

THOREAU'S "FRIEND RICKETSON"



**"NARRATIVE HISTORY" AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1813



July 30, Friday: In the Peninsular War, the allied soldiers who had stood against the French two days earlier went on the attack, and were able to push the French back at Sorauren north of Pamplona.

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) was born “to a modest competence” so as to never need to work for a living. Born into the [Quaker](#) family of Joseph and Anna Thornton Ricketson and thus considered a “birthright” Friend, he would be educated at Friend’s Academy in [New Bedford](#) and [Henry Thoreau](#) would habitually address him as “Friend Ricketson” even before the point in late adult years at which he would become a “convinced” Friend. He would be a lifelong intimate of [George William Curtis](#). In his adult years he would characterize himself as



“an ordinary looking person”: his hair was sandy brown, his full beard reddish brown, his eyes hazel, and at five foot three inches in height, he was distinctly “altitude impaired.” As if this altitude impairment were not enough of an affliction, his left eye would become “from an injury received in my youth, defective in vision and slightly smaller than my right one.”



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As he would appear (or as he would have liked to appear, this portrait being idealized) at the age of 25:





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Table of Altitudes



Yoda	2 ' 0 "
Lavinia Warren	2 ' 8 "
Tom Thumb, Jr.	3 ' 4 "
Lucy (Australopithecus Afarensis)	3 ' 8 "
Hervé Villechaize ("Fantasy Island")	3 ' 11"
Charles Proteus Steinmetz	4 ' 0 "
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (1)	4 ' 3 "
Alexander Pope	4 ' 6 "
Benjamin Lay	4 ' 7 "
Dr. Ruth Westheimer	4 ' 7 "
Gary Coleman ("Arnold Jackson")	4 ' 8 "
Edith Piaf	4 ' 8 "
Queen Victoria with osteoporosis	4 ' 8 "
Linda Hunt	4 ' 9 "
Queen Victoria as adult	4 ' 10 "
Mother Teresa	4 ' 10 "
Margaret Mitchell	4 ' 10 "
length of newer military musket	4 ' 10"
Charlotte Brontë	4 ' 10-11"
Tammy Faye Bakker	4 ' 11"
Soviet gymnast Olga Korbut	4 ' 11"
jockey Willie Shoemaker	4 ' 11"
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec	4 ' 11"
Joan of Arc	4 ' 11"
Bonnie Parker of "Bonnie & Clyde"	4 ' 11"
Harriet Beecher Stowe	4 ' 11"
Laura Ingalls Wilder	4 ' 11"
a rather tall adult Pygmy male	4 ' 11"
Gloria Swanson	4 ' 11"1/2
Clara Barton	5 ' 0 "
Isambard Kingdom Brunel	5 ' 0 "
Andrew Carnegie	5 ' 0 "
Thomas de Quincey	5 ' 0 "
Stephen A. Douglas	5 ' 0 "
Danny DeVito	5 ' 0 "
Immanuel Kant	5 ' 0 "



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William Wilberforce	5 ' 0 "
Dollie Parton	5 ' 0 "
Mae West	5 ' 0 "
Pia Zadora	5 ' 0 "
Deng Xiaoping	5 ' 0 "
Dred Scott	5 ' 0 " (±)
Captain William Bligh of HMS <i>Bounty</i>	5 ' 0 " (±)
Harriet Tubman	5 ' 0 " (±)
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (2)	5 ' 0 " (±)
John Brown of Providence, Rhode Island	5 ' 0 " (+)
John Keats	5 ' 3/4 "
Debbie Reynolds (Carrie Fisher's mother)	5 ' 1 "
Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher)	5 ' 1 "
Bette Midler	5 ' 1 "
Dudley Moore	5 ' 2 "
Paul Simon (of Simon & Garfunkel)	5 ' 2 "
Honore de Balzac	5 ' 2 "
Sally Field	5 ' 2 "
Jemmy Button	5 ' 2 "
Margaret Mead	5 ' 2 "
R. Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller	5 ' 2 "
Yuri Gagarin the astronaut	5 ' 2 "
William Walker	5 ' 2 "
Horatio Alger, Jr.	5 ' 2 "
length of older military musket	5 ' 2 "
the artist formerly known as Prince	5 ' 2 1/2 "
typical female of Thoreau's period	5 ' 2 1/2 "
Francis of Assisi	5 ' 3 "
Voltaire	5 ' 3 "
Mohandas Gandhi	5 ' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5 ' 3 "
Kahlil Gibran	5 ' 3 "
Friend Daniel Ricketson	5 ' 3 "
The Reverend Gilbert White	5 ' 3 "
Nikita Khrushchev	5 ' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5 ' 3 "
Truman Capote	5 ' 3 "
Kim Jong Il (North Korea)	5 ' 3 "





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Stephen A. "Little Giant" Douglas	5' 4 "
Francisco Franco	5' 4 "
President James Madison	5' 4 "
Ioséf Vissarionovich Dzugashvili "Stalin"	5' 4 "
Alan Ladd	5' 4 "
Pablo Picasso	5' 4 "
Truman Capote	5' 4 "
Queen Elizabeth	5' 4 "
Ludwig van Beethoven	5' 4 "
Typical Homo Erectus	5' 4 "
typical Neanderthal adult male	5' 4 ¹ / ₂ "
Alan Ladd	5' 4 ¹ / ₂ "
comte de Buffon	5' 5 " (-)
Captain Nathaniel Gordon	5' 5 "
Charles Manson	5' 5 "
Audie Murphy	5' 5 "
Harry Houdini	5' 5 "
Hung Hsiu-ch'üan 洪秀全	5' 5 "
Marilyn Monroe	5' 5 ¹ / ₂ "
T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia"	5' 5 ¹ / ₂ "
average runaway male American slave	5' 5-6 "
Charles Dickens	5' 6? "
President Benjamin Harrison	5' 6 "
President Martin Van Buren	5' 6 "
James Smithson	5' 6 "
Louisa May Alcott	5' 6 "
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	5' 6 ¹ / ₂ "
Napoleon Bonaparte	5' 6 ¹ / ₂ "
Emily Brontë	5' 6-7 "
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	5' ? "
average height, seaman of 1812	5' 6.85 "
Oliver Reed Smoot, Jr.	5' 7 "
minimum height, British soldier	5' 7 "
President John Adams	5' 7 "
President John Quincy Adams	5' 7 "
President William McKinley	5' 7 "
"Charley" Parkhurst (a female)	5' 7 "



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Ulysses S. Grant	5 ' 7 "
Henry Thoreau	5 ' 7 "
the average male of Thoreau's period	5 ' 7 ¹ / ₂ "
Edgar Allan Poe	5 ' 8 "
President Ulysses S. Grant	5 ' 8 "
President William H. Harrison	5 ' 8 "
President James Polk	5 ' 8 "
President Zachary Taylor	5 ' 8 "
average height, soldier of 1812	5 ' 8.35 "
President Rutherford B. Hayes	5 ' 8 ¹ / ₂ "
President Millard Fillmore	5 ' 9 "
President Harry S Truman	5 ' 9 "
President Jimmy Carter	5 ' 9 ¹ / ₂ "
Herman Melville	5 ' 9 ³ / ₄ "
Calvin Coolidge	5 ' 10"
Andrew Johnson	5 ' 10"
Theodore Roosevelt	5 ' 10"
Thomas Paine	5 ' 10"
Franklin Pierce	5 ' 10"
Abby May Alcott	5 ' 10"
Reverend Henry C. Wright	5 ' 10"
Nathaniel Hawthorne	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Louis "Deerfoot" Bennett	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Friend John Greenleaf Whittier	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
President Dwight D. Eisenhower	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots	5 ' 11"
Sojourner Truth	5 ' 11"
President Grover Cleveland	5 ' 11"
President Herbert Hoover	5 ' 11"
President Woodrow Wilson	5 ' 11"
President Jefferson Davis	5 ' 11"
President Richard Milhous Nixon	5 ' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
Robert Voorhis the hermit of Rhode Island	< 6 '
Frederick Douglass	6 ' (-)
Anthony Burns	6 ' 0 "
Waldo Emerson	6 ' 0 "
Joseph Smith, Jr.	6 ' 0 "



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David Walker	6 ' 0 "
Sarah F. Wakefield	6 ' 0 "
Thomas Wentworth Higginson	6 ' 0 "
President James Buchanan	6 ' 0 "
President Gerald R. Ford	6 ' 0 "
President James Garfield	6 ' 0 "
President Warren Harding	6 ' 0 "
President John F. Kennedy	6 ' 0 "
President James Monroe	6 ' 0 "
President William H. Taft	6 ' 0 "
President John Tyler	6 ' 0 "
John Brown	6 ' 0 (+)"
President Andrew Jackson	6 ' 1"
Alfred Russel Wallace	6 ' 1"
President Ronald Reagan	6 ' 1"
Venture Smith	6 ' 1 1/2"
John Camel Heenan	6 ' 2 "
Crispus Attucks	6 ' 2 "
President Chester A. Arthur	6 ' 2 "
President George Bush, Senior	6 ' 2 "
President Franklin D. Roosevelt	6 ' 2 "
President George Washington	6 ' 2 "



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Gabriel Prosser	6' 2"
Dangerfield Newby	6' 2"
Charles Augustus Lindbergh	6' 2"
President Bill Clinton	6' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
President Thomas Jefferson	6' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
President Lyndon B. Johnson	6' 3"
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.	6' 3"
Richard "King Dick" Seaver	6' 3 ¹ / ₄ "
President Abraham Lincoln	6' 4"
Marion Morrison (AKA John Wayne)	6' 4"
Elisha Reynolds Potter, Senior	6' 4"
Thomas Cholmondeley	6' 4" (?)
Franklin Benjamin Sanborn	6' 5"
Peter the Great of Russia	6' 7"
Giovanni Battista Belzoni	6' 7"
Thomas Jefferson (the statue)	7' 6"
Jefferson Davis (the statue)	7' 7"
Martin Van Buren Bates	7' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
M. Bihin, a Belgian exhibited in Boston in 1840	8'
Anna Haining Swan	8' 1"



NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT



October 22, Friday: [Maria Louisa Sampson](#) was born in [Plymouth](#), Massachusetts.

The Meerfeld Endowment, by Imperial decree, was awarded to Franz Schubert.

[Helen Louisa Thoreau](#)'s 1st birthday.

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

"Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project

Thoreau's F/friend Daniel Ricketson



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*6th day 22 of 10 M 1813 / Last Night I watched with David
Huntington & feel but Poorly today
We have this Afternoon finished pulling down the old house &
building the fence round the Lot. —*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

**LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?
— NO, THAT’S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN’S STORIES.
LIFE ISN’T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.**



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1821



A horse pulling a sleigh ran over [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) at the age of 9. His right hip would bring him pain for the entirety of his life.

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion communion of the Methodist Episcopal Church officially became a separate denomination, under the leadership of James Varick. (It would be this African Methodist Episcopal Zion church that Frederick Douglass eventually would join in [New Bedford](#), and for which he would become a lay exhorter.)

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





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1822



At the age of 10 [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), whose right leg had already been injured, was thrown by his horse. He would be having severe headaches for the entirety of his life.

THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





FRIEND RICKETSON

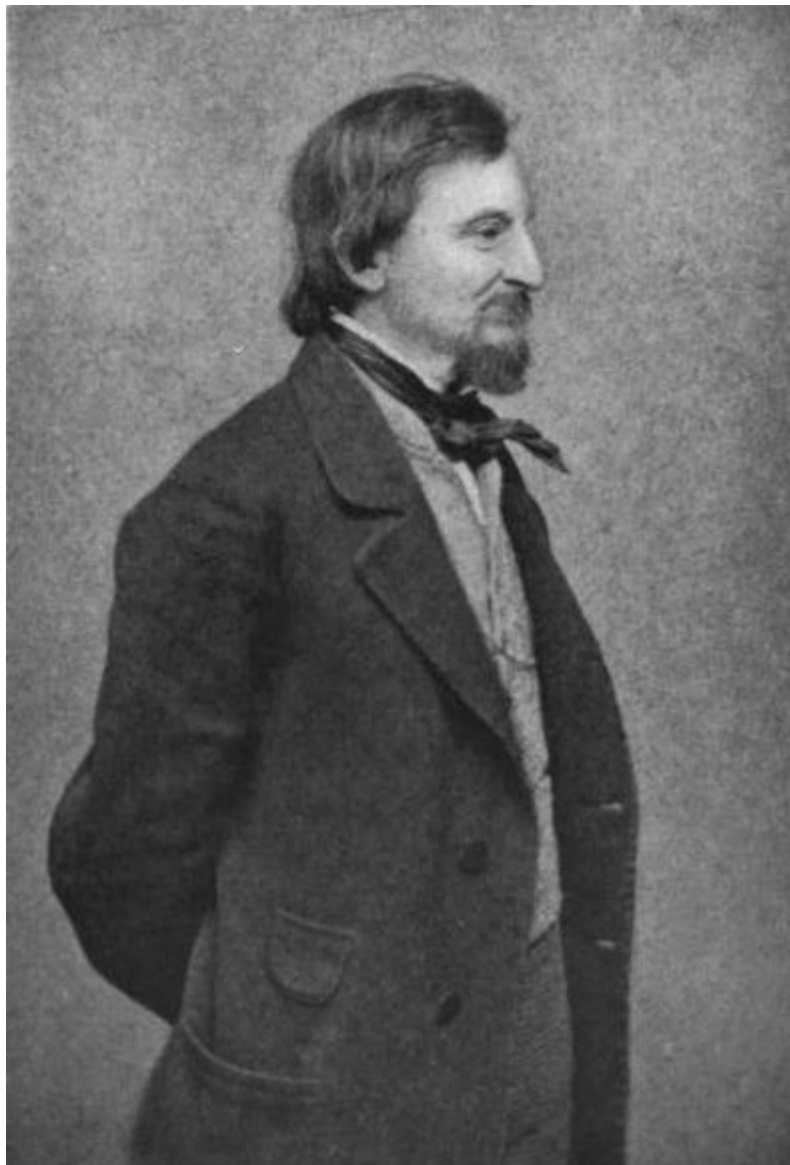
DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1823



At the age of 11 [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) was struck in the eye by “a rough Irish youth” with a consequent partial loss of sight. The eye would be distinctly smaller, which explains why his portrait is from the side:





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DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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1827



August 3, Friday: [Friend Joseph Ricketson, Senior](#) wrote a letter to his sons [Daniel](#) and [Joseph, Junior](#).

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

6th day feeling an engagement of mind to attend the School committee & Meeting for Sufferings at [Providence](#) I went on board the Steam Boat Babcock at 8 OC & arrived at the School House while the committee were at dinner. - & in season to their Second setting & to visit the Schools. - In the Boys School T Shillitoe imparted much excellent advice in a solid impressive manner. - In the Girls School he also had much to say & Alice Rathbone appeared in a very baptizing supplication on behalf of all present & the various classes of Society - I lodged at my dear friend [Moses Browns](#). -

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1831



Failing to gain admittance to [Harvard College](#) due to an inadequacy in mathematics, [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) began the study of law with John Russell in [New Bedford](#). After gaining admittance to the Massachusetts bar, however, he would prefer to spend down an ample inheritance and indulge himself in a life of casual reading and abundant leisure.

NEW “HARVARD MEN”

**WHAT I’M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF**



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1833



May 19, Sunday: At 9:30AM, [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) observed a beautiful rainbow from the British side of [Niagara Falls](#).



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1834



January 27, Monday: [Dmitri Mendeleyev](#) was born in Tobolsk, Russia.



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[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) got married with [Friend Maria Louisa Sampson](#).





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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1835

➡ By the mid-1830s, Nathan Johnson's catering and Mary "Polly" Johnson's confectionery business were well known in [New Bedford](#). They were living in their own place, which is now the rear section of 21 Seventh Street. The New Bedford [Mercury](#) was carrying the couple's advertisements that at their Seventh Street establishment one might obtain eat-in "refreshments," and in addition "Fresh Bordeaux Almonds; superior (French) Olives, Olive Oil, Prunes, Cocoa Nuts Oranges, Lemons, Lemon Syrup, shelled Almonds, Spices, &c. &c. Confect[ion]s, Jellies, Ice Cream, Cake, Candies" were being offered for sale. [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) would report that Nathan Johnson "and his worthy wife, 'Polly,' were the *sine qua none* at all the fashionable parties of our place, as caterers and waiters." The papers of [Friend](#) Charles Waln Morgan at the Mystic Seaport Museum provide an account of a year's worth of purchases from this establishment, delicacies such as sponge cake, loaf cake, and short cake, oranges, the fashionable, molded, jelly-like dessert known as *blanc mange*, macaroons, ice cream, candy (their confections reportedly were made with the use of "free labor sugar" — that is, sugar harvested and processed by free employees rather than by slave labor), and the sort of calves' feet jelly which hostesses then often served on a bed of lettuce with slices of hard-boiled egg on top — the Johnson's may not have been of the right race to be allowed to join the New Bedford monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) (Nathan had applied in 1822, ➡ but his petition had of course been stonewalled), but everybody sure liked the way they could cook! The Reverend Samuel Joseph May, visiting New Bedford, observed that Johnson had acquired "the respect of the community in which he dwells ... by his uniformly upright conduct and modest manners," and that through industry and thrift he had built up "a very pretty estate, and has found time to attend to the cultivation of his mind."

➡ June 24, Wednesday: Cesar Franck began lessons in composition with Anton Reicha in Paris.

Elizabeth Peabody Alcott, called "Lizzie" and "Betty" and "Beth," and destined to have her middle name officially changed from "Peabody" to "Sewall," was born to Abba Alcott. This was Abba's third child. She was naming her infant after her friend Miss [Elizabeth Palmer Peabody](#) — but this was a friendship not destined to endure. A most unusual thing for those times: the father [Bronson Alcott](#) insisted on being present for the birth.

[Arthur Ricketson](#), first son of [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), was born.

➡ 8th month 26th: [Friend Joseph Ricketson, Senior](#) of [New Bedford](#) wrote to [Dr. William Andrus Alcott](#) about his family's food habits:

VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES





FRIEND RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1836



December 1, Thursday: [Anna Ricketson](#) was born.


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

5th day 1st of 12th M 1836 Our Quarterly Meeting at large was well attended & a considerable number of young people were present –

Mary Battey was again much favoured in testimony & Hannah Dennis in a short testimony the rest of the time was occupied by Lindley M Hoag – he is a young man & needs to be very careful of his Stepping along – there was also a prayer by a young woman not recommended by the Select Meeting – Dined at Joseph Tillinghast & occupied the rest of the time in calling on some of the old Schollars with whom I was acquainted when at the School

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**DANIEL RICKETSON****FRIEND RICKETSON****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM****1837**

 [New Bedford, Massachusetts](#) would not reach its peak for another two decades, but it was already most prosperous. The registered tonnage of ships, inclusive of some 300 whaling vessels, centering on the Acushnet River (including those of Fairhaven across the inlet), was exceeded only by the registered tonnage of New-York, of [Boston](#), and of New Orleans (pictured here, in this year):



For the next quarter century, up until the Civil War times, this port would continue to enjoy its constant growth and prosperity, and Ishmael, in [Herman Melville](#)'s *MOBY-DICK; OR, THE WHALE*, would refer to it as "perhaps the dearest place to live in, in all New England." In this fortunate port, here was [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)



FRIEND RICKETSON

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portrayed during this year at the age of 25:



(This would be a portrait of Friend Daniel as he would have liked to appear — for in real life after one eye had been struck by another boy, not only would that eye be deficient in vision but it would be distinctly smaller than the other.)



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1839

May 27, Monday: Birth of [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s second son Walton.¹ He would be educated at the Friends Academy of [New Bedford](#), would become an artist, and would never marry.

[Waldo Emerson](#) to his journal:

*A great genius must come & preach self reliance. Our people are timid, desponding, recreant whimperers. If they fail in their first enterprises they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, men say he is RUINED. If the finest genius studies at the Cambridge Divinity College, and is not ordained within a year afterwards in Boston, or New York, it seems to his friend & himself that he is justified in being disheartened & in complaining for the rest of his life. a sturdy New Hampshire man or Vermonter who in turn tries **all** the professions, who **teams it, farms it, peddles**, keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, & so forth, in successive years, and always like a cat falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these Boston dolls. My brave Henry here who is content to live now, & feels no shame in not studying any profession, for he does not postpone his life but lives already – pours contempt on these crybabies of routine & Boston. He has not one chance but a hundred chances. Now let a stern preacher arise who shall reveal the resources of Man, & tell men they are not leaning willows, but can & must detach themselves, that a man, a woman, is a sovereign eternity, born to shed healing to the nations; that he should be ashamed of our compassion; & that the moment he acts from himself, tossing the laws, the books, the idolatries, the customs, out of the window, we pity him, we pity her no more, but thank & revere them; that with the exercise of self trust new powers shall appear.*

1. An alleged runic signature of Leif Eriksson with date MI would be observed on a boulder lying on the beach at No Man's Land, an island off Martha's Vineyard, around 1920. It would form the basis of a book by Edward F. Gray, LEIF ERIKSSON DISCOVERER OF AMERICA (Oxford, 1930), in which it is illustrated. Opinions of runic experts were so disappointing that Mr. Gray finally concluded (page 159) that it was carved by some later explorer such as Verrazzano or Gosnold as a "monument to Lief" [sic]. The inscription has been thoroughly investigated by Edmund B. Delabarre and Charles W. Brown for [The New England Quarterly](#), VIII (1935), 365-78. They concluded that it had been carved in the twentieth century by some joker, probably [Walton Ricketson](#) (1839-1923) of New Bedford. Refer to Samuel Eliot Morison's THE EUROPEAN DISCOVERY OF AMERICA. THE NORTHERN VOYAGES A.D. 500-1600. NY: Oxford UP, 1971.



FRIEND RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1841

October 9, Saturday: [Joseph Ricketson, Senior](#), father of [Friend Joseph Ricketson, Junior](#) and [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), died.

The force under Colonel Monteath, sent out to suppress a local rebellion in [Afghanistan](#), proved to be too small to be able to penetrate into the district it was intended to overawe or to subdue. It consisted only of the 35th Regiment of native infantry, 100 sappers, a squadron of the 5th Cavalry, and 2 guns. When it had ventured out only 10 miles from Cabul, it was attacked in its camp and 35 of its sepoys suddenly became ineffectives by being “killed or wounded” — to employ the utilitarian military category of the report. Before it could proceed with its assigned mission, it would need to wait in camp for awhile for reinforcements.

[Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) to his AMERICAN NOTEBOOKS:

Saturday, October 9.—Still dismal weather. Our household, being composed in great measure of children and young people, is generally a cheerful one enough, even in gloomy weather. For a week past we have been especially gladdened with a little seamstress from Boston, about seventeen years old; but of such a petite figure, that, at first view, one would take her to be hardly in her teens. She is very vivacious and smart, laughing and singing and talking all the time,—talking sensibly; but still, taking the view of matters that a city girl naturally would. If she were larger than she is, and of less pleasing aspect, I think she might be intolerable; but being so small, and with a fair skin, and as healthy as a wildflower, she is really very agreeable; and to look at her face is like being shone upon by a ray of the sun. She never walks, but bounds and dances along, and this motion, in her diminutive person, does not give the idea of violence. It is like a bird, hopping from twig to twig, and chirping merrily all the time. Sometimes she is rather vulgar, but even that works well enough into her character, and accords with it. On continued observation, one discovers that she is not a little girl, but really a little woman, with all the prerogatives and liabilities of a woman. This gives a new aspect to her, while the girlish impression still remains, and is strangely combined with the sense that this frolicsome maiden has the material for the sober bearing of a wife. She romps with the boys, runs races with them in the yard, and up and down the stairs, and is heard scolding laughingly at their rough play. She asks William Allen to place her "on top of that horse," whereupon he puts his large brown hands about her waist, and, swinging her to and fro, lifts her on horseback. William threatens to rivet two horse-shoes round her neck, for having clambered, with the other girls and boys, upon a load of hay, whereby the said load lost its balance and slid off the cart. She strings the seed-berries of roses together, making a scarlet necklace of them, which she fastens about her throat. She gathers flowers of everlasting to wear in her bonnet, arranging them with the skill of a dressmaker. In the evening, she sits singing by the hour, with the musical part of the establishment, often breaking into laughter, whereto she is incited by the tricks of the boys. The last thing one hears of her, she is tripping up stairs to bed, talking lightsomely or warbling; and one meets her in the morning, the very image of bright morn itself, smiling briskly at you, so that one takes her for a promise of cheerfulness through the day. Be it said, with all the rest, that there is a perfect maiden modesty in her deportment. She has just gone away, and the last I saw of her was her vivacious face peeping through the curtain of the cariole, and nodding a gay farewell to the family, who were shouting their adieux at the door. With her other merits, she is an excellent daughter, and supports her mother by the labor of her hands. It would be difficult to conceive beforehand how much can be added to the enjoyment of a household by mere sunniness of temper and liveliness of disposition; for her intellect is very ordinary, and she never says anything worth hearing, or even laughing at, in itself. But she herself is an expression well worth studying.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to Rufus Wilmot Griswold, editor of numerous poetry anthologies.

Concord Oct. 9th 1841.
Dear Sir,



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

I am sorry that I can only place at your disposal three small poems printed in the "Dial" — that called "Sympathy" in no. 1. — "Sic Vita" in no. 5 — and "Friendship" in no. 6. If you see fit to reprint these will you please to correct the following errors?

In the second stanza of "Sympathy"

[see MS p.]for posts read ports.

5th breeze phaze.

the eyes our eyes

worked works.

13th dearest truest.

4th "Friendship"

for our read one.

10th warden warder.

I was born in Concord, Massachusetts, in 1817, and was graduated at Harvard University, in 1837.

Yrs respectfully

Henry D. Thoreau.

December 28, Tuesday: Emma Louise Ricketson was born.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1844

By his own later account, it was in the timeframe of this year and the following one that [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) took up the abolitionist cause.





DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Here is [Frederick Douglass's](#) US speaking schedule for the year 1844:

January 24	Boston for the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society
February 11-18	Concord, New Hampshire
February 19-April 30	Framingham, Dorchester , Reading, Lowell, Groton, Townsend, Braintree , Foxboro, Medway, Wrentham
March 1-2	New Bedford
March 6 (approx.)	Sudbury, Massachusetts
March 11	Medford, Massachusetts
March 17	Neponset Village, Massachusetts
March 18-19	Dedham, Massachusetts
March 24	Walpole, Massachusetts
March 29-30	Pawtucket, Rhode Island
April 4	Essex County Anti-Slavery Society
April 25	Lynn, Massachusetts
April 28	Northampton, Massachusetts
May 6-11	New-York's Broadway Tabernacle and Concert Hall, for the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society
May 28, 29, 31	Boston's Marlboro Chapel for the annual meeting of the New England Anti-Slavery Society
June 12	Concord, Massachusetts for the Middlesex County Anti-Slavery Society
June 28	Methuen, Massachusetts for the Essex County Anti-Slavery Society
August 1	Concord for the celebration of the First of August, with Waldo Emerson , William A. White, the Reverend Samuel Joseph May, Moses Grandy , and Headmaster Cyrus Pierce of the normal school in Lexington
August 12	Norristown, Pennsylvania for the annual meeting of the Eastern Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society
August 17	The lawn of the State House in Philadelphia
before August 28	Chester County, Pennsylvania
August 30	Wilbur Fisk Hall in Philadelphia
August 31	Clarkson Hall in Philadelphia
September 21	Gardiner's Church, and the Friends' Meetinghouse, in Philadelphia
September 15-30	New Hampshire and Maine
October 19-20	Liberty Hall in New Bedford, Massachusetts , for the Bristol County Anti-Slavery Society
October 24	Liberty Hall in New Bedford, Massachusetts
November 3	Mechanics' Hall in Salem , for the Salem Female Anti-Slavery Society
November 4-5	Marblehead, Massachusetts for the quarterly meeting of the Essex County Anti-Slavery Society
November 11 (approx.)	Mechanics' Hall in Salem
November 20-22	Mechanics' Hall in Providence for the annual meeting of the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society
November 26	Town Hall of Cambridgeport, Massachusetts for the Middlesex County Anti-Slavery Society
December 21-22	Portsmouth, New Hampshire for the Ladies Anti-Slavery Society



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1846

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) purchased the [New Bedford](#) estate known as “Woodlee,” where he would have the 1st and smaller of his two shanties.

Here is Professor Lawrence Buell on [Thoreau](#) as just another of those cranky [hermits](#) in just another of those secluded nooks, per pages 146, 153, and 479 of THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMAGINATION: THOREAU, NATURE WRITING, AND THE FORMATION OF AMERICAN CULTURE (quote):

[O]ne of WALDEN's first enthusiastic readers, [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), had serendipitously built a cabin retreat for himself on his New Bedford property. Thoreau and Ricketson were but two variants of a long-publicized type of American eccentric: the cranky hermit, who for a variety of possible reasons retreated to his (or her) secluded nook. [Continuing in an endnote: For an amusing bestiary of profiles, see Carl Sifakis, AMERICAN ECCENTRICS (New York and Bicester, England: [Facts on File](#), 1984). His roster includes Francis Phyle, “the hermit of Mount Holly”; Sarah Bishop, “the atrocity hermitess”; Albert Large, “the hermit amidst the wolves”; and many more.]... [[Thoreau](#)] elevates the Horatian and Virgilian love of rural retirement, a neoclassical motif of great resonance to the Anglo-American squierarchy, a motif on which Thoreau had written a college essay, to the level of a lifework. ...Some readers will resist this side of Thoreau's genius.... Thus we normalize the Walden sojourn by imagining it as an efficient way to get a lot of writing done, or normalize Walden by positing a firm aesthetic structure or ideational commitment. This tends to suppress both the worst and the best about Thoreau.... In the early 1870s, John Muir probably built his shack over a Yosemite sawmill without thinking about Thoreau, even though he already had begun to read him. By the 1890s, John Burroughs was far more aware of Thoreau's shadow, often evincing a prickly, hypersensitive anxiety of influence; but Burroughs probably was not copying Thoreau when he built his cabin, Slabsides. In modern times, however, the commemoration of Muir and Burroughs as naturist prophets has been cross-pollinated by the myth of a Thoreauvian tradition.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

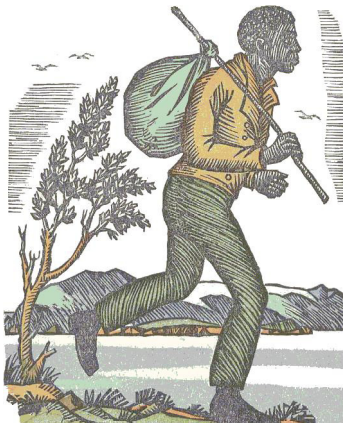
GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

The propagating fissure in the [Liberty Bell](#) had by this point gotten too bad to permit ringing it any more, unless something was done to stop this propagation and to stop the rough edges of the hairline fissure from rubbing together.

In Boston, the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Fair put out for sale a printing entitled THE LIBERTY BELL, as a fund-raising effort of the “Friends of Freedom”:



- Thompson, George. “A Fragment, Verbatim et Literatim From my Journal in Upper India”
- Howitt, William. “Onward! Right Onward!”
- Atkinson, William P. “The True Reformer”
- Higginson, J.W. “Sonnet to [William Lloyd Garrison](#)” [presumably this was a typo for [T.W. Higginson](#)]
- Parker, Theodore. “A Parable”
- Longfellow, Henry W. “The Poet of Miletus”
- Joshua Reed Giddings. “Fugitive Slaves in Northern Ohio”



- Anonymous. “Our Country”
- Cabot, Susan C. “Thought”
- Anonymous. “Interference: On Reading a Paper, In Defence [sic] of Slavery, Written by a Clergyman”
- Hitchcock, Jane Elizabeth. “All are Needed”
- Parker, Theodore. “Jesus There is No Name So Dear as Thine”



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

- ---. "Oh Thou Great Friend to All the Sons of Men"
- ---. "Dear Jesus Were Thy Spirit Now on Earth"
- Clarkson, Thomas. "Letter"
- Follen, Eliza Lee. "Song, for the Friends of Freedom"
- [Harriet Martineau](#). "A Communication"
- Jones, Benjamin S. "Our Duty"
- Samuel Joseph May. "Extract From a Speech at the Anti-Texan Meeting in Faneuil Hall, 1845"
- Thompson, George. "Early Morning"
- ---. "Sonnet: To Blanche"
- [Fuller, S. Margaret](#). "The Liberty Bell"
- Hornblower, Jane E. "A Fragment"
- Haughton, James. "Pro-Slavery Appeal To the World for Sympathy, Answered from Old Ireland"
- Spooner, Allen C. "Jubilee"
- ---. "Discouragements and Incentives"
- Ross, Georgiana Fanny. "Stanzas On Reading J. H. Wiffen's Translation of Tasso"
- Browne, John W. "A Vision of the Fathers"
- Watts, Alaric A. "A Remonstrance"
- Lee, E [probably Eliza Buckminster]. "The Dream within a Dream"
- Bowring, John. "Think of the Slave"
- Furness, William H. "Self-Denial"
- [William Lloyd Garrison](#). "Fight On!"
- Howitt, Mary. "Some Passages from the Poetry of Life"
- [William Lloyd Garrison](#). "Sonnet . . . Character"
- Wendell Phillips. "The Church"
- [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#). "Lines to the Trans-Atlantic Friends of the Slave"
- Kirkland, Caroline M. "Recollections of Anti-Slavery at the West"

This familiar essay reveals the same lively, ironic style that made the author's *A New Home: Who'll Follow?* popular.

- Quincy, Edmund. "Phoebe Mallory; the Last of the Slaves"

A narrative of the life of Phoebe Mallory, the last living person to have been enslaved in Massachusetts. Mallory died in 1845.

- Lowell, James Russell. "The Falconer"
- The Reverend [Adin Ballou](#). "Is there any Friend?"
- Lowell, Maria. "The Slave-Mother"
- [Lucretia Mott](#). "What is Anti-Slavery Work?"
- Clay, Cassius M. "God and Liberty"
- Lissant. "Influence de l'emigration Europeenne Sur le Sort de la Race Africaine aux Etats Unis d'Amerique"
- Weston, Anne Warren. "Sonnet in Memory of [Elizabeth Fry](#)"



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

- Howitt, William. "The Worst Evil of Slavery"



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FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1848

In Boston, the National Anti-Slavery Bazaar had out for sale a printing entitled THE LIBERTY BELL, as a fund-raising effort of the “Friends of Freedom”:



- A Southron [*sic*]. “The Insurrection and its Hero: A Tale of the South”
- Browning, Elizabeth Barrett. “The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim’s Point”

Long poem by the prominent British author published here for the first time.

