, Thoreau's refusal of the proposal by Ms. Foord, a repudiation which must be described as having been not only "orgiastic" but also "savage." This episode of his life amounted to the carnal error of a man with a spirit-glutted soul, or amounted to the blood-revenge of a man with an *apriori* bosom. It is not by chance that no women appear in the WALDEN book, or in the life at the pond. Thoreau, the "bachelor of nature" erecting in WALDEN the Western Fable of Ennui, altogether excluded women from his life and his surroundings and his writing, replacing this human contact with but the emeritic patience of ruminative sitting and waiting.

Oh wow!

Now what appears on the following pages are the direct quotations from Dahlberg's writings which support the above paraphrase of what he offered. Warning: they make painful reading[13]

13. Dahlberg, Edward. CAN THESE BONES LIVE. Norfolk CT: New Directions, revised edition 1960, pages 61-2, 64, 91-4, 127, 129 passim.

See what all the spirit-glutted souls, the rationalists and the ethical metaphysicians, who took to their apriori bosoms the remote abstract Mass Man — see what the spectral humanity-guzzlers have done.

All, from Plato, Immanuel Kant, G.W.F. Hegel, Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Kropotkin, to the socialists and communists, have been adepts in the humanity cult. The brotherhood of man has always attracted men without adequate blood-pigmentation, like Kant and Thoreau, who arrive at the love of man through the multiplication-tables and the categories. Both of these moral teachers had an egregious distaste for man. Kant kept himself closeted all his life in Königsberg because he would encounter fewer specimens of the genus, man. Henry Thoreau, so earnest and truthful, ate a muskrat to overcome his flesh-revulsion. Immanuel Kant devoured the categorical imperatives instead, and neither the muskrat nor the categories helped.

But the end of rationalism is not its own abstractions, but carnal error, or blood-revenge, as Henry Thoreau's orgiastic and savage refusal of the woman who had proposed to him, or Immanuel Kant's vile definition of marriage as "a treaty of reciprocal possession by the two parties which is made effective by the reciprocal use of their sex properties." Immanuel Kant embraced godhead, the universe, the abstract Man, and, as he himself confessed, masturbated! While Aristotle, Master of Schoolmen, as the story goes, crawled on all fours, his rider, not the Golden Mean, but his mistress flourishing a whip! ... "How men lust after a piece of spirit," cried Friedrich Nietzsche, "when a piece of flesh has been denied them."

...

How the Christian moan of ennui hovers over the Puritan; Emily Dickinson "plaited the residue of woe with monotony," and Henry Thoreau bequeathed a bog at the Temple and the Table.

Is this the serpent, or the fish?

Jesus the bridegroom has perished; but the dogma, the ambiguous statutes, have endured: the nails, the cross, the hyssop, the dirty paraphernalia of sorrow, horror, and belief have remained. The cup that was too galled for Christ –"Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me"– has been drained by sectaries, visionaries, artists. A whole generation of poets, Emily Dickinson, Herman Melville, Henry Thoreau, Edgar Allan Poe and Walt Whitman, went to Bethesda and to skulled Golgotha.

Yet we trumpet Emily Dickinson straitened craft. Infolded Puritan lips become the beauteous, skeletal, Lacedaemonian line! And Emily Dickinson's apocalyptic poetry accents Christ's admonitory "Yea, yea; Nay, nay"; it is as life and vision, as we have observed it in the lowly and surly habits of Rappites, Shakers and Quakers, a jeopardy and chastisement.

And Henry Thoreau's bog is what? the marsh, rocks, cindered veins of ravines, the charred and livid shells of trees lit by Charon's eyes. Nothing blooms here: all is doomed: "Dead Water Mountain," "dead water of Second Lake," of "Large Lake"; "Among the rivers which empty into the Merrimac [*sic*], the Concord is known ... as a dead stream."

All of Nature's Table is not for man, who sometimes has for repast Banquo's ghost.

There are many Natures — marsh, fen, mountain, mouse, bird, dove and men, whose touch, sight and smell yield a sweet Elysium or a reechy, blasted Erebus.

In LEVITICUS man is enjoined to keep the blood, the flesh and the brain, the altar of memory, undefiled. There are abominations in nature, fitch, kite, raven, rat or toad, that paint their loathsome image upon the tender mind: the body or raiment touched and fouled by these must be bathed; the earthen vessel upon which an Unclean Animal has fallen must be broken so that the veins may not unravel in revulsion. Had not Henry Thoreau said that the Imagination is wounded long before the conscience, and then turned his own Pegasus into a reptile.

His star was blighted by the First Shame; he wrote, "our very life is our disgrace." Henry Thoreau, like Adam after the Fall, hid in quagmire, mud and fen. How can fallen "man ascend pure and fragrant"? asked he who went INTO NATURE to be clean. His life was a sorcerer's mixing of separate natures. It was a devil's nuptial of man and pond, bird, pine, muskrat and ravine; "I fell in love with a scrub oak," "I felt a positive yearning toward one bush."

Henry Thoreau's life is a half parable: to be PURE he cast out the devils, but entered the swine. His Nature is Bethesda's Sink in whose mired waters he sought ablution from the Fall.

Human literature and lore are a warm, loose bounty of the tongue — how tall Ulysses was when he sat, or how high Agamemnon was when standing. What noble gossip are Sancho's gristled proverbs. Here are the flour, grain, wine and barley, all the goodly, brewing curd and milk of talk. This is the BREAD for which we ask our Poets only to get a Stone — Henry Thoreau's swamp, Emily Dickinson burial sod, and Herman Melville's watery grave.

The nineteenth century socialist settlements, Economy, New Harmony, New Lebanon, Fruitlands, Oneida, and the visions of the poets, Henry Thoreau's WALDEN, Emily Dickinson poems, Poe's "Eureka" and Herman Melville's BILLY BUDD, are NEW TESTAMENT allegories.

Celibate Henry Thoreau, spinster Emily Dickinson, and the ascetic Shakers partake of the bread of original sin.

...

Henry Thoreau, "bachelor of nature," indeed! wrote of war, economy, ruminative sitting, waiting and eremitic patience, altogether excluding women, and erected in WALDEN the Western Fable of Ennui.

...

MISS SOPHIA FORD

MS. SOPHIA FOORD

HOW MANY QUAKERS HAVE STUDIED SEWEL'S HISTORY AND READ FOX'S JOURNALS AS THOREAU AND EMERSON DID?

Henry Thoreau ... had read little about the early Quakers, and knew Friends mainly through a few modern representatives. Although he admired some of those he met, his impressions of Quakerism in general were not favorable. In 1843, he was much impressed by hearing an address in the Hester Street meeting house in New York by the great Quaker reformer, Lucretia Mott. It was in his account of this meeting that he commented on the Quaker women as "looking all like sisters or so many chickadees." Lucretia Mott's point of view appealed to him; he described it as "transcendentalism in its mildest form." When Thoreau gave his nature lectures in New Bedford he usually stayed with Friend Daniel Ricketson, a well-to-do Quaker who had read WALDEN and was one of Thoreau's admirers. Although Ricketson was a Friend, he was "plain and unspiritual," and apparently had little Quaker influence upon Thoreau. He loved nature and was occasionally chosen by Thoreau as a companion in his rambles over the countryside. On one of their trips near Fairhaven in the summer of 1856 they came upon an elderly Quaker minister who made a very unfavorable impression upon Thoreau. Thoreau thought the old man spoke "with a sanctified air" and was conceited and narrow-minded. He had earlier commented that "even the quietness and perhaps unworldliness of an aged Quaker has something ghostly and saddening about it, as it were a preparation for the grave." Thoreau had one more encounter with Quakers, which again left him unimpressed. In the autumn of 1856 he was employed as a surveyor to help lay out an educational colony called Eagleswood, near Perth Amboy, New Jersey. Not all the members of the colony were Quakers but Quaker influence was strong. There he attended the Friends meeting for worship, which he described in a letter to a friend as follows: "Sunday forenoon I attended a sort of Quaker meeting ... where it was expected that the Spirit would move me ... and it or something else, did – an inch or so. I said just enough to set them a little by the ears and make it lively." But Quakerism, as he saw it, seemed too mild and too encrusted with tradition to suit his taste. Emerson, on the other hand, openly acknowledged his interest in Quakers and even his debt to them. From his earliest years Emerson seems to have been influenced by Quaker ideas.

RICKETSON WAS A WELL-TO-DO QUAKER WHO BECAME QUITE SPIRITUAL IN 1861 WHILE THOREAU WAS IN MINNESOTA

NO, HE WAS HELPING THE COLONY DURING ITS STAGE OF DISINTEGRATION

MY SISTER, MY FRIEND!

* This is from pages 100-1 of George A. Sellick's QUAKERS IN BOSTON 1656-1964: THREE CENTURIES OF FRIENDS IN BOSTON AND CAMBRIDGE, published in Cambridge MA by the Friends Meeting at Cambridge, 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge MA 02138; printed Boston MA by the Thomas Todd Company, in 1979. My underlining is for emphasis on the inaccuracies.

MS. SOPHIA FOORD

MISS SOPHIA FORD

Had Jesus married the illuminated prostitute, Magdalene, he would have forsaken the Acts, the overthrowing of the tables of the pigeon and money-venders, and the Bleeding Cross and given man as inheritance an imperishable generation of gentle little children or Galilean verse. But there is no Magdalene, not even a Mary or Martha, in the Puritan Testament; woman does not exist in these literary masterpieces, in MOBY-DICK, or in WALDEN.