- Follen, Eliza Lee. “Harshness of Abolitionists”
- Taylor, J. Bayard. “To Earth”
- Brooke, Samuel. “Enthusiasm”
- Wiffen, Benjamin B. “Placido, the Cuban Poet”
- Placido. “Thirty Years”
- May, Samuel J. “The American Revolution”
- Trend, Henry. “Response across the Atlantic From Britons to Americans”
- [Harriet Martineau](#). “Incidents of Travel”
- Anonymous. “Lines for the Anti-Slavery Bazaar”
- Linsant. “L’Esclavage”
- [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#). “The Fugitives’ Hymn”
- Whipple, Charles K. “Clerical Influence”
- Alexander, W. Lindsay. “Hail! the Dawn!”
- Parker, Theodore. “Come and do it better”
- —. “A Christmas Hymn”
- Frederick Douglass. “Bibles for the Slaves”
- Seymour, Almira. “The Spirit’s Birth-song”
- Lee, Eliza. “Old Sambo”

Another contribution dealing with the Northern practice of slavery. Eliza Lee reminisces about Sambo, her father’s servant and “the earliest friend and associate of [her] youth.”

- Hornblower, Jane E. “Sonnet: British West Indian Emancipation”



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

- Cabot, Susan C. "The Slave of Mammon"
- [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#). "The Field"
- Wright, Henry C. "Reminiscences: My First Acquaintance with Garrison and Anti-Slavery"
- A Backwoods' Girl [E. C. W.] "Idiot Era"
- Joshua Reed Giddings. "Progress of Free Principles in Congress"
- Lowell, James Russell. "An Extract"
- Dall, Caroline W. Healey. "Annie Gray: A Tale"

Dall's story engages the question of what it might mean for a white woman to consider herself "the slave's friend." This story is much influenced by Lydia Maria Child's tales published in earlier volumes of *The Liberty Bell*.

- Lowell, Maria. "Song"
- Pillsbury, Parker. "Incidents in the Life of an Anti-Slavery Agent"
- Jones, Benjamin S. "The Lord's Prayer"
- Brown, William Wells. "The American Slave-Trade"
- Carpenter, Mary. "Offerings of English Women from the Old World to the New"
- Quincy, Edmund. "Seth Sprague"
- Dawson, Susan F. "Pray!"
- May, Samuel Jr. "Have any of the Rulers believed?"
- Holinski, Alexander. "Abolitionism in America"
- Weston, Anne Warren. "Retrospection and Repentance"
- Garrison, William Lloyd. "Hard Language"
- Bowditch, William Ingersoll "What Law is not"





FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1850

By this point the Orthodox Friends and the [Hicksite](#) Friends (the two groups created by the great split among the Quakers) had in effect each divided again: the majority of Orthodox Friends were presumably becoming Episcopalians, while the majority of Hicksite Friends were presumably going off in the direction of the Unitarians; both these were amalgamating with the world's people. The residual of each group, of the Orthodox Friends and the Hicksite Friends, remained serious Friends and looked forward to the day when they would be able to again worship together and remain untainted by entanglement with non-[Quakers](#) — even entanglement with non-Quaker abolitionists.

The splitting had begun, in Lynn and in [New Bedford](#), at a very early point in the 1920s and not as a direct expression of the views of Friend Elias Hicks, as a conflict between “New Light” individualistic inspirational Quakers and traditional authoritarian Quakers. The Ricketson family of New Bedford had gone with the New Lights. Here are [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) and Friend Louisa Sampson Ricketson as of this year, at the age of 37 — and you will immediately notice that they are no longer attired in Quaker costumes (no hat, no bonnet, cravat, lace):





DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1852

In Boston, the National Anti-Slavery Bazaar had out for sale a printing entitled THE LIBERTY BELL, as a fund-raising effort of the “Friends of Freedom”:



- Weston, Anne Warren. “Sonnet, Suggested by the inscription on the Bell of the Hall of Independence, Philadelphia: ‘Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof’”
- Buckingham, Edgar. “Consequences”
- Michell, Emma. “The Strife with Slavery”
- [David Lee Child](#). “African Inventors”
- Morley, John. “Courage: To the ‘Silent Workers’”
- De Beaumont, Gustave. “L’Esclavage et les Etats-Unis”
- ---. “The United States and Slavery”
- Furness, William H. “The Great Festival”
- Little, Sophia L. “The Autograph of Sims”
- [Harriet Martineau](#). “More Warsaws than One”
- Arago, Dominique. “Extraits des Souvenirs Politiques”
- ---. “Passages from ‘Political Reminiscences’”
- Chapman, Edwin. “The Slave”
- Bowditch, William Ingersoll “Faith in Human Brotherhood”
- Sargent, Henrietta. “The Olive Tree”
- Parker, Theodore. “The Like and the Different”
- Lowell, Maria. “Cadiz”
- Jackson, Edmund. “The Virginia Maroons”
- Ross, Georgiana Fanny. “Stanzas In Memory of William Allen, Companion of Clarkson and Wilberforce, in their labors for the Abolition of Slavery”
- Schoelcher, Victor. “L’Esclavage aux Etats-Unis, et l’Exposition de Londres”
- ---. “American Slavery, and the London Exhibition”
- Gilbert, Howard Worcester. “Sonnet: To a Recreant Statesman”
- Talbot, George F. “Nulla vestigia retrorsum”
- [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#). “Lines [A mind determined to be strong]”



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

- Buckingham, Joseph T. "Seymour Cunningham; or, All for Liberty"
- Hall, Louisa J. "The Joy of Wealth"
- Paschoud, Martin. "Le Christianisme et l'Esclavage"
- ---. "Christianity and Slavery"
- Thompson, George. "The Slave in America"
- Phillips, Wendell. "A Letter"
- Hurnard, James. "Sonnet: To a Blackbird"
- May, Samuel Jr. "Christianity a Crime!"
- Anonymous. "To Powers, the Sculptor: Upon hearing that he was employed on a statue of California and one of America"
- Chapman, Maria Weston. "The Baron de Stael-Holstein"
- De Stael-Holstein, Le Baron. "L'Esclavage la Meme Partout"
- ---. "Slavery the Same Everywhere"
- Garrison, William Lloyd. "To Kossuth"
- Charles Chauncy Shackford "The Law of Progress and Slavery"
- George, Teuton. "The Manumitted Slave"
- Webb, Richard D. "Expostulation"
- List, Harriet Winslow. "The Ring"
- [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#). "Forward"





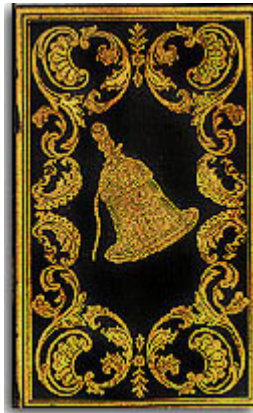
DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1853

In Boston, the National Anti-Slavery Bazaar had out for sale a printing entitled THE LIBERTY BELL, as a fund-raising effort of the “Friends of Freedom”:



THE LIBERTY BELL, 1853

- [Harriet Martineau](#). “Henrietta, the Bride”
- Foxton, E. “Petra; or, a Song of the Desert”
- Dall, Caroline W. Healey. “A Breeze from Lake Ontario”

Report on a Canadian community of former slaves, followed by an argument that “it will not do to have a Constitution which is not opposed to Freedom; we must have one that claims it with emphasis....”

- Chapman, Edwin. “The Slave Mother”
- Whipple, Charles K. “Personality”
- Sanford, Lucy. “The Cathedral”
- Bowditch, William Ingersoll “Liberty, Sectional: Slavery, National”
- [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#). “True Greatness—[Thomas Clarkson](#)”
- Lafayette, O. “Lettre: A Monsieur V. Schoelcher”
- ---. “Letter: To M. Victor Schoelcher”
- [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#). “The Morning Mist”
- Richard Hildreth. “The Approaching Crisis”
- Hurnard, James. “Sonnet [As I was gathering strawberries to-day]”
- Talbot, George F. “Webster”
- Sargent, Henrietta. “The Prayer of Moses granted”
- [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#). “Am I my Brother’s Keeper?”
- Weston, Anne Warren. “In Memory of C.S.”
- Frothingham, Octavius Brooks. “Pauperism and Slavery”
- Dorvelas-Dorval. “Statement respecting the Commerce of Hayti”
- Martineau, Harriet. “Nan’s Lot in Life, A Tale”
- Chapman, Maria Weston. “The Young Sailor”



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

- Chapman, Maria Weston. "Russia and the Russians"
Editorial note introducing Tourgueneff, a Russian noble imprisoned and sentenced to death for supporting the serfs. Chapman suggests the connections between anti-slavery work and other struggles against oppression.
- Tourgueneff, N [Ivan]. "Lettre"
In French.
- May, Samuel Jr. "A more excellent Way"
- Waterston, R. C. "The Voice of Freedom"
- Chapman, Maria Weston. "The Sculptor of the Torrid Zone"
- Legouve, Ernest. "La Religion de l'Abolition"
- Phillips, Wendell. "Daniel Webster"
- Anonymous. "Lines written after a Winter of severe Storms"
- Remusat. "L'Inconsequence Republicaine"
- Quincy, Edmund. "Fetichism [sic]"
- [William Lloyd Garrison](#). "To Louis Kossuth"
- Lesley, J. P. "The Bell"





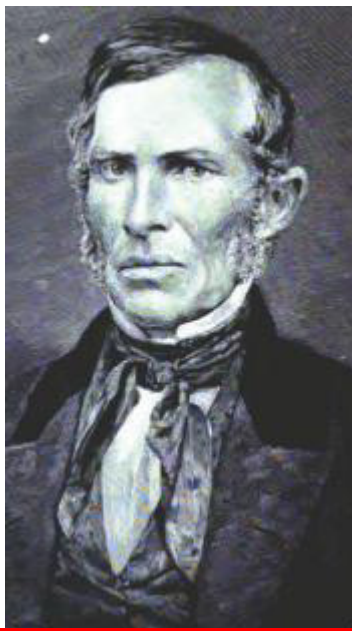
DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1854

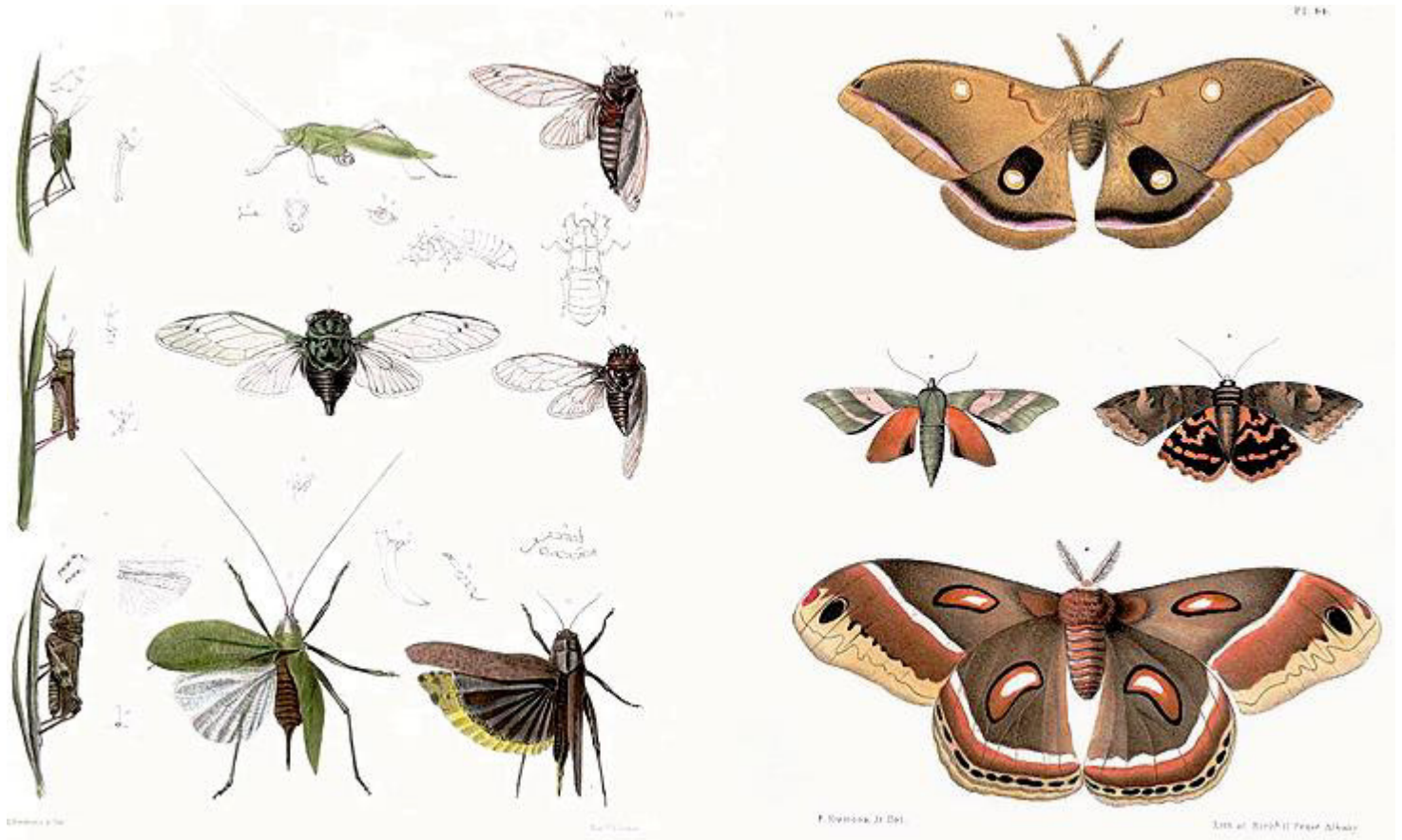
[Ebenezer Emmons](#)'s AMERICAN GEOLOGY, CONTAINING A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES OF THE SCIENCE WITH FULL ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE CHARACTERISTIC AMERICAN FOSSILS (Albany: Gray, Sprague & Co.). Also, his A TREATISE UPON AMERICAN GEOLOGY.



PIONEER OF SCIENCE

Also, his INSECTS OF NEW-YORK (C. van Benthuyssen, publisher; this was the 5th volume of the author's AGRICULTURE OF NEW-YORK), which [Henry Thoreau](#) would check out of the [New Bedford](#) library while visiting [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in 1857.

THE SCIENCE OF 1854

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**FRIEND RICKETSON****DANIEL RICKETSON****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

Selling his estate “Woodlee,” [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) bought “Brooklawn,” three miles from the center of [New Bedford](#), the estate on which he would build himself a somewhat larger board-and-batten unplastered shanty, this time measuring 12 X 14.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

August 10, Thursday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) purchased a copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#):



Bought a book this morning named Walden, or Life in the Woods, by Henry D. Thoreau, who spent several years upon the shore of Walden Pond near Concord, Mass., living in a rough board house of his own building. Much of his experience in his out-of-door and secluded life I fully understand and appreciate.


[Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) also purchased a copy.

Bronson Alcott completed a reading of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

At 4:30 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to the Cliffs of Fair Haven Hill (Gleason 26/J7). In the afternoon Thoreau went to Conantum (Gleason J6) and thence to Clematis Brook (Gleason K7). He had a conversation with Eben J. Loomis.



The tinkling notes of goldfinches [**American Goldfinch**  *Carduelis tristis*] and bobolinks which we hear nowadays are of one character and peculiar to the season. They are not voluminous flowers, but rather nuts of sound, –ripened seed of sound. It is the tinkling of ripened grain in Nature's basket. It is like the sparkle on water, a sound produced by friction on the crisped air.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) on the 2d page of the Boston Atlas:

Reprinted in CRITICAL ESSAYS ON HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S
WALDEN, ed. Joel Myerson (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co.,
1988), page 18.

[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was reviewed under the heading "New Publications" on the front page of the Boston Daily Journal, column 6:



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

This is a remarkable book. The thread of the work is a narrative of the personal experience of the eccentric author as a hermit on the shores of Walden Pond. The body consists of his reflections on life and its pursuits. Mr. Thoreau carried out his ideas of "communism" by building with his own hands an humble hut, cultivating his own garden patch, earning with the sweat of his brow enough of coarse food to sustain life, and living independent of the world and of its circumstances. He continued this selfish existence for two years, and then returned to society, but why, he does not inform his readers. Whether satisfied that he had mistaken the "pleasures of solitude," or whether the self-improvement which the world has charitably supposed was the object of his retirement had been accomplished, it is certain that he was relieved of none of his selfish opinions—that he left behind in the woods of Concord none of his misanthropy, and that he brought back habits of thought which, though profound, are erratic, and often border on the transcendental. The narrative of the two years hermit life of such a man can hardly fail to be attractive, and the study of the workings of a mind so constituted must possess a peculiar interest. But the attraction is without sympathy—the interest is devoid of admiration. The outre opinions of a mind like that of Mr. Thoreau, while they will attract attention as the eccentric outbursts of real genius, so far from finding a response in the bosom of the reader, will excite a smile, from their very extravagance, and we can easily imagine that if Mr. Thoreau would banish from his mind the idea that man is an oyster, he might become a passable philosopher. Mr. Thoreau has made an attractive book—more attractive than his "Week on the Concord and Merrimack." But while many will be fascinated by its contents, few will be improved. As the pantheistic doctrines of the author marred the beauty of his former work, so does his selfish philosophy darkly tinge the pages of "Walden," and the best that can be said of the work in its probable effects is, that while many will be charmed by the descriptive powers of the author, and will smile at his extravagant ideas, few will be influenced by his opinions. This is a negative virtue in a book which is likely to be widely circulated, and which might do much mischief if the author could establish a bond of sympathy with the reader.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "New Publications" in the Salem [Register](#), page 2 column 3.

This is a remarkable book, the production of one of the eccentric geniuses who seem to swarm in old Concord, either because they are to the manor born, as was the case with Thoreau, or because there is something sympathetic in the atmosphere which induces an immigration of oddities thither. The author affects to be a philosopher, and is a sort of compound of Diogenes and Timon, flavored with the simplicity of a hermit and a pure child of nature. There is nothing in literature, that we know of, exactly like his book. Mr. Thoreau is a graduate of Harvard College, in the class of 1837, where he was a diligent student. Subsequently, in one of his whimsical freaks, he built himself a hut in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, where he lived alone, and earned his living by the labor of his hands only, for the space of two years and two months, at the end of which time he became a sojourner in civilized life again. The book was written principally during this seclusion, and is, in some sort, a digested record of his life there, with sage reflections on the social condition and the ordinary aims of human ambition. It is a strikingly original, singular, and most interesting work. Several passages from the narrative portion have appeared in journals which were favored with sheets in advance. We avail ourselves of the following brief extract near the conclusion, which gives a little insight into his philosophy:-

[Reprints "Conclusion," pages 328.5-329.16.]

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) in the Lowell [Journal and Courier](#), page 2 column 3.

Ticknor & Fields, of Boston, have just sent us this handsome volume, by Henry D. Thoreau, author of "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers." Mr Thoreau, who lived nearly three years in the woods, has been called 'the Concord Diogenes,' as Ralph Waldo Emerson has been called the Concord Platonist or American Plato. This is one of the most singular, as well as one of the best of works. It is no romance, though most of it is of a narrative character. The press all over the country have given the most flattering notices of it; and without doubt it will command a very extensive sale. It surely deserves it.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

August 12, Saturday: In his journal, [Henry Thoreau](#) noted the first watermelon of the season. He went by boat to Conantum (Gleason J6). He walked the Fitchburg Railroad tracks to Bare or Pine Hill in Lincoln (Gleason J9).

Bronson Alcott completed a re-reading of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), and also of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

The Concord librarian, [Albert Stacy](#), purchased a copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) for the town library at a cost of \$0.⁷⁵, and the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) purchased two copies for \$2.⁰⁰. A favorable review under the heading "Editorial Correspondence" presumably by the Reverend John Sullivan Dwight appeared in [Dwight's Journal of Music, A Paper of Art and Literature](#) (5:149-50):

... Thoreau is one of those men who has put such a determined trust in the simple dictates of common sense, as to earn the vulgar title of "transcendentalist" from his sophisticated neighbors. ... Of course, they find him strange, fantastical, a humorist, a theorist, a dreamer. It may be or it may not.... Walden's literary style is admirably clear and terse and elegant; the pictures wonderfully graphic; for the writer is a poet and a scholar as well as a tough wrestler with the first economical problems of nature, and a winner of good cheer and of free glorious leisure out of what men call the "hard realities" of life. Walden Pond, a half mile in diameter, in Concord town, becomes henceforth as classical as any lake of Windermere. And we doubt not men are beginning to look to transcendentalists for the soberest reports of good hard common-sense, as well as for the models of the clearest writing.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "New Publications" in the Boston [Commonwealth](#), 2:4.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

We mean, before long, to say how delightful a book this is [no subsequent notice located]; but it is now Saturday, the very day when people buy books, and we can only say that it is just the pleasantest and most readable, the most thought-provoking book of the present season. It is a better work than the author['s] previous one, "A [W]eek on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers," though we reckon that as a book which will live in American literature a good while. "Walden" is a record of two years' sojourning in a house built by the author with his own hands, near Walden Pond. He was a squatter upon the land, and his sovereignty was over all he surveyed. Most lively accounts he gives of his life there, mingled with pages of philosophical (sensible or other) reflections upon all sorts of topics. No more attractive book has been printed for a long time. It ought, to be sure, considering the author's theories of food and raiment, to be printed upon birch-bark, but it is, on the contrary, issued in Ticknor & Fields' best style.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "New Publications" in the Boston [Olive Branch](#), 3:3-4.

This is indeed a quaint book, as any person, who is in the least familiar with the character of the author, might expect. It gives a full account of his experience during his sojourn on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Mass. Having imbibed the idea that the daily life of his neighbors, with its cares, its trials and its conformity to fashion and custom was little better than a penance, he made himself a home in that secluded spot. He built a house, which cost him about thirty dollars; furnished it scantily and began to keep "bachelor's hall." There in his solitary abode he read the great book of Nature; watched the stars, the birds and the waters, and mused and philosophized after his own fashion. Besides, he had a small piece of land near this cottage, which he cultivated, and which yielded him a small harvest. His expenditures for food and clothing were very trifling, and it will no doubt, astonish many to know that so moderate a sum supported a person two years. He gives the details of his life and we presume they will entertain the reader as they have us.



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“SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS” appeared in The National Anti-Slavery Standard.



Review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS under the heading “New Publications” on the second page of the New Bedford, Massachusetts Mercury, column 3:

This is a remarkable history of remarkable experiences. Mr. Thoreau is an eccentric genius, and affects the philosopher, despising all the ordinary aims and petty ambitions of the world, looking in a half cynical, half amused mood upon men and things, and meanwhile retiring into a semi barbarous state builds with his own hands a hut on Walden Pond in Connecticut [sic], where for twenty-six months he lives like a hermit on the labor of his hands, looking to nature, ‘kindest mother still,’ for the supply of his physical wants, and as a perpetual fountain of delight to his eye and soul. This volume is in some measure a record of his external and internal being during his retiracy, and is perfectly unique in experience and expression. A simple, pure heart, high cultivation and a luxuriant fancy, give to Mr. Thoreau a vigorous intellectual life, and impart a freshness and charm to his style which leads one on quite enchanted. For its fine descriptions of nature, it will bear more than one reading, while its stern and true lessons on the value of existence, its manly simplicity, its sage reflections, will drop many a good seed for content and true living, to spring up and flourish and beautify new homes, albeit in civilized life, for we do not think any will be so enamored of Mr. Thoreau’s experience, as to seek it in his way.