1862

May 11, Sunday: Louisa May Alcott sent Sophia Foord a keepsake snippet from the wreath of andromeda they had placed on Henry's coffin.

Concord May 11th

Dear Miss Ford

As I promised to write you when Henry died I send these few lines to fulfil that promise though I suppose you have seen notices of the event in the papers.

Father saw him the day before he died lying patiently & cheerfully on the bed he would never leave again alive. He was very weak but suffered nothing & talked in his old pleasant way saying "it took Nature a long time to do her work but he was most out of the world". On Tuesday at eight in the morning he asked to be lifted, tried to help do it but was too weak & lying down again passed quietly & painlessly out the old world into the new. On Friday at Mr. Emerson's desire he was publicly buried from the church, a thing Henry would not have liked but Emerson said his sorrow was so great he wanted all the world to mourn with him. Many friends came from Boston & Worcester, Emerson read an address good in itself but not appropriate to the time or place, the last few sentences were these & very true.

"In the Tyrol there grows a flower on the most inaccessible peaks of the mountains, called 'Adelvezia' or 'noble purity,' it is so much loved by the maidens that their lovers risk their lives in seeking it & are often found dead at the foot of precipices with the flower in their hands. I think our friend's life was a search for this rare flower, & I know that could we see him now we should find him adorned with profuse garlands of it for none could more fitly wear them".

Mr. Channing wrote the Stanzas & they were very sweetly sung. Father read selections from Henry's own books, for many people said he was an infidel & as he never went to church when living he ought not to be carried there dead. If ever a man was a real Christian it was Henry, & I think his own wise & pious thoughts read by one who loved him & whose own life was a beautiful example of religious faith, convinced many & touched the hearts of all. It was a lovely day clear, & calm, & spring like, & as we all walked after Henry's coffin with its pall of flowers, carried by six of his townsmen who had grown up with him, it seemed as if Nature wore her most benignant aspect to welcome her dutiful & loving son to his long sleep in her arms. As we entered the churchyard birds were singing, early violets blooming in the grass & the pines singing their softest lullaby, & there between his father & his brother we left him, feeling that though his life seemed too short, it would blossom & bear fruit for us long after he was gone, & that perhaps we should know a closer friendship now than even while he lived.

I never can mourn for such men because they never seem lost to me but nearer & dearer for the solemn change. I hope you have this consolation, & if these few words of mine can give you anything you have not already learned I am very glad, & can only add much love from us all & a heart full from your

Lou.

Come & see us when you can, after this week we shall be clean & in order, & always ready. I enclose a little sprig of "andromeda" his favourite plant a wreath of which we put on his coffin.

The above does not do complete justice to the letter. Louisa was using two sheets of paper, front and back for a total of four pages, to write to her former teacher, and when she got to "I hope you have this consolation, & if these few words" she had run out of space at the bottom of the back of her second sheet. To have added a third sheet would have increased the postage, so she therefore went back to the top of the front side of the first sheet, above the salutation, to continue in the blank space there with "of mine can give you anything you have not already learned ... we shall be clean & in good order, & always ready," whereupon she again ran out of blank space, and so she turned the sheets over, and at the top margin of the front of the second sheet, upside down, she wrote "I enclose a little sprig of 'andromeda'" and at the top margin of the back of the first sheet, upside down, she wrote "his favorite plant — a wreath of which we put on his coffin." (In the 1962 publication, a photograph of the actual letter has been presented.)

Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau evidently posted on this day a letter that she had begun to write to Friend Daniel Ricketson on April 7th:

CONCORD, April 7, 1862.

MR. RICKETSON:
DEAR SIR, — I feel moved to acknowledge the pleasant letters which Henry has lately received from you. It is really refreshing to hear of the flight of the wild geese and the singing of birds. There is a good deal of snow still whitening our fields. I am almost impatient to see the ground bare again.
My dear brother has survived the winter, and we should be most thankful if he might linger to welcome the green grass and the flowers once more.
Believing as I do in the sincerity of your friendship for Henry, I feel anxious that you should know how ill he is. Since the autumn he has been gradually failing, and is now the embodiment of weakness; still, he enjoys seeing his friends, and every bright hour he devotes to his manuscripts which he is preparing for publication. For many weeks he has spoken only in a faint whisper. Henry accepts this dispensation with such childlike trust and is so happy that I feel as if he were being translated, rather than dying in the ordinary way of most

mortals. I hope you will come and see him soon, and be cheered. He has often expressed pleasure at the prospect of seeing you.
I asked Mr. Alcott to write to you some weeks since; but I do not think that he impressed you with Henry's true condition. Few of his friends realize how sick he is, his spirits are always so good.
In much haste, believe me,
yours truly,

S.E. THOREAU.

P.S. Henry sends kind regards to you and your family, and desires me to tell you that he cannot rise to greet a guest, and has not been out for three months.

SUNDAY May 11th '62.
Mottoes placed in Henry's coffin by his friend W.E.C.:—
"Hail to thee, 0 man, who art come from the transitory place to the imperishable."
"Gazed on the heavens for what he missed on earth."
"I think for to touche also
The world whiche neweth everie daie,
So as I can, so as I maie."
Dear friend, you will not forget the bereaved mother and sister.
Yours truly,

S.E. THOREAU.

1885

April 1, Wednesday: Sophia Foord died in Dedham, Massachusetts at age 82; Louisa May Alcott would pay tribute to her in the Woman's Journal.

1892

May: "The Emerson-Thoreau Correspondence: The Dial Period," concerned with some letters written in 1843, appeared in the Atlantic Monthly (LXIX). Franklin Benjamin Sanborn, in preparing this material, censored a sensitive passage in Henry Thoreau's letter of November 14, 1847 in regard to Miss Sophia Foord:

> I have had a tragic correspondence, for the most part all on one side, with Miss Ford. She did really wish to—I hesitate to write—marry me—that is the way they spell it. Of course I did not write a deliberate answer—how could I deliberate upon it? I sent back as distinct a No, as I have learned to pronounce after considerable practice, and I trust that this No has succeeded. Indeed I wished that it might burst like hollow shot after it had struck and buried itself, and make itself felt there. There was no other way. I really had anticipated no such foe as this in my career.

The body of the article follows:

> IN reading the invaluable Memoirs of Emerson by Mr. Cabot, those who knew how intimate were the relations between the Concord poet-philosopher and his younger neighbor, the poet-naturalist, must have been surprised to see how little Thoreau is mentioned there. Only two pages out of eight hundred treat distinctly of Henry Thoreau and are specified in the index; and though Dr. Emerson's pleasing volume concerning his father and his Concord friends deals more liberally with Thoreau and his brother John, yet no hint is given that a copious and important correspondence went on between Emerson and Thoreau at two different periods, — in the year 1843, when Thoreau assisted in editing the Dial, and in 1847-48, when Emerson was in England, and Thoreau, dwelling in the Emerson family at Concord, entertained the traveler with domestic news very dear to the affectionate husband and father. These letters have been in my hands for ten years past, and there seems to be no reason now why they should not be given to the public. They will, I think, open a new view of Thoreau's character to those readers — perhaps the majority — who fancy him a reserved, stoical, and unsympathetic person. In editing the small collection of Thoreau's letters which he made in 1865, three years after the writer's death, Emerson included only one of the epistles to himself in the year 1843, though several of those addressed to Mrs. Emerson from Staten Island were published. I shall omit this printed letter, while giving Emerson's letter to which it is a reply.[14]
>
> In the early part of 1843 Thoreau was still living in Emerson's family, of which he became an inmate in April, 1841, and to which he returned in the autumn of 1847, after closing the chapter of his Walden hermit-life. In the first of the following letters he returns his thanks to Emerson for the hospitality thus

> afforded; and I have no doubt that a beautiful poem called The Departure, which I first printed in the Boston Commonwealth in the year following Thoreau's death, was written twenty years before — in 1843 — to commemorate his first separation from that friendly household when he went, in the spring of 1843, to reside as tutor in the family of Mr. William Emerson, at Staten Island, N. Y. The letter numbered I., however, was written by Thoreau in the Emerson household at Concord to Emerson at Staten Island, or perhaps in New York, where he was that winter giving a course of lectures.

In explanation of the passages concerning Bronson Alcott, in this letter, it should be said that he was then living at the Hosmer Cottage, in Concord, with his English friends, Charles Lane and Henry Wright, and that he had refused to pay a tax to support what he considered an unjust government, and was arrested by the deputy sheriff, Sam Staples, in consequence.

I. THOREAU TO EMERSON.

CONCORD, *January* 24, 1843. DEAR FRIEND, — The best way to correct a mistake is to make it right. I had not spoken of writing to you, but as you say you are about to write to me when you get my letter, I make haste on my part in order to get yours the sooner. I don't well know what to say to earn the forthcoming epistle, unless that Edith takes rapid strides in the arts and sciences — or music and natural history — as well as over the carpet; that she says "papa" less and less abstractedly every day, looking in *my* face, — which may sound like a *Ranz des Vaches* to yourself. And Ellen declares every morning that "papa *may* come home to-night;" and by and by it will have changed to such positive statement as that "papa came home *larks* night."

Elizabeth Hoar still flits about these clearings, and I meet her here and there, and in all houses but her own, but as if I were not the less of her family for all that. I have made slight acquaintance also with one Mrs. Lidian Emerson, who almost persuades me to be a Christian, but I fear I as often lapse into heathenism. Mr. O'Sullivan was here three days. I met him at the Atheneum [Concord], and went to Hawthorne's [at the Old Manse] to tea with him. He expressed a great deal of interest in your poems, and wished me to give him a list of them, which I did; he saying he did not know but he should notice them. He is a rather puny-looking man, and did not strike me. We had nothing to say to one another, and therefore we said a great deal! He, however, made a point of asking me to write for his Review, which I shall be glad to do. He is, at any rate, one of the not-bad, but does not by any means take you by storm, — no, nor by calm, which is the best way. He expects to see you in New York. After tea I carried him and Hawthorne to the Lyceum.

Mr. Alcott has not altered much since you left. I think you will find him much the same sort of person. With Mr. Lane I have had one regular chat *à la* George Minott, which of course was greatly to our mutual grati- and edi- fication; and, as two or three as regular conversations have taken place since, I fear there may have been a precession of the equinoxes. Mr. Wright, according to the last accounts, is in Lynn, with uncertain aims and prospects, — maturing slowly, perhaps, as indeed are

14. The earliest note which I find from Emerson to Thoreau bears no date, but was doubtless written in 1840 or 1841, for at no later time could the persons named in it have visited Concord together. Thoreau must have been living with his father and mother in the Parkman house, where the Library now stands.

> MY DEAR HENRY, — We have here G. P. Bradford, R. Bartlett, G. W. Lippitt, C. S. Wheeler, and Mr. Alcott. Will you not come down and spend an hour?
> Yours,
> R. W. E
> Thursday, P. M.

There is also a brief note asking Thoreau to join the Emersons in a party to the Cliffs (Fairhaven hill), and to bring his flute. Living near each other, the two friends did not often write until 1843.

all of us. I suppose they have told you how near Mr. Alcott went to the jail, but I can add a good anecdote to the rest. When Staples came to collect Mrs. Ward's taxes, my sister Helen asked him what he thought Mr. Alcott meant, — what his idea was, — and he answered, "I vum, I believe it was nothing but principle, for I never heard a man talk honester."

There was a lecture on Peace by a Mr. Spear (ought he not to be beaten into a ploughshare?), the same evening, and, as the gentlemen, Lane and Alcott, dined at our house while the matter was in suspense, — that is, while the constable was waiting for his receipt from the jailer, — we there settled it that we, that is, Lane and myself, perhaps, should agitate the State while Winkelried lay in durance. But when, over the audience, I saw our hero's head moving in the free air of the Universalist church, my fire all went out, and the State was safe as far as I was concerned. But Lane, it seems, had cogitated and even written on the matter, in the afternoon, and so, out of courtesy, taking his point of departure from the Spear-man's lecture, he drove gracefully *in medias res*, and gave the affair a very good setting out; but, to spoil all, our martyr very characteristically, but, as artists would say, in bad taste, brought up the rear with a "My Prisons," which made us forget Silvio Pellico himself.

Mr. Lane wishes me to ask you to see if there is anything for him in the New York office, and pay the charges. Will you tell me what to do with Mr. [Theodore] Parker, who was to lecture February 15th? Mrs. Emerson says my letter is written instead of one from her.

At the end of this strange letter I will not write — what alone I had to say — to thank you and Mrs. Emerson for your long kindness to me. It would be more ungrateful than my constant thought. I have been your pensioner for nearly two years, and still left free as under the sky. It has been as free a gift as the sun or the summer, though I have sometimes molested you with my mean acceptance of it, — I who have failed to render even those slight services of the *hand* which would have been for a sign, at least; and, by the fault of my nature, have failed of many better and higher services. But I will not trouble you with this, but for once thank you as well as Heaven.

Your friend, H.D.T.

Mrs. Lidian Emerson, the wife of R.W. Emerson, and her two daughters, Ellen and Edith, are named in this first letter, and will be frequently mentioned in the correspondence. At this date, Edith, now Mrs. W.H. Forbes, was fourteen months old. Mr. Emerson's mother, Madam Ruth Emerson, was also one of the household, which had for a little more than seven years occupied the well-known house under the trees, east of the village. No reply to this letter is in my hands.

II. THOREAU TO EMERSON.

CONCORD, *February* 10, 1843. DEAR FRIEND, — I have stolen one of your own sheets to write you a letter upon, and I hope, with two layers of ink, to turn it into a comforter. If you like to receive a letter from me, too, I am glad, for it gives me pleasure to write. But don't let it come amiss; it must fall as harmlessly as leaves settle on the landscape. I will tell you what we are doing this now.

Supper is done, and Edith — the dessert, perhaps, more than the desert — is brought in, or even comes in *per se;* and round she goes, now to this altar, and then to that, with her monosyllabic invocation of "oc," "oc." It makes me think of "Langue d'oc." She must belong to that province. And like the gipsies she talks a language of her own while she understands ours. While she jabbers Sanscrit, Parsee, Pehivi, say "Edith go bah!" and "bah" it is. No intelligence passes between us. She knows. It is a capital joke, — that is the reason she smiles so. How well the secret is kept! she never descends to explanation. It is not buried like a common secret, bolstered up on two sides, but by an eternal silence on the one side, at least. It has been long kept, and comes in from the unexplored horizon, like a blue mountain range, to end abruptly at our door one day (Don't stumble at this steep simile.) And now she studies the heights and depths of nature

On shoulders whirled in some eccentric orbit

Just by old Pestum's temples and the perch
Where Time doth plume his wings.

And how she runs the race over the carpet, while all Olympia applauds, — mamma, grandma, and uncle, good Grecians all, — and that dark-hued barbarian, Partheanna Parker, whose shafts go through and through, not backward! Grandmamma smiles over all, and mamma is wondering what papa would say, should she descend on Carlton House some day. "Larks night" ës abed, dreaming of "pleased faces" far away. But now the trumpet sounds, the games are over; some Hebe comes, and Edith is translated. I don't know where; it must be to some cloud, for I never was there.

Query: what becomes of the answers Edith thinks, but cannot express? She really gives you glances which are before this world was. You can't feel any difference of age, except that you have longer legs and arms. Mrs. Emerson said I must tell you about domestic affairs, when I mentioned that I was going to write. Perhaps it will inform you of the state of all if I only say that I am well and happy in your house here in Concord.

Your friend, HENRY. Don't forget to tell us what to do with Mr. Parker, when you write next. I lectured this week. It was as bright a night as you could wish. I hope there were no stars thrown away on the occasion.

[A part of the same letter, though bearing a date two days later, and written in a wholly different style, as of one sage to another, is the following postscript.]

February 12, 1843. DEAR FRIEND, — As the packet still tarries, I will send you some thoughts, which I have lately relearned, as the latest public and private news.

How mean are our relations to one another! Let us pause till they are nobler. A little silence, a little rest, is good. It would be sufficient employment only to cultivate true ones.

The richest gifts we can bestow are the least marketable. We hate the kindness which we understand. A noble person confers no such gift as his whole confidence: none so exalts the giver and the receiver; it produces the truest gratitude. Perhaps it is only essential to friendship that some vital trust should have been reposed by the one in the other. I feel addressed and probed even to the remote parts of my being when one nobly shows, even in trivial things, an implicit faith in me. When such divine commodities are so near and cheap, how strange that it should have to be each day's discovery! A threat or a curse may be forgotten, but this mild trust translates me. I am no more of this earth; it acts dynamically; it changes my very substance. I cannot do what before I did. I cannot be what before I was. Other chains may be broken, but in the darkest night, in the remotest place, I trail this thread. Then things cannot *happen*. What if God were to confide in us for a moment! Should we not then be gods? How subtle a thing is this confidence!

Nothing sensible passes between; never any consequences are to be apprehended should it be misplaced. Yet something has transpired. A new behavior springs; the ship carries new ballast in her hold. A sufficiently great and generous trust could never be abused. It should be cause to lay down one's life, — which would not be to lose it. Can there be any mistake up there? Don't the gods know where to invest their wealth? Such confidence, too, would be reciprocal. When one confides greatly in you, he will feel the roots of an equal trust fastening themselves in him. When such trust has been received or reposed, we dare not speak, hardly to see each other; our voices sound harsh and untrustworthy. We are as instruments which the Powers have dealt with. Through what straits would we not carry this little burden of a magnanimous trust! Yet no harm could possibly come, but simply faithlessness. Not a feather, not a straw, is entrusted; that packet is empty. It is only *committed* to us, and, as it were, all things are committed to us.

The kindness I have longest remembered has been of this sort, — the sort unsaid; so far behind the speaker's lips that almost it already lay in my heart. It did not have far to go to be communicated. The gods cannot misunderstand, man cannot explain. We communicate like the burrows of foxes,

in silence and darkness, under ground. We are undermined by faith and love. How much more full is Nature where we think the empty space is than where we place the solids! — full of fluid influences. Should we ever communicate but by these? The spirit abhors a vacuum more than Nature. There is a tide which pierces the pores of the air. These aerial rivers, let us not pollute their currents. What meadows do they course through? How many fine mails there are which traverse their routes! He is privileged who gets his letter franked by them.

I believe these things.

HENRY D. THOREAU

And now comes the first Emersonian reply, — hardly a reply to either of these letters, of which only one had been received February 4-11, when Emerson wrote from the Carlton House, a New-York hotel.