Review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS on the second page of the Roxbury Norfolk County Journal.



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column 6:

Mr. Thoreau is an eccentric genius as well as an original thinker and good writer. His eccentricity led him to build a hut upon the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, in which he lived alone for two years, laboring in his garden patch to raise food for the support of life, and all that he might experience the pleasures of solitude and a perfectly independent life. But Mr. Thoreau is a man of education, of intellect, of taste, — though he did not show much of the latter in his odd sort of life, according to the general estimation of the world, — and he did not live alone in the woods like a savage. He mused and studied — mused somewhat on the works of nature, somewhat more on mankind, and not in the most loving and gentle spirit, and he studied his own erratic mind. The latter occupation might have been more profitable, perhaps, had he observed it from a different point of view. The book which he now gives to the world after coming out from his self imposed exile, is a sort of history of his hermitage, an account of his solitary mode of living, a description of the external things which occupied his attention, colored throughout with a sort of philosophy which is little else than the peculiarities of Mr. Thoreau's mind. The narrative and descriptions are certainly very interesting and attractive, full of life and nature, and the book is in this respect quite a charming one. In other respects it may find fewer admirers, but altogether, from its origin and character, it may be set down as a remarkable book, which will command the attention of the tasteful reader and of the thoughtful student. It is hardly necessary to say that it is published in the neat style which characterizes all the volumes issued by these publishers.

In [New Bedford](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) completed a reading of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) and began



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to cultivate the author:



Finished this morning reading Walden, or Life in the Woods, by H. D. Thoreau. I have been highly interested in this book, the most truly original one I ever read, unless the life of John Bunce, an old book written by an eccentric English Gentleman. The experience of Thoreau and his reflections are like those of every true lover of Nature. His views of the artificial customs of civilized life are very correct. Mankind labor and suffer to supply themselves with the unnecessaries of life, — leisure for enjoyment is rarely obtained. I long for mankind to be emancipated from this thralldom which has spread its nets and snares over so large a portion of the human family. A love for a more simple life increases with me, and I hope that the time will ere long come when I may realize the peace to be derived therefrom. Simplicity in all things, house, living, dress, address, &c. &c. My fortune, though not large, is ample, and were my style of living less expensive I might have considerable for charitable purposes. One of my greatest luxuries has been in books, — good books I value beyond most all else in the world of earthly treasure, after my family, — handsome editions of my favorite authors. Such I want in the best of paper, type, and binding and English, for my reading is confined pretty much to my native language. England, Scotland, or rather Great Britain and America, have furnished nearly all the authors I am acquainted with. Genuine English literature is my line of reading.

On this day or the following one, [Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).



Mailed a letter to Henry D. Thoreau expressive of my satisfaction in reading his book, "Walden, or Life in the Woods." His volume has been a source of great comfort to me in reading and will I think continue to be so, giving me cheerful views of life and feeling of confidence that misfortune cannot so far as property is concerned deprive me or mine of the necessities of life, and even that we may be better in every respect for the changes.

[Friend Daniel](#) included on this day the interesting information that [William Cowper](#)'s "The Task" was his "greatest favorite." (I think it no exaggeration to say that you could count on the fingers of one foot the people for whom Cowper's "The Task" would their "greatest favorite," or even readable — Thoreau is one of the few



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people I have heard of, who had their own personal copy of this poem.)



Brooklawn, near New Bedford

Mass. Aug. 12th. 1854—

Dear Sir,

I have just finished reading “Walden” and hasten to thank you for the great degree of satisfaction it has afforded me. Having always been a lover of Nature, in man, as well as in the material universe, I hail with pleasure every original production in literature which bears the stamp of a genuine and earnest love for the true philosophy of human life.— Such I assure you I esteem your book to be. To many, and to most, it will appear to be the wild musings of an eccentric and strange mind, though all must recognize your affectionate regard for the gentle denizens of the woods and pond as well as the great love you have shewn for what are familiarly called the beauties of Nature. But to me the book appears to evince a mind most thoroughly self possessed, highly cultivated with a strong vein of common sense. The whole book is a prose poem (pardon the solecism) and at the same time as simple as a running brook.

I have always loved ponds of pure translucent water, and some of my happiest and most memorable days have been passed on and around the beautiful Middleboro’ Ponds, particularly the largest, Assawampset—here King Philip frequently came, and a beautiful round hill near by, is still known as “King Philip’s look-out.” I have often felt an inclination when tired of the noise and strife of society, to retire to the shores of this noble old pond, or rather lake, for it is some 5 or 6 miles in length and 2 broad. But I have a wife and four children, & besides have got a little too far along, being in my fortysec-



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ond year, to undertake a new mode of life. I strive however, and have striven during the whole of my life, to live as free from the restraint of mere forms & ceremonies as I possibly can. I love a quiet, peaceful rural retirement; but it was not my fate to realize this until a little past thirty years of age—since then I have been a sort of rustic, genteel perhaps, rustic. Not so very genteel you might reply, if you saw the place where I am writing. It is a rough board Shanty 12 x 14 three miles from New Bedford in a quiet & secluded spot—here for the present I eat & sleep, read, write, receive visitors &c. My house is now undergoing repairs &c and my family are in town.

A short time since a whip-poor-will serenaded me, and later at night I hear the cuckoos near my windows. It has long been my delight to observe the feathered tribes, and earlier in life I was quite an ornithologist. The coming of the first Blue bird in early Spring is to me still a delightful circumstance. But more particularly soothing to me is the insect hum so multitudinous at this season.— Now as I write the crickets & other little companions are sweetly & soothingly singing around my dwelling, & occasionally in my room. I am quite at home with partridges, Quails, rabbits skunks & woodchucks. But Winter is my best time, then I am a great trampler through the woods. O how I love the woods. I have walked thousands of miles in the woods hereabouts. I recognize many of my own experiences in your “Walden”. Still I am not altogether given up to these matters—they are my pastimes. I have a farm to at tend to, fruit trees & a garden & a little business occasionally in town to look after, but much leisure nevertheless. In fact I am the only man of leisure I know of, every body here as well as elsewhere is upon the stir. I love quiet, this you know friend Thoreau dont necessarily imply that the body should be still all the time. I am often quietest, ar ’nt you, when walking among the still haunts of Nature or hoeing perhaps beans as I have oftentimes done as well as corn & potatoes &c &c.

Poetry has been to me a great consolation amid the jarring elements of this life. The English poets some of them at least, and one Latin, our good old Virgil, have been like household gods to me.—

Cowper’s Task, my greatest favorite now lies before me in which I had been reading & alternately looking at the western sky just after sunset before I commenced this letter. Cowper was a true lover of the country. How often have I felt the force of these lines upon the country in my own experience

“I never framed a wish, or formed a plan,



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*That flattered me with hopes of earthly bliss
But there I laid the scene."*

All through my boyhood, the country haunted my thoughts. Though blessed with a good home, books & teachers, the latter however with one exception were not blessings, I would have exchanged all for the life of a rustic. I envied as I then thought the freedom of the farmer boy. But I have long thought that the life of the farmer, that is most farmers, possessed but little of the poetry of labour. How we accumulate cares around us. The very repairs I am now making upon my house will to some considerable extent increase my cares. A rough board shanty, rye & indian bread, water from the spring, or as in your case, from the pond, and other things in keeping, do not burden the body & mind. It is fine houses, fine furniture, sumptuous fare, fine clothes, and many in number, horses & carriages, servants &c &c, these are the harpies, that so disturb our real happiness.

My next move in life I hope will be into a much more simple mode of living. I should like to live in a small house, with my family, uncarpeted white washed walls, simple old fashioned furniture & plain wholesome old fashioned fare. Though I have always been inclined to be a vegetarian in diet & once lived in capital health two years on the Graham system.

Well this will do for myself. Now for you friend Thoreau. Why return to "the world" again? a life such as you spent at Walden was too true & beautiful to be abandoned for any slight reason.

The ponds I allude to are much more secluded than Walden, and really delightful places. Should you ever incline again to try your "philosophy of living" I would introduce you into haunts, that your very soul would leap to behold. Well, I thought I would just write you a few lines to thank you for the pleasure I have received from the reading of your "Walden", but I have found myself running on till now. I feel that you are a kindred spirit and so fear not. I was pleased to find a kind word or two in your book for the poor down trodden slave. Wilberforce, Clarkson and John Woolman & Anthony Benezet were household words in my father's house.— I early became acquainted with the subject of slavery for my parents were Quakers, & Quakers were then all Abolitionists. My love of Nature, absolute, undefiled nature makes me an abolitionist. How could I listen to the woodland songs—or gaze upon the outstretched landscape, or look at the great clouds & the starry heavens and be aught but a friend of



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the poor and oppressed coloured race of our land. But why do I write—it is in vain to portray these things—they can only be felt and lived, and to you of all others I would refrain from being prolix.

I have outlived, or nearly so, all ambition for notoriety. I wish only to be a simple, good man & so live that when I come to surrender up my spirit to the Great Father, I may depart in peace.

I wrote the above last evening. It is now Sunday afternoon, and alone in my Shanty I sit down to my desk to add a little more. A great white cloud which I have been watching for the past half hour is now majestically moving off to the north east before the fine s . w. breeze which sets in here nearly every summer afternoon from the ocean. We have here the best climate in New England—shelter ed on the north & east by dense pine woods from the cold winds which so cut up the healths of eastern folk, or rather are supposed to—but I think if the habits of our people were right the north easters would do but little harm. I never heard that the Indians w ere troubled by them—but they were nature’s philosophers and lived in the woods. I love to go by my instincts, inspiration rather. O how much we lose by civilization! In the eyes of the world you & I are demi savages— But I rather think we could stand our hand at the dinner table or in the drawing room with most of folks. I would risk you any where, and as for myself I have about done with the follies of “society.” I never was trump’d yet.

I have lived out all the experiences of idle youth—some gentle, & some savage experiences but my heart was not made of the stuff for a sportsman or angler—early in life I ranged the woods, fields & shores with my gun, or rod, but I found that all I sought could be obtained much better without the death dealing implements. So now my rustic staff is all the companion I usually take, unless my old dog joins me—taking new track as he often does, and bounding upon me in some distant thicket. My favorite books are—Cowper’s task, Thomson’s Seasons Milton, Shakespeare, &c &c—Goldsmith Gray’s Elegy—Beattie’s Minstrel (parts) Howitt, Gil. White, (Selbourne) Bewick (wood engraver) moderns—Wordsworth Ch. Lamb—De Quincy, Macaulay, Kit. North, &c &c

These and others are more my companions than men. I like talented women & swear lustily by Mary Wolstoncroft, Md^e— Roland, Joan d’arc & somewhat by dear Margaret Fuller.



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The smaller fry, I let go by—

Again permit me to thank you for the pleasure & strength I have found in reading “Walden.”

Dear Mr Walden good bye for the present.

Yours most respectfully

Daniel Ricketson

Henry D. Thoreau Esq



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October 1, Sunday: In Syracuse NY, the 3d annual “Jerry Celebration” sponsored by the Unitarian congregation of the Reverend Samuel Joseph May, honoring the freeing of Jerry McHenry from the federal marshals who had been seeking to “return” him to his “owner” on October 1, 1851.

RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW



Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR, wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#).