III. EMERSON TO THOREAU.

NEW YORK, *February*, 1843.MY DEAR HENRY, — I have yet seen no new men in New York (excepting young Tappan); but only seen again some of my old friends of last year. Mr. Brisbane [Albert Brisbane] has just given me a faithful hour and a half of what he calls his principles; and he shames truer men by his fidelity and zeal. Already he begins to hear the reverberation of his single voice from most of the States of the Union. He thinks himself sure of W. H. Channing (2) as a good Fourierist. I laugh incredulous while he recites (for it seems always as if he was repeating paragraphs out of his master's book) descriptions of the self-augmenting potency of the solar system, which is destined to contain one hundred and thirty-two bodies, I believe, and his urgent inculcation of our *stellar duties*. But it has its kernel of sound truth; and its insanity is so wide of New York insanities that it is virtue and honor.

February 10. I beg you, my dear friend, to say to those faithful lovers of me who have just sent me letters which any man should be happy and proud to receive — I mean my mother and my wife — that I am grieved they should have found my silence so vexatious. I think that some letter must have failed, for I cannot have let ten days go by without writing home. I have kept no account, but am confident that that cannot be. Mr. Mackay has just brought me his good package, and I will not at this hour commence a new letter, but you shall tell Mrs. Emerson that my first steps in New York on this visit seem not to have been prudent, and so I lose several precious days.

February 11. A society invited me to read my course before them in the Bowery, on certain terms, one of which was that they guaranteed me a thousand auditors. I referred them to my brother William, who covenanted with them. It turned out that their church was in a dark, inaccessible place, a terror to the honest and fair citizens of New York; and our first lecture had a handful of persons, and they all personal friends of mine, from a distant part of the city. But the Bereans felt so sadly about the disappointment that it seemed at last, on much colloquy, not quite good-natured and affectionate to abandon them at once, but to read also a second lecture, and then part. The second was read with faint success, and then we parted. I begin this evening anew in the Society Library, where I was last year. This takes more time than I could wish, a great deal, and I grieve that I cannot come home. I see W. H. Channing and Mr. [Henry] James at leisure, and have had what the Quakers call "a solid season "once or twice; with Tappan a very happy pair of hours, and him I must see again.

I am enriched greatly by your letter, and now by the dear letters which Mr. Mackay has brought me from Lidian Emerson and Elizabeth Hoar; and for speed in part, and partly because I like to write so, I make you the organ of communication to the whole household, and must still owe you a special letter. I dare not say when I will come home, as the time so fast approaches when I should speak to the Mercantile Library. Yesterday eve I was at Staten Island, where William had promised me as a lecturer. and made a speech at Tompkinsville. Dear love to my mother. I shall try within twenty-four hours to write to my wife. Thanks, thanks for your love to Edie! Farewell.

R. WALDO E.

The "special letter," if written, has failed to appear, and instead of it I find one devoted chiefly to the next number of the Dial, of which Emerson was then the editor, with Thoreau's aid. For the January number of 1843 Thoreau had given his unmetrical translation of the Prometheus Bound of AEschylus; for the April number he gave translations from the pseudo-Anacreon, and those beautiful Grecian poems of his own on Smoke and Haze.

IV. EMERSON TO THOREAU

NEW YORK, 12 *February*, 1843.MY DEAR HENRY, — I am sorry I have no paper but this unsightly sheet, this Sunday eve, to write you a message which I see must not wait. The Dial for April, what elements shall compose it? What have you for me? What has Mr. Lane? Have you any Greek translations in your mind? Have you given shape to the comment on Etzler?(3) (It was about some sentences on this matter that I made, some day, a most rude and snappish speech. I remember, but you will not, and must give the sentences as you first wrote them.) You must go to Mr. [Charles] Lane, with my affectionate respects, and tell him that I depend on his important aid for the new number, and wish him to give us the most recent and stirring matter that he has. If (as he is a ready man) he offers us anything at once, I beg you to read it; and if you see and say decidedly that it is good for us, you need not send it to me; but if it is of such quality that you can less surely pronounce, you must send it to me by Harnden. Have we no more news from Wheeler? Has Bartlett none?(4)

I find Edward Palmer here, studying medicine and attending medical lectures. He is acquainted with Mr. Porter, whom Lane and Wright know, and values him highly. I am to see Porter. Perhaps I shall have no more time to fill this sheet; if so, farewell.

Yours, R. WALDO E.

This Edward Palmer appears again in a letter of Thoreau's, and I think he afterwards made one of Alcott's little community at Fruitlands, in Harvard, where Charles Lane owned the property, and resided for a time, with his son William and his friend Wright. To this editorial letter of Emerson, Thoreau, who was punctuality itself, replied at once.

V. THOREAU TO EMERSON.

CONCORD, *February* 15, l843. MY DEAR FRIEND, — I got your letters, one yesterday and the other to-day, and they have made me quite happy. As a packet is to go in the morning, I will give you a hasty account of the Dial. I called on Mr. Lane this afternoon, and brought away, together with an abundance of good will, first, a bulky catalogue of books without commentary, — some eight hundred, I think he told me, with an introduction filling one sheet, — ten or a dozen pages, say, though I have only glanced at them; second, a review — twenty-five or thirty printed pages — of Conversations on the Gospels, Record of a School, and Spiritual Culture, with rather copious extracts. However, it is a good subject, and Lane says it gives him satisfaction. I will give it a faithful reading directly. [These were Alcott's publications, reviewed by Lane.] And now I come to the little end of the horn; for myself, I have brought along the Minor Greek Poets, and will mine there for a scrap or two, at least. As for Etzler, I don't remember any "rude and snappish speech" that you made, and if you did it must have been longer than anything I had written; however, here is the book still, and I will try. Perhaps I have some few scraps in my Journal which you may choose to print. The translation of the AEschylus I should like very well to continue anon, if it should be worth the while. As for poetry, I have not remembered to write any for some time; it has quite slipped my mind; but sometimes I think I hear the mutterings of the thunder. Don't you remember that last summer we heard a low, tremulous sound in the woods and over the hills, and thought it was partridges or rocks, and it proved to be thunder gone down the river? But sometimes it was over Wayland way, and at last burst over our heads. So we will not despair by reason of the drought. You see, it takes a good many words to supply the place of one deed; a hundred lines to a cobweb, and but one cable to a man-of-war. The Dial case needs to be reformed in many particulars. There is no news from Wheel-

er, none from Bartlett. They all look well and happy in this house, where it gives me much pleasure to dwell.

Yours in haste, HENRY. P.S.

Wednesday Evening, *February* 16. DEAR FRIEND, — I have time to write a few words about the Dial. I have just received the three first signatures, which do not yet complete Lane's piece. He will place five hundred copies for sale at Munroe's bookstore. Wheeler has sent you two full sheets — more about the German Universities — and proper names, which will have to be printed in alphabetical order for convenience; what this one has done, that one is doing, and the other intends to do. Ham-mer-Purgstall (Von Hammer) may be one, for aught I know. However, there are two or three *things* in it, as well as names. One of the books of Herodotus is discovered to be out of place.

He says something about having sent to Lowell, by the last steamer, a budget of literary news, which he will have communicated to you ere this. Mr. Alcott has a letter from Heraud, and a book written by him, — the Life of Savonarola, — which he wishes to' have republished here. Mr. Lane will write a notice of it. (The latter says that what is in the New York post office *may* be directed to Mr. Alcott.) Miss [Elizabeth] Peabody has sent a "Notice to the readers of the Dial," which is not good.

Mr. Chapin lectured this evening, and so rhetorically that I forgot my duty and heard very little. I find myself better than I have been, and am meditating some other method of paying debts than by lectures and writing, — which will only do to talk about. If anything of that "other" sort should come to your ears in New York, will you remember it for me? Excuse this scrawl, which I have written over the embers in the dining-room. I hope that you live on good terms with yourself and the gods.

Yours in haste, HENRY.

Mr. Lane and his lucubrations proved to be tough subjects, and the next letter has more to say about them and the Dial. He had undertaken to do justice to Mr. Alcott and his books, as may still be read in the pages of that April number of the Transcendentalist quarterly.

VI. THOREAU TO EMERSON.

CONCORD, *February* 20, 1843. MY DEAR FRIEND, — I have read Mr. Lane's review, and *can* say, speaking for this world and for fallen man, that "it is good for us." As they say in geology, time never fails, there is always enough of it, so I may say, criticism never fails; but if I go and read elsewhere, I say it is good, — far better than any notice Mr. Alcott has received, or is likely to receive from another quarter. It is at any rate "the other side," which Boston needs to hear. I do not send it to you, because time is precious, and because I think you would accept it, after all. After speaking briefly of the fate of Goethe and Carlyle in their own countries, he says, "To Emerson in his own circle is but slowly accorded a worthy response; and Alcott, almost utterly neglected," etc.

I will strike out what relates to yourself, and, correcting some verbal faults, send the rest to the printer with Lane's initials.

The catalogue needs amendment, I think. It wants completeness now. It should consist of such books only as they would tell Mr. [F. H.] Hedge and [Theodore] Parker they had got; omitting the Bible, the classics, and much besides, — for there the incompleteness begins. But you will be here in season for this.

It is frequently easy to make Mr. Lane more universal and attractive; to write, for instance, "universal ends" instead of "the universal end," just as we pull open the petals of a flower with our fingers where they are confined by its own sweets. Also he had better not say "books designed too. This is that abominable dialect. He has just given me a notice of George Bradford's Fènelon for the Record of the Months, and speaks of extras of the Review and Catalogue, if they are printed, — even a hundred, or thereabouts. How shall this be arranged? Also he wishes to use some manu-

scripts of his which are in your possession, if you do not. Can I get them?

I think of no news to tell you. It is a serene summer day here, all above the snow. The hens steal their nests, and I steal their eggs still, as formerly. This is what I do with the hands. Ah, labor, — it is a divine institution, and conversation with many men and hens. Do not think that my letters require as many special answers. I get one as often as you write to Concord. Concord inquires for you daily, as do all the members of this house. You must make haste home before we have settled all the great questions, for they are fast being disposed of. But I must leave room for Mrs. Emerson.

Yours, HENRY.

P. S. BY MRS. EMERSON.

MY DEAR HUSBAND, — Thinking that Henry had decided to send Mr. Lane's manuscript to you by Harnden to-morrow, I wrote you a sheet of gossip which you will not ultimately escape. Now I will use up Henry's vacant spaces with a story or two. G. P. Bradford has sent you a copy of his Fènelon, with a freezing note to me, which made me declare I would never speak to him again; but Mother says," Never till next time!" William B. Greene has sent me a volume of tales translated by his father. Ought there to be any note of acknowledgment? I wish you may find time to fill all your paper when you write; you must have millions of things to say that we would all be glad to read.

Last evening we had the "Conversation," though, owing to the bad weather, but few attended. The subjects were: What is Prophecy? Who is a Prophet? and The Love of Nature. Mr. Lane decided, as for all time and the race, that this same love of nature — of which Henry [Thoreau] was the champion, and Elizabeth Hoar and Lidian (though L. disclaimed possessing it herself) his faithful squiresses — that this love was the most subtle and dangerous of sins; a refined idolatry, much more to be dreaded than gross wickednesses, because the gross sinner would be alarmed by the depth of his degradation, and come up from it in terror, but the unhappy idolaters of Nature were deceived by the refined quality of their sin, and would be the last to enter the kingdom. Henry frankly affirmed to both the wise men that they were wholly deficient in the faculty in question, and therefore could not judge of it. And Mr. Alcott as frankly answered that it was because they went beyond the mere material objects, and were filled with spiritual love and perception (as Mr. T. was not), that they seemed to Mr. Thoreau not to appreciate outward nature. I am very heavy, and have spoiled a most excellent story. I have given you no idea of the scene, which was ineffably comic, though it made no laugh at the time; I scarcely laughed at it myself, — too deeply amused to give the usual sign. Henry was brave and noble; well as I have always liked him, he still grows upon me. Elizabeth sends her love, and says she shall not go to Boston till your return, and you must make the 8th of March come quickly.

2. Nephew and biographer of Dr. Channing, and cousin of Ellery Channing, the poet, soon to be named.

3. This was the review of Etiler's book which Mr. 0'Sullivan, mentioned in Thoreau's first letter, soon printed in his Democratic Review, for which Hawthorne was a frequent writer. The Dial was a quarterly magazine, published for four years from July, 1840.

4. Charles Stearns Wheeler, a college classmate of Thoreau, was then in Germany (where he died the next summer), and was contributing to the Dial. Robert Bartlett, of Plymouth, was Wheeler's most intimate friend.

And now the localities of the two friends are reversed in the letters which follow. Mr. Emerson had returned to Concord in March, and in May Mr. Thoreau had gone to Staten Island, into the family of Emerson's elder brother, William, where he was teaching the eldest son, William, and studying New York, at long

range or at close quarters. The first letter in the series comes from Emerson.

VII. EMERSON TO THOREAU.

CONCORD, Sunday Eve, 21 *May*, 1843. MY DEAR FRIEND, — Our Dial is already printing, and you must, if you can, send me something good by the 10th of June, certainly, if not before. If William E. can send by a private opportunity, you shall address it to "Care of Miss Peabody, 13 West Street," or, to be left at Concord Stage Office.(5) Otherwise send by Harnden, — W. E. paying to Boston and charging to me. Let the pacquet bring letters also from you, and from [Giles] Waldo and Tappan, I entreat.

You will not doubt that you are well remembered here, by young, older, and old people; and your letter to your mother was borrowed and read with great interest, pending the arrival of direct accounts and of later experiences, especially in the city. I am sure that you are under sacred protection, if I should not hear from you for years. Yet I shall wish to know what befalls you on your way.

Ellery Channing is well settled in his house, and works very steadily thus far, and our intercourse is very agreeable to me. Young [B. W.] Ball has been to see me, and is a prodigious reader and a youth of great promise, — born, too, in the good town. Mr. Hawthorne is well, and Mr. Alcott and Mr. Lane are revolving a purchase in Harvard of ninety acres.

Yours affectionately, R. W. EMERSON.

This letter is addressed to "Henry D. Thoreau, care of Mr. Emerson, Esq., 64 Wall Street, New York;" but Thoreau himself was living on Staten Island, at a town called Castleton, whence he made excursions across the bay to the city, and up and down the two islands, Staten and Manhattan. The sea greatly attracted him, for he had seen little, till then, of the great ocean; but the city was an affliction to him.

VIII. THOREAU TO EMERSON.

CASTLETON, STATEN ISLAND, May 23. MY DEAR FRIEND, — I was just going to write to you when I received your letter. I was waiting till I had got away from Concord. I should have sent you something for the Dial before, but I have been sick ever since I came here, rather unaccountably, — what with a cold, bronchitis, acclimation, etc., still unaccountably. I send you some verses from my journal which will help make a packet. I have not time to correct them, if this goes by Rockwood Hoar. If I can finish an account of a winter's walk in Concord, in the midst of a Staten Island summer, — not so wise as true, I trust, — I will send it to you soon.

I have had no later experiences yet. You must not count much upon what I can do or learn in New York. I feel a good way off here; and it is not to be visited, but seen and dwelt in. I have been there but once, and have been confined to the house since. Everything there disappoints me but the crowd; rather, I was disappointed with the rest before I came. I have no eyes for their churches, and what else they find to brag of. Though I know but little about Boston, yet what attracts me, in a quiet way, seems much meaner and more pretending than there, — libraries, pictures, and faces in the street. You don't know where any respectability inhabits. It is in the crowd in Chatham Street. The crowd is something new, and to be attended to. It is worth a thousand Trinity Churches and Exchanges while it is looking at them, and will run over them and trample them under foot one day. There are two things I hear and am aware I live in the neighborhood of, — the roar of the sea and the hum of the city. I have just come from the beach (to find your letter), and I like it much. Everything there is on a grand and generous scale, — seaweed, water, and sand; and even the dead fishes, horses, and hogs have a rank, luxuriant odor; great shadnets spread to dry; crabs and horseshoes crawling over the sand; clumsy boats, only for service, dancing like sea-fowl over the surf, and ships afar off going about their business.

Waldo and Tappan carried me to their English alehouse the first Saturday, and Waldo spent two hours here the next day. But Tappan I have only seen. I like his looks and the sound of his silence. They are confined every day but Sunday, and then Tappan is obliged to observe the demeanor of a church-goer to prevent open war with his father. I am glad that Channing has got settled, and that, too, before the inroad of the Irish. I have read his poems two or three times over, and partially through and under, with new and increased interest and appreciation. Tell him I saw a man buy a copy at Little & Brown's. He may have been a virtuoso, but we will give him the credit. What with Alcott and Lane and Hawthorne, too, you look strong enough to take New York by storm. Will you tell L., if he asks, that I have been able to do nothing about the books yet?

Believe that I have something better to write you than this. It would be unkind to thank you for particular deeds.

Your friend, HENRY D. THOREAU.

IX. THOREAU TO EMERSON.

STATEN ISLAND, *June* 8, 1843. DEAR FRIEND, — I have been to see Henry James, and like him very much. It was a great pleasure to meet him. It makes humanity seem more erect and respectable. I never was more kindly and faithfully catechised. It made me respect myself more to be thought worthy of such wise questions. He is a man, and takes his own way, or stands still in his own place. I know of no one so patient and determined to have the good of you. It is almost friendship, such plain and human dealing. I think that he will not write or speak inspiringly; but he is a refreshing forward-looking and forward-moving man, and he has naturalized and humanized New York for me. He actually reproaches you by his respect for your poor words. I had three hours' solid talk with him, and he asks me to make free use of his house. He wants an expression of your faith, or to be sure that it is faith, and confesses that his own treads fast upon the neck of his understanding. He exclaimed, at some careless answer of mine, "Well, you Transcendentalists are wonderfully consistent. I must get hold of this somehow!" He likes Carlyle's book,(6) but says that it leaves him in an excited and unprofitable state, and that Carlyle is so ready to obey his humor that he makes the least vestige of truth the foundation of any superstructure, not keeping faith with his better genius nor truest readers.

I met Wright on the stairs of the Society Library, and W. H. Channing and Brisbane on the steps. The former (Channing) is a concave man, and you see by his attitude and the lines of his face that he is retreating from himself and from yourself, with sad doubts. It is like a fair mask swaying from the drooping boughs of some tree whose stem is not seen. He would break with a conchoidal fracture. You feel as if you would like to see him when he has made up his mind to run all the risks. To be sure, he doubts because he has a great hope to be disappointed, but he makes the possible disappointment of too much consequence. Brisbane, with whom I did not converse, did not impress me favorably. He looks like a man who has lived in a cellar, far gone in consumption. I barely saw him, but he did not look as if be could let Fourier go, in any case, and throw up his hat. But I need not have come to New York to write this.