Scheduling difficulties had forced the postponement of [Henry Thoreau](#)’s lecture in Plymouth MA by one week. He responded to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)’s letter of August 12th, talking about visiting Middleboro Ponds and recommending [William Gilpin](#)’s books on nature, which he was just then reading.





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Concord Mass, Oct 1st '54

Dear Sir,

I had duly received your very kind and frank letter, but delayed to answer it thus long because I have little skill as a correspondent, and wished to send you something more than my thanks.

I was gratified by your prompt and hearty acceptance of my book. Yours is the only word of greeting I am likely to receive from a dweller in the woods like myself, from where the whippoorwill and cuckoo are heard, and there are better than moral clouds drifting over, and real breezes blow.

Your account excites in me a desire to see the Middleboro Ponds, of which I had already heard somewhat; as also of some very beautiful ponds on the Cape, in Harwich I think, near which I once passed. I have sometimes also thought of visiting that remnant of our Indians still living near you.— But then, you know there is nothing like ones native fields and lakes. The best news you send me is, not that Nature with you is so fair and genial, but that there is one there who likes her so well. That proves all that was asserted.

Homer, of course, you include in your list of lovers of nature – and, by the way, let me mention here, – for this is “my thunder” lately – W^m Gilpin’s long series of books on the Picturesque, with their illustrations. If it chances that you have not met with these, I cannot just now frame a better wish than that you may one day derive as much pleasure from the inspection of them as I have.

Much as you have told me of yourself, you have still I think a little the advantage of me in this correspondence, for I have told you still more in my book. You have therefore the broadest mark to fire at. A young English author, Thomas Cholmondeley, is just now waiting for me to take a walk with him – therefore excuse this very barren note from

*Yrs, hastily at last,
Henry D. Thoreau*



FRIEND RICKETSON

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October 4, Wednesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) received [Henry Thoreau](#)'s letter of October the 1st:



Received a letter from Henry D. Thoreau to-day in reply to mine to him. Letter hastily written and hardly satisfactory, evidently well meant though overcautious.



[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was reviewed on the 2d page of the Louisville, Kentucky [Daily Courier](#).

[Thoreau](#) wrote to Benjamin Marston Watson [BENJAMIN MARSTON WATSON](#).

*Concord Oct 4th '54
Dear Sir,
I meant to read
to you but once;—in the eve-
ning, if it is convenient for all
parties. That is as large a taste
of my present self as I dare offer
you in one visit.
Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau.*

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Postage: p^d
Address: *B.M. Watson Esq.*
Plymouth
Mass.



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October 12, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was again being written by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in New Bedford.



Wrote an invitation to H.D. Thoreau of Concord, author of Walden, and sent a letter which I had on hand some time.



*Brooklawn, near New Bedford
Oct. 12th. 1854
Dear Mr Walden,*



FRIEND RICKETSON

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*Your long delayed, but very
acceptable acknowledgement of the 1st
Inst. came duly to hand. It requires
no answer ~~I am aware~~ and I trust
you will not esteem this as such. I
simply wish to say, that it will afford
me pleasure to show you the Middle
boro ponds as well as the other Indian
water spoken of by you, which I conclude
to be what is called "Wakeby Pond"
at Marshpee near Sandwich.
Since I first wrote you my rough
board shanty which I then inhabited
& from which I now ~~as then~~ write,*

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*has been partially forsaken, the house
of which I spoke to you ~~I think~~ as
being built, having been completed
& my family moved into it — so the
shanty is somewhat shorn of its beams
to the public or vulgar eye at
least but none the less prized by
me — here I spent a considerable
part of my time in study & meditation,
and here I also entertain my best
& most welcome friends. Now friend
Walen, if ~~you~~ it should be agreeable
to you to leave home at this pleasant
season, I shall be happy to receive
you as my guest. Making my farm
which lies about three miles north
of New Bedford head quarters we
can sally forth into the adjoining country
— to the fine ponds in question and*

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*visit other objects of interest hitherround.
I am just now quite busily engaged in
the improvements of my grounds near my
house but expect to conclude them by
the end of next week, when should
it meet your pleasure I shall be*



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*very happy to see you here.
I am quite a tramper as well as yourself,
but have ~~also~~ horseflesh & carriages
at hand if preferable, which,
certainly for long distances, with
all my ante-diluvian taste, I deem
to be.
Perhaps your young English friend &
author Mr Cholmondeley would
like to accompany you if should
you conclude to come, if so please
extend the invitation to him should
you deem it proper. I do not wish*

*Page 4
to push matters at all, but am
of the opinion, if you are not
too learned we shall affiliate
nicely in our rustic feelings
at any rate it will do no harm
to try.
Your short & hastily written note
embarrasses me & I hardly know
whether it best or no to send what
I have now written & so conclude
whether this shall reach you
or not
Your friend & fellow worshipper
at Nature's great shrine
Daniel Ricketson*

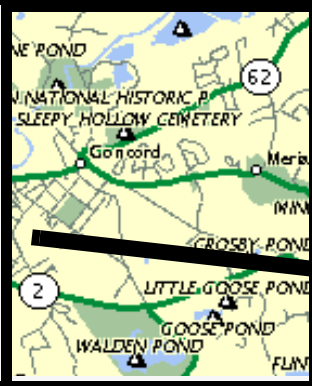


FRIEND RICKETSON

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December 14, Thursday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) walked up the north bank of the Assabet River to the one-arch stone bridge:



From [New Bedford](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) wrote to [Thoreau](#):



Wrote an invitation to H.D. Thoreau of Concord, author of Walden, and sent a letter which I had on hand some time.

December 19, Tuesday: George Washington Briggs stocked [Louisa May Alcott](#)'s FLOWER FABLES on the shelves of his bookstore on Washington Street in Boston in time for the [Christmas](#) season, as a potential child's [Christmas](#) gift item. He placed an advertisement for it in the Boston [Evening Transcript](#):²

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

THE ALCOTT FAMILY

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



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



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

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

Concord Mass. Dec 19th 1854.

Dear Sir,

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

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

NANTUCKET ISLAND

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

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

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

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

*Excuse this short note from Yours truly
Henry D. Thoreau.*

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

Concord Mass. Dec. 19th 1854.

Mr. Blake,



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

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without any great exertion. [The day] is never so dark, nor the night even, but that the laws, at least, of light still prevail, and so may make it light in our minds if they are open to the truth. There is considerable danger that a man will be crazy between dinner and supper—but it will not directly answer any good purpose that I know of, & it is just as easy to be sane. We have got to know what both life and death are before we can begin to live after our own fashion. Let us be learning our a b c s as soon as possible. I never yet knew the sun to be knocked down and rolled thro' a [mud puddle]; he comes



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*out honor bright from behind every
storm. Let us then take sides with the
sun—seeing we have so much leisure[]
[1]et us not put all we prize into
a foot-ball to be kicked, when a bladder
will do as well.
When an Indian is burned, his body [may be]
broiled, it may be no more than a beef-
steak. What of that? They may broil
his heart, but they do not therefore broil
his courage,—his principles. Be of good
courage! That is the main thing.*

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*this cold winter to pay for the fuel
that will be required to warm them?
I suppose I have burned up a pretty
good sized tree to-night—& for
what? I settled with Mr Tarbell
for it the other day—but that
was'nt the final settlement.
I got off cheaply from him. At last,
One will say— “Let us see, how
much wood did you burn, Sir? And
I shall shudder to think that the
next question will be, “What did you
do while you were warm?”— Do
we think the ashes will pay for it?—
that God is an ash-man? It is a
fact that we have got to render [an]
an account for the deeds done in the
body.
Who knows but we shall be
better the next year than we have been
the past? At any rate, I
wish you a really new year—com-
mencing from the instant you read
this,—and happy or u[n]happy ac-
cording to your deserts.
Henry D. Thoreau
Dec. 19, 1854.*

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



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



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

December 20, Wednesday: At 7 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) skated to Nawshawtuct or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6). In the afternoon he and [Ellery Channing](#) skated to Fair Haven Pond or Bay (Gleason J7), and Thoreau noted that it was "killing work" for Channing not only because of his skates but also because he wasn't using an "easy" skating technique.

The Boston [Evening Transcript](#) carried on its 1st page a notice:

Messrs. George W. Briggs & Co. have published an illustrated work entitled *Flower Fables*, by [Louisa May Alcott](#). It contains several agreeable sketches, in prose and verse, adapted to the capacity of intelligent young persons.³

[Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in New Bedford.

*H. D. Thoreau
Dear Sir,
Yours of the 19th came
to hand this evening.
I shall therefore look for
you on Monday next.
My farm is 3 mi. north
of New Bedford. Say to
the conductor to leave you
at the Tarkiln Hill station,
where I or some of my folks
will be in readiness for you*

*Page 2
on the arrival of the evening
train. Should you intend
coming earlier in the day
please inform me in time.
I will get word to the Com^e
of the N B Lyceum as
you desire.*

3. [Louisa May Alcott](#). FLOWER FABLES. Boston MA: George W. Briggs & Co., 1855



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*If I do not hear from
you again, I shall pre-
pare for your arrival
as before.*

Page 3

In the meantime I remain

Yours very truly

Danl Ricketson

Brooklawn

near New Bedford

Wednesday eveg. Dec 20. '54



I am surprised to find how fast the dog can run in a straight line on the ice. I am not sure that I can beat him on skates, but I can turn much shorter.

DOG

December 25, Monday: The diary of Nathaniel Arbuckle, a farmer of Delhi, New York, indicates that [Christmas](#) day was just another workday:

25 On the 21th of this month James Came home from John Murray's Sick but he went to work this morning again this is Christmas and a mild Day it is Thomas an Margarete is going Over to uncles Walters on a Visit it is good Sleighing wind South Sold to Samuel S Smith this day 151 Bushells of Oats Price 5/ Per Bushell Need Payment

[Henry Thoreau](#) visited his literary admirer and correspondent [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) at his home "Brooklawn," stopping off at [Harvard Library](#) along the way to check out William Wood's NEW-ENGLAND'S PROSPECT; BEING A TRUE, LIVELY, AND EXPERIMENTAL DESCRIPTION OF THAT PART OF AMERICA, COMMONLY CALLED NEW ENGLAND (London: John Dawson, 1639).



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He also checked out Gabriel Sagard-Théodat's *LE GRAND VOYAGE DU PAYS DES HURONS* (Paris: Denys Moreau, 1632).