I have seen Tappan for two or three hours, and like both him and Waldo; but I always see those of whom I have heard well with a slight disappointment. They are so much better than the great herd, and yet the heavens are not shivered into diamonds over their heads. Persons and things flit so rapidly through my brain, nowadays, that I can hardly remember them. They seem to be lying in the stream, stemming the tide, ready to go to sea, as steamboats when they leave the dock go off in the opposite direction first, until they are headed right, and then begins the steady revolution of the paddle-wheels; and *they* are not quite cheerily headed anywhither yet, nor singing amid the shrouds as they bound over the billows. There is a certain youthfulness and generosity about them, very attractive; and Tappan's more reserved and solitary thought commands respect.

After some ado, I discovered the residence of Mrs. Black, but there was palmed off on me, in her

stead, a Mrs. Grey (quite an inferior color), who told me at last that she was not Mrs. Black, but her mother, and was just as glad to see me as Mrs. Black would have been, and so, forsooth, would answer just as well. Mrs. Black had gone with Edward Palmer to New Jersey, and would return on the morrow.

I don't like the city better, the more I see it, but worse. I am ashamed of my eyes that behold it. It is a thousand times meaner than I could have imagined. It will be something to hate, — that is the advantage it will be to me; and even the best people in it are a part of it, and talk coolly about it. The pigs in the street are the most respectable part of the population. When will the world learn that a million men are of no importance compared with *one* man? But I must wait for a shower of shillings, or at least a slight dew or mizzling of sixpences, before I explore New York very far.

The sea-beach is the best thing I have seen. It is very solitary and remote, and you only remember New York occasionally. The distances, too, along the shore, and inland in sight of it, are unaccountably great and startling. The sea seems very near from the hills, but it proves a long way over the plain, and yet you may be wet with the spray before you can believe that you are there. The far seems near, and the near far. Many rods from the beach, I step aside for the Atlantic, and I see men drag up their boats on to the sand, with oxen, stepping about amid the surf, as if it were possible they might draw up Sandy Hook.

I do not feel myself especially serviceable to the good people with whom I live, except as inflictions are sanctified to the righteous. And so, too, must I serve the boy. I can look to the Latin and mathematics sharply, and for the rest behave myself. But I cannot be in his neighborhood hereafter as his Educator, of course, but as the hawks fly over my own head. I am not attracted toward him but as to youth generally. He shall frequent me, however, as much as he can, and I will be I.

Bradbury told me, when I passed through Boston, that he was coming to New York the following Saturday, and would then settle with me, but he has not made his appearance yet. Will you, the next time you go to Boston, present that order for me which I left with you?

If I say less about Waldo and Tappan now, it is, perhaps, because I may have more to say by and by. Remember me to your mother and Mrs. Emerson, who, I hope, is quite well. I shall be very glad to hear from her, as well as from you. I have very hastily written out something for the Dial, and send it only because you are expecting something, — though something better. It seems idle and Howittish, but it may be of more worth in Concord, where it belongs. In great haste. Farewell.

HENRY D. THOREAU.

The Bradbury mentioned was of the publishing house of Bradbury & Soden, in Boston? which had taken Nathan Hale's Boston Miscellany off his hands, and had published in it, with promise of payment, Thoreau's Walk to Wachusett. But much time had passed, and the debt was not paid; hence the lack of a "shower of shillings" which the letter laments. Emerson's reply gives the first news of the actual beginning of Alcott's short-lived paradise at Fruitlands, and dwells with interest on the affairs of the rural and lettered circle at Concord, from which Alcott and his English friends were just departing, only to retain sadder and wiser the next year.

X. EMERSON TO THOREAU.

CONCORD, *June* 10, 1848.DEAR HENRY, — It is high time that you had some token from us in acknowledgment of the parcel of kind and helpful things you sent us, as well as of your permanent right in us all. The cold weather saddened our landscape and our gardens here almost until now; but today's sunshine is obliterating the memory of such things. I have just been visiting my petty plantations, and find that all your grafts live except a single scion; and all my new trees, including twenty pines to fill up interstices in my "curtain,"(7) are well alive. The town is full of Irish, and the woods of engineers with theodolite and red flag, singing out their feet and inches to each other from station to station. Near Mr. Alcott's [the Hosmer Cottage] the road is already begun. [This

was the Fitchburg railroad, which crosses the highway not far from where the Alcotts had been living.]

From Mr. Alcott and Mr. Lane, at Harvard, we have yet heard nothing. They went away in good spirits, having sent "Wood Abram" and Lamed and William Lane before them, with horse and plough, a few days in advance, to begin the spring work. Mr. Lane paid me a long visit, in which he was more than I had ever known him gentle and open; and it was impossible not to sympathize with and honor projects that so often seem without feet or hands. They have near a hundred acres of land which they do not want, and no house, which they want first of all. But they count this an advantage, as it gives them the occasion they so much desire, of building after their own idea. In the event of their attracting to their company a carpenter or two, which is not impossible, it would be a great pleasure to see their building, which could hardly fail to be new and beautiful. They have fifteen acres of woodland, with good timber.

Ellery Channing is excellent company, and we walk in all directions. He remembers you with great faith and hope; thinks you ought not to see Concord again these ten years — that you ought to grind up fifty Concords in your mill — and much other opinion and counsel he holds in store on this topic. Hawthorne walked with me yesterday afternoon, and not until after our return did I read his Celestial Railroad, which has a serene strength which we cannot afford not to praise, in this low life.

Our Dial thrives well enough in these weeks. I print W. E. Channing's Letters, or the first ones,(8) but he does not care to have them named as his for a while. They are very agreeable reading, and their wisdom lightened by a vivacity very rare in the Dial. [S. G.] Ward, too, has sent me some sheets on architecture, whose good sense is eminent. I have a valuable manuscript — a sea voyage — from a new hand, which is all clear good sense, and I may make some of Mr. Lane's graver sheets give way for this honest story; otherwise I shall print it in October. I have transferred the publishing of the Dial to James Munroe & Co.

Do not, I entreat you, let me be in ignorance of anything good which you know of my fine friends, Waldo and Tappan. T. writes me never a word. I had a letter from H. James, promising to see you, and you must not fail to visit him. I must soon write to him, though my debts of this nature are, perhaps, too many. To him I much prefer to talk than to write. Let me know well how you prosper and what you meditate. And all good abide with you.

R. W. E.

June 15.

Whilst my letter has lain on the table waiting for a traveler, your letter and parcel have safely arrived. I may not have place now for the Winter's Walk in the July Dial, which is just making up its last sheets, and somehow I must end it to-morrow, when I go to Boston. I shall then keep it for October, subject, however, to your order, if you find a better disposition for it. I will carry the order to the faithless booksellers.(9) Thanks for all these tidings of my friends at New York and at the Island, and love to the last. I have letters from Lane at Fruitlands, and from Miss Fuller at Niagara; she found it sadly cold and rainy at the Falls.

XI. THOREAU TO EMERSON.

STATEN ISLAND, *July* 8, 1843. DEAR FRIENDS, — I was very glad to hear your voices from so far. I do not believe there are eight hundred human beings on the globe. It is all a fable, and I cannot but think that you speak with a slight outrage and disrespect of Concord when you talk of fifty of them. There are not so many. Yet think not that I have left all behind, for already I begin to track my way over the earth, and find the cope of heaven extending beyond its horizon, — forsooth, like the roofs of these Dutch houses. My thoughts revert to those dear hills and that *river* which so fills up the world to its brim, — worthy to be named with Mincius and Alpheus, — still drinking its

meadows while I am far away. How can it run heedless to the sea, as if I were there to countenance it? George Minott, too, looms up considerably, — and many another old familiar face. These things all look sober and respectable. They are better than the environs of New York, I assure you.

I am pleased to think of Channing as an inhabitant of the grey town. Seven cities contended for Homer dead. Tell him to remain at least long enough to establish Concord's right and interest in him. I was beginning to know the man. In imagination I see you pilgrims taking your way by the red lodge and the cabin of the brave farmer man, so youthful and hale, to the still cheerful woods. And Hawthorne, too, I remember as one with whom I sauntered, in old heroic times, along the banks of the Scamander, amid the ruins of chariots and heroes. Tell him not to desert, even after the tenth year. Others may say, "Are there not the cities of Asia?" But what are they? Staying at home is the heavenly way. And Elizabeth Hoar, my brave townswoman, to be sung of poets, — if I may speak of her whom I do not know. Tell Mrs. Brown(10) that I do not forget her, going her way under the stars through this chilly world, — I *did* not think of the wind, — and that I went a little way with her. Tell her not to despair. Concord's little arch does not span all our fate, nor is what transpires under it law for the universe.

And least of all are forgotten those walks in the woods in ancient days, — too sacred to be idly remembered, — when their aisles were pervaded as by a fragrant atmosphere. They still seem youthful and cheery to my imagination as Sherwood and Barnsdale, — and of far purer fame. Those afternoons when we wandered o'er Olympus, — and those hills, from which the sun was seen to set, while still our day held on its way.

"At last he rose and twitched his mantle hine;
To—morrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

I remember these things at midnight, at rare intervals. But know, my friends, that I a good deal hate you all in my most private thoughts, as the substratum of the little love I bear you. Though you are a rare band, and do not make half use enough of one another.

I think this is a noble number of the Dial. It perspires thought and feeling. I can speak of it now a little like a foreigner. Be assured that it is not written in vain, — it is not for me. I hear its prose and its verse. They provoke and inspire me, and they have my sympathy. I hear the sober and the earnest, the sad and the cheery voices of my friends, and to me it is a long letter of encouragement and reproof; and no doubt so it is to many another in the land. So don't give up the ship. Methinks the verse is hardly enough better than the prose. I give my vote for the Notes from the Journal of a Scholar, and wonder you don't print them faster. I want, too, to read the rest of the Poet and the Painter. Miss Fuller's is a noble piece, — rich, extempore writing, talking with pen in hand. It is too good not to be better, even. In writing, conversation should be folded many times thick. It is the height of art that, on the first perusal, plain common sense should appear; on the second, severe truth; and on a third, beauty; and, having these warrants for its depth and reality, we may then enjoy the beauty for evermore. The sea-piece is of the best that is going, if not of the best that is staying. You have spoken a good word for Carlyle. As for the Winter's Walk, I should be glad to have it printed in the Dial if you think it good enough, and will criticise it; otherwise send it to me, and I will dispose of it.

I have not been to New York for a month, and so have not seen Waldo and Tappan. James has been at Albany meanwhile. You will know that I only describe my personal adventures with people; but I hope to see more of them, and *judge* them too. I am sorry to learn that Mrs. E. is no better. But let her know that the Fates pay a compliment to those whom they make sick, and they have not to ask, "What have I done?" Remember me to your mother, and remember me yourself as you are remembered by H. D. T.

I had a friendly and cheery letter from Lane a month ago.

5. There was yet no railroad from Boston to Concord, but the Fitchburg road was building, as will be seen in another of these letters. The stagecoach ran once a day, seldom carrying a dozen passengers. Now fifty or a hundred make the journey daily.
6. Past and Present.
7. This was a shelter of pine-trees planted in the angle of the roads east of Emerson's house, to break the east wind and screen the inmates. - back
8. In that charming but unfinished Youth of the Poet and Painter, which described so well the scenery of the Merrimac and the Artichoke rivers, near Newbury, and gently satirized Cambridge and Boston. Mr. Ward was at that time a Boston banker.
9. Bradbury & Soden.
10. A sister of Mrs. Emerson.

XII. EMERSON TO THOREAU.

CONCORD, *July* 20, 1843. DEAR HENRY, — Giles Waldo shall not go back without a line to you, if only to pay a part of my debt in that kind long due. I am sorry to say that when I called on Bradbury & Soden, nearly a month ago, their partner, in their absence, informed me that they could not pay you, at present, any part of their debt on account of the Boston Miscellany. After much talking, all the promise he could offer was "that within a year it would probably be paid," — a probability which certainly looks very slender. The very worst thing he said was the proposition that you should take your payment in the form of Boston Miscellanies! I shall not fail to refresh their memory at intervals.

We were all very glad to have such cordial greetings from you as in your last letter, on the Dial's and on all personal accounts. Hawthorne and Channing are both in good health and spirits, and the last always a good companion for me, who am hard to suit, I suppose. Giles Waldo has established himself with me by his good sense. I fancy from your notices that he is more than you have seen. I think that neither he nor W. A. Tappan will be exhausted in one interview. My wife is at Plymouth to recruit her wasted strength, but left word with me to acknowledge and heartily thank you for your last letter to her. Edith and Ellen are in high health; and, as pussy has this afternoon nearly killed a young oriole, Edie tells all corners, with great energy, her one story, "Birdy — *sick*." Mrs. Brown, who just left the house, desires kindest remembrances to you, whom "she misses and whom "she thinks of."

In this fine weather we look very bright and green in yard and garden, though this sun, without showers, will perchance spoil our potatoes. Our clover grew well on your patch between the dikes; and Reuben Brown adjudged that Cyrus Warren should pay fourteen dollars this year for my grass. Last year he paid eight dollars. All your grafts of this year have lived and done well. The apple-trees and plums speak of you in every wind.

You will have read and heard the sad news to the little village of Lincoln of Stearns Wheeler's death. Such an overthrow to the hopes of his parents made me think more of them than of the loss the community will suffer in his kindness, diligence, and ingenuous mind. The papers have contained ample notices of his life and death. I saw Charles Newcomb the other day at Brook Farm, and he expressed his great gratification in your translations, and said that he had been minded to write you and ask of you to translate in like manner — Pindar. I advised him by all means to do so. But he seemed to think he had discharged his conscience. But it was a very good request. It would

be a fine thing to be done, since Pindar has no adequate translation, — no English equal to his fame. Do look at the book with that in your mind, while Charles is mending his pen. I will soon send you word respecting the Winter Walk.

Farewell. R. W. EMERSON.

The reply to this letter, dated August 7, is printed in the volume of Letters and Poems edited by Emerson in 1855. To that letter of Thoreau's Emerson responded, and enlarged upon its themes as follows.

XIII. EMERSON TO THOREAU.

CONCORD, *September* 8, 1843. DEAR HENRY, — We were all surprised to hear, one day lately, from G. Waldo, that you were forsaking the deep quiet of the Clove for the limbo of the false booksellers, and were soon relieved by hearing that you were safe again in the cottage at Staten Island. I could heartily wish that this country, which seems all opportunity, did actually offer more distinct and just rewards of labor to that unhappy class of men who have more reason and conscience than strength of back and of arm; but the experience of a few cases that I have lately seen looks, I confess, more like crowded England and indigent Germany than like rich and roomy Nature. But the few cases are deceptive; and though Homer should starve in the highway, Homer will know and proclaim that bounteous Nature has bread for all her boys. To-morrow our arms will be stronger; to-morrow the wall before which we sat will open of itself and show the new way.

Ellery Channing works and writes as usual at his cottage, to which Captain Moore has added a neat slat fence and gate. His wife as yet has no more than five scholars, but will have more presently. Hawthorne has returned from a visit to the seashore in good spirits. Elizabeth Hoar is still absent since Evarts's marriage.(11) You will have heard of our Wyman Trial and the stir it made in the village. But the Cliff and Walden, which know something of the railroad, knew nothing of that; not a leaf nodded; not a pebble fell. Why should I speak of it to you? Now the humanity of the town suffers with the poor Irish, who receives but sixty, or even fifty cents, for working from dark till dark, with a strain and a following up that reminds one of negro-driving. Peter Hutchinson told me he had never seen men perform so much; he should never think it hard again if an employer should keep him at work till after sundown. But what can be done for their relief as long as new applicants for the same labor are coming in every day? These of course reduce the wages to the sum that will suffice a bachelor to live, and must drive out the men with families. The work goes on very fast. The mole which crosses the land of Jonas Potter and Mr. Stow, from Ephraim Wheeler's high land to the depot, is eighteen feet high, and goes on two rods every day. A few days ago a new contract was completed, — from the terminus of the old contract to Fitchburg, — the whole to be built before October, 1844; so that you see our fate is sealed. I have not yet advertised my house for sale, nor engaged my passage to Berkshire; have even suffered George Bradford to plan a residence with me next spring, and at this very day am talking with Mr. Britton of building a cottage in my triangle for Mrs. Brown; but I can easily foresee that some inconveniences may arise from the road, when open, that shall drive me from my rest.

I mean to send the Winter's Walk to the printer to-morrow for the Dial. I had some hesitation about it, notwithstanding its faithful observation and its fine sketches of the pickerel-fisher and of the woodchopper, on account of mannerism, an old charge of mine, — as if, by attention, one could get the trick of the rhetoric; for example, to call a cold place sultry, a solitude public, a wilderness *domestic* (a favorite word), and in the woods to insult over cities, whilst the woods, again, are dignified by comparing them to cities, armies, etc. By pretty free omissions, however, I have removed my principal objections. I ought to say that Ellery Channing admired the piece loudly and long, and only stipulated for the omission of Douglas and one copy of verses on the Smoke. For the rest, we go on with the Youth of the Poet and Painter and with extracts from the Jamaica Voyage, and Lane has sent me A Day with the Shakers. Poetry have I very little. Have you no Greek translations ready

for me?

I beg you to tell my brother William that the review of Channing's poems, in the Democratic Review, has been interpolated with sentences and extracts, to make it long, by the editor, and I acknowledge, as far as I remember, little beyond the first page. And now that I have departed so far from my indolence as to write this letter, I have yet to add to mine the affectionate greetings of my wife and my mother.

Yours, B. W. EMERSON.

Emerson did, in fact, throw out from the Winter Walk two pages or so, besides making changes here and there; all which the young author took in good part. I have the rejected pages, which perhaps, in after years, the editor would have accepted, finding that Thoreau's mannerism, like his punning, was part of the man, and must be humored.

XIV. THOREAU TO EMERSON.

STATEN ISLAND, *September* 14, 1843. DEAR FRIEND, — Miss Fuller will tell you the news from these parts, so I will only devote these few moments to what she does not know as well. I was absent only one day and night from the Island, the family expecting me back immediately. I was to earn a certain sum before winter, and thought it worth the while to try various experiments. I carried the Agriculturist about the city, and up as far as Manhattanville, and called at the Croton Reservoir, where indeed they did not want any Agriculturist, but paid well enough in their way. Literature comes to a poor market here, and even the little that I write is more than will sell. I have tried the Democratic Review, the New Mirror, and Brother Jonathan. The last two, as well as the New World, are overwhelmed with contributions which cost nothing, and are worth no more. The Knickerbocker is too poor, and only the Ladies' Companion pays. O'Sullivan is printing the manuscript I sent him some time ago, having objected only to my want of sympathy with the Communities.

I doubt if you have made more corrections in my manuscript than I should have done ere this, though they may be better; but I am glad you have taken any pains with it. I have not prepared any translations for the Dial, supposing there would be no room, though it is the only place for them.

I have been seeing men during these days, and trying experiments upon trees; have inserted three or four hundred buds (quite a Buddhist, one might say). Books I have access to through your brother and Mr. Mackean, and have read a good deal. Quarles's Divine Poems as well as Emblems are quite a discovery. I am very sorry Mrs. Emerson is so sick. Remember me to her and to your mother. I like to think of your living on the banks of the Mill-brook, in the midst of the garden with all its weeds; for what are botanical distinctions at this distance? Your friend,

HENRY D. THOREAU.

XV. THOREAU TO EMERSON.

STATEN ISLAND, October 17, 1843. MY DEAR FRIEND, — I went with my pupil to the Fair of the American Institute, and so lost a visit from Tappan, whom I met returning from the Island. I should have liked to hear more news from his lips, though he had left me a letter and the Dial which is a sort of circular letter itself. I find Channing's letters full of life, and I enjoy their wit highly. Lane writes straight and solid, like a guideboard, but I find that I put off the "social tendencies" to a future day, which may never come. He is always Shaker fare, quite as luxurious as his principles will allow. I feel as if I were ready to be appointed a committee on poetry, I have got my eyes so whetted and proved of late, like the knife-sharpener I saw at the Fair, certified to have been "in constant use in a gentleman's family for more than two years." Yes, I ride along the ranks of the English poets, casting terrible glances, and some I blot out, and some I spare. Mackean has imported, within the year, several new editions and collections of old poetry, of which I have the reading, but there is a good deal of chaff to a little meal, — hardly worth bolting. I have just opened Bacon's Advance-

ment of Learning for the first time, which I read with great delight. It is more like what Scott's novels were than anything.

I see that I was very blind to send you my manuscript in such a state; but I have a good *second* sight, at least. I could still shake it in the wind to some advantage, if it would hold together. There are some sad mistakes in the printing. It is a little unfortunate that the Ethnical Scriptures should hold out so well, though it does really hold out. The Bible ought not to be very large. Is it not singular that, while the religious world is gradually picking to pieces its old testaments, here are some coming slowly after, on the seashore, picking up the durable relics of perhaps older books, and putting them together again?

Your Letter to Contributors is excellent, and hits the nail on the head. It will taste sour to their palates at first, no doubt, but it will bear a sweet fruit at last. I like the poetry, especially the Autumn verses. They ring true. Though I am quite weather-beaten with poetry, having weathered so many epics of late. The Sweep Ho! sounds well this way. But I have a good deal of fault to find with your Ode to Beauty. The tune is altogether unworthy of the thoughts. You slope too quickly to the rhyme, as if that trick had better be performed as soon as possible, or as if you stood over the line with a hatchet, and chopped off the verses as they came out, some short and some long. But give us a long reel, and we'll cut it up to suit ourselves. It sounds like parody. "Thee knew I of old," "Remediless thirst," are some of those stereotyped lines. I am frequently reminded, I believe, of Jane Taylor's Philosopher's Scales, and how the world

"Flew out with a bounce,"

which

"Yerked the philosopher out of his cell;"

or else of

"From the climes of the sun all war-worn and weary."

I had rather have the thought come ushered with a flourish of oaths and curses. Yet I love your poetry as I do little else that is near and recent, especially when you get fairly round the end of the line, and are not thrown back upon the rocks. To read the lecture on The Comic is as good as to be in our town meeting or Lyceum once more.

I am glad that the Concord farmers ploughed well this year; it promises that something will be done these summers. But I am suspicious of that *Brittonner*, who advertises so many cords of *good* oak, chestnut, and maple wood for sale. *Good!* ay, good for what? And there shall not be left a stone upon a stone. But no matter, — let them hack away. The sturdy Irish arms that do the work are of more worth than oak or maple. Methinks I could look with equanimity upon a long street of Irish cabins, and pigs and children reveling in the genial Concord dirt; and I should still find my Walden wood and Fair Haven in their tanned and happy faces.

I write this in the cornfield — it being washing-day — with the inkstand Elizabeth Hoar gave me;(12) though it is not redolent of cornstalks, I fear. Let me not be forgotten by Channing and Hawthorne, nor our grey - suited neighbor under the hill [Edmund Hosmer].

Your friend, H. D. THOREAU. This letter and that of Emerson preceding it (No. XIII.) will be best explained by a reference to the Dial for October, 1843. The Ethnical Scriptures were selections from the Brahminical books, from Confucius, etc., such as we have since seen in great abundance.

The Autumn verses are by Channing; Sweep Ho! by Ellen Sturgis, afterwards Mrs. Hooper; the Youth of the Poet and Painter also by Channing. The Letter to Contributors, which is headed simply A Letter, is by Emerson, and has been much overlooked by his later readers; his Ode to Beauty is very well known, and does not deserve the slashing censure of Thoreau, though, as it now stands, it is better than first printed. Instead of

"Love drinks at thy banquet
Remediless thirst,"

we now have the perfect phrase,

"Love drinks at thy fountain
False waters of thirst."

The Comic is also Emerson's. There is a poem, The Sail, by William Tappan, so often named in these letters, and a sonnet by Charles A. Dana, now of the New York Sun.

XVI. EMERSON TO TROREAU.

CONCORD, *October* 25, 1843. DEAR HENRY, — I have your letter this evening by the advent of Mrs. Fuller to Ellery Channing's, and am heartily glad of the robust greeting. Ellery brought it to me, and, as it was opened, wondered whether he had not some right to expect a letter. So I read him what belonged to him. He is usually in good spirits, and always in good wit, forms stricter ties with George Minott, and is always merry with the dullness of a world which will not support him. I am sorry you will dodge my hunters, T. and W. William Tappan is a very satisfactory person, only I could be very willing he should read a little more; he speaks seldom, but easily and strongly, and moves like a deer. H. James, too, has gone to England. I am the more sorry because you liked him so well.

In Concord no events. We have had the new Hazlitt's Montaigne, which contained the Journey into Italy, — new to me, — and the narrative of the death of the renowned friend …tienne de la Bo"tie. Then I have had Saadi's Gulist,n, Ross's translation, and Marot, and Roman de la Rose, and Robert of Gloucester's rhymed Chronicle.

Where are my translations of Pindar for the Dial? Fail not to send me something good and strong. They send us the Rivista Ligure, a respectable magazine, from Genoa; La Dèmocratie Pacifique, a bright daily paper, from Paris; the Deutsche Schnellpost, the German New York paper; and Phalanx from London; the New Englander from New Haven, which angrily affirms that the Dial is not as good as the Bible. By all these signs we infer that we make some figure in the literary world, though we are not yet encouraged by a swollen subscription list. Lidian says she will write you a note herself. If, as we have heard, you will come home to Thanksgiving, you must bring something that will serve for Lyceum lecture, — the craving, thankless town!

Yours affectionately, WALDO EMERSON.

11. The present W. M. Evarts, lately Senator from New York, a cousin of Miss Hoar.
12. This inkstand was presented by Miss Hoar, with a note dated "Boston, May 2, 1843," which deserves to be copied.

> DEAR HENRY, — The rain prevented me from seeing you the night before I came away, to leave with you a parting assurance of good will and good hope. We have become better acquainted within the two past years than in our whole life as schoolmates and neighbors before; and I am unwilling to let you go away without telling you that I, among your other friends, shall miss you much, and follow you with remembrance and all best wishes and confidence. Will you take this little inkstand and try if it will carry ink safely from Concord to Staten Island? and the pen, which, if you can write with steel, may be made sometimes the interpreter of friendly thoughts to those whom you leave beyond the reach of your voice, — or record the inspirations of Nature, who, I doubt not, will be as faithful to you who trust her in the sea-girt Staten Island as in Concord woods and meadows. Good-by, and [Greek text], which, a wise man says, is the only salutation fit for the wise.
>
> Truly your friend, E. HOAR.

Soon after [the last] letter was received by Thoreau at Staten Island he returned to Concord, and there lived with his father, mother, and two sisters, Helen and Sophia, until he went, in March,1845, to live in the Walden woods. He was so near his friend Emerson in 1844-47 that few or no letters passed between them. The Dial perished in the mean time, — the number for April, 1844, being the last of the sixteen, and containing a few of Thoreau's promised translations from Pindar. From that time until 1849 he was at work on his first book, The Week. Ellery Channing, in 1844—45, had gone to New York to help Horace Greeley edit the Tribune, and had afterwards sailed up the Mediterranean and made his short visit to Rome; Hawthorne had left the Old Manse and entered the Salem custom house; and Alcott had bought the Wayside estate (which Hawthorne afterwards occupied), and was gardening there in 1846-47. Finally, after many invitations, Emerson decided to visit England, and in the autumn of 1847 Thoreau left his Walden hut to reside in Emerson's house at the village, and to renew the correspondence of four years earlier. This will make another chapter.

1980

Ellen Tucker Emerson. THE LIFE OF LIDIAN JACKSON EMERSON. Edited by Delores Bird Carpenter. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980 (written late in the 19th Century).

We learn that:

- Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson nearly named one of his sons for Henry David Thoreau.
- Mrs. Lidian Emerson and Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau sometimes annoyed one another.
- Sophia Foord refused to help Lidian Emerson mend carpets because she considered floor coverings to be a vanity.
- Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau and Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau were impressed by table-tipping Spiritualists.

"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 27, 2013

MISS SOPHIA FORD **MS. SOPHIA FOORD**

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.

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.