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[Friend Daniel](#)'s estate "Brooklawn," with his shanty⁴ to the left:



"There is no Frigate like a Book
To take us Lands away"
— Emily Dickinson

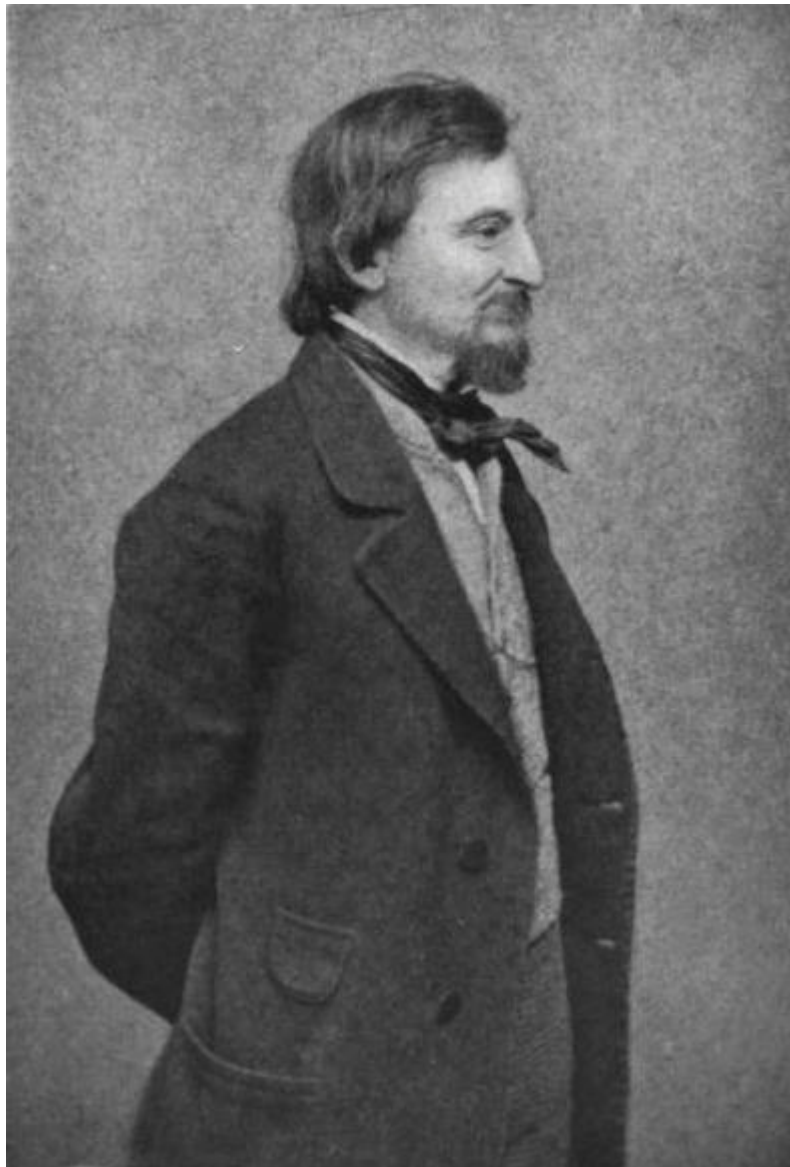
4. "D.R.'s Shanty is about half a dozen rods S.W. of his house ... is 12 x 14 feet, with 7 feet posts, with common pent roof. The roof is shingled, and the sides made of matched boards, and painted a light clay color, with chocolate colored blinds. Within it is not plastered and is open to the roof, showing the timbers and rafters. ... In front of the east window is a small box stove. ... Against the stove is a rude settle with a small cushion and pillow; and on the opposite side a large desk with some bookshelves above it. ... R. or one of his guests swept the Shanty each morning. The West and N.W. side is well-nigh covered with slips of paper on which are written some sentences or paragraphs from R.'s favorite books — many quotations celebrating retirement, country life, simplicity, humanity, sincerity etc. from Cowper and other English poets."



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM





DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

By prearrangement, [Thoreau](#) was to be met at the Tarkiln Hill station in New Bedford, but evidently it was not [Friend Daniel](#) who met him, for on the following page is "By no means a bad likeness ... of the plain and upright Thoreau," a sketch by Ricketson of his first impressions of Thoreau coming up the walk at Brooklawn, while Ricketson was shoveling the snow off of it.



My first interview with him was so peculiar that I will venture to state it. The season was winter, a snow had lately fallen, and I was engaged in shovelling the accumulated mass from the entrance to my house, when I perceived a man walking toward me bearing an umbrella in one hand and a leather travelling-bag in the other. So unlike my ideal Thoreau, whom I had fancied, from the robust nature of his mind and habits of life, to be a man of unusual vigor and size, that I did not suspect, although I had expected him in the morning, that the slight, quaint-looking person before me was the Walden philosopher. There are few persons who had previously read his works that were not disappointed by his personal appearance. As he came near to me I gave him the usual salutation, and supposing him to be either a pedler or some way-traveller, he at once remarked, "You don't know me." The truth flashed on my mind, and concealing my own surprise I at once took him by the hand and led him to the room already prepared for him, feeling a kind of disappointment - a disappointment, however, which soon passed off, and never again obtruded itself to the philosopher's disadvantage. In fact, I soon began to see that Nature had dealt kindly by him, and that this apparently slender personage was physically capable of enduring far more than the ordinary class of men, although he had then begun to show signs of failure of strength in his knees.

According to [Friend Daniel](#)'s journal, from which he has abstracted above, they spent the evening chatting about various matters such as the climate, et cetera, of England and America, et cetera:



H.D. Thoreau arrived this P.M., spent evening conversing upon various matters, the climate, &c., of England and America, &c.



December 25: To New Bedford via Cambridge.

I think that I never saw a denser growth than the young white cedars in swamps on the Taunton and New

[HDT](#)

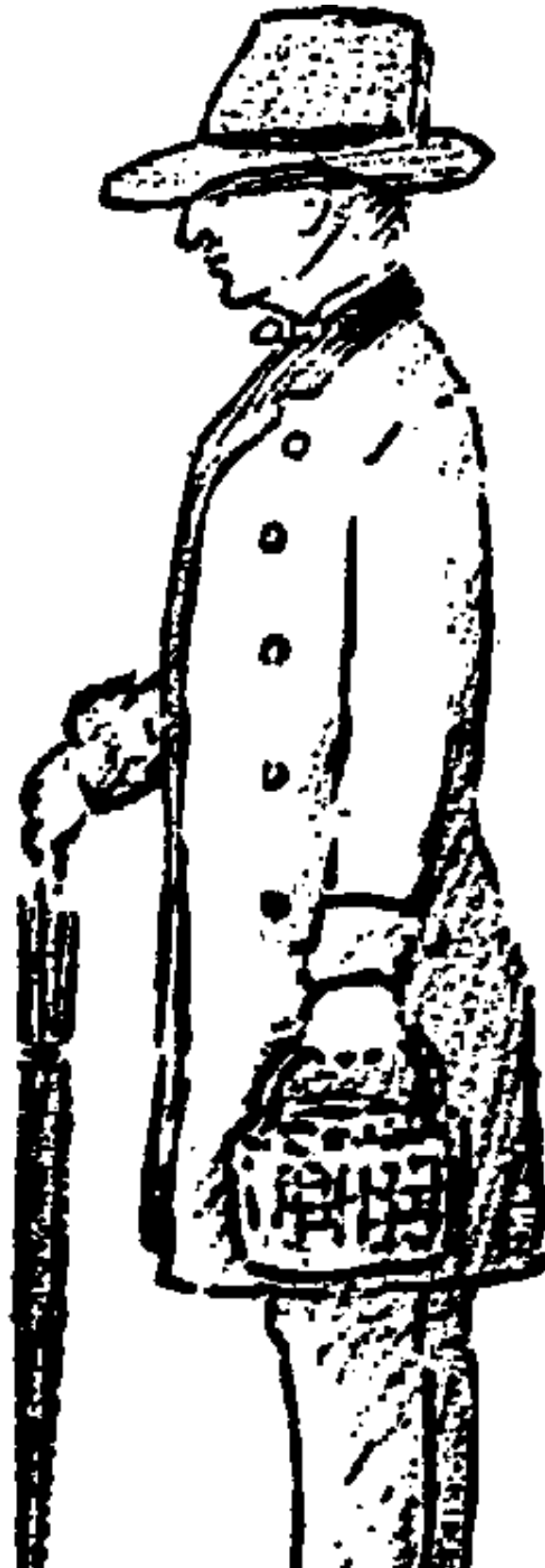
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DANIEL RICKETSON

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Bedford Railroad. In most places it looked as if there was not room for a man to pass between the young trees. That part of the country is remarkably level and wooded. The evergreen prinus very commonly in the low ground. At New Bedford saw the casks of oil covered with seaweed to prevent fire; the weed holds moisture. Town not lively. Whalers abroad at this season.

Ricketson has "Bewick's British Birds," two vols.; "Æsop's Fables," one vol.; "Select Fables," one vol. (partly the same); "Quadrupeds," one vol.

Has taken pains to obtain them. The tail-pieces were the attraction to him. He suggested to Howitt to write his Abodes of the Poets.⁵

5. Howitt's HOMES AND HAUNTS OF THE BRITISH POETS (London: Richard Bentley, 1847)

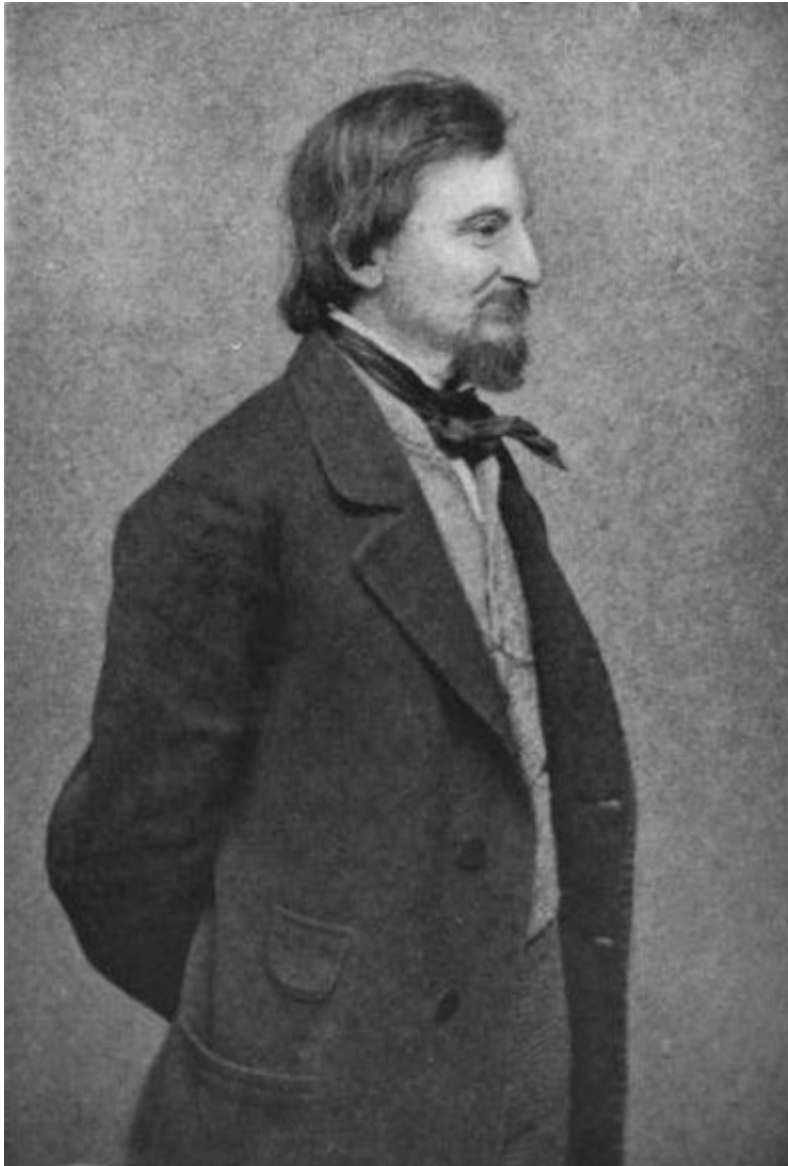


FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

December 26, Tuesday: It was a fine, mild day, and [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) and [Henry Thoreau](#) walked through the



woods to Tarkiln Hill and then through Acushnet to the Friends Meeting House. In the afternoon they rode around White's factory. In the evening Thoreau delivered "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" at the [New Bedford](#) lyceum but [Friend Daniel](#) didn't feel well enough to attend.

THOREAU'S SERMON

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



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

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



A fine mild spring-like day. Walked through the woods to Tarkiln Hill and through Acushnet to Friends' Meeting House with Henry D. Thoreau, author of Walden. Rode this P.M. with H.D.T. round White's factory. Louisa [Mrs. Louisa Sampson Ricketson] and the children, except Walton [son], attended Lyceum this evening. Lecture by Mr. Thoreau. Subject, "Getting a Living." I remained at home, not feeling well enough to attend.



December 26, 1854: At Ricketson's ([New Bedford](#)).

I do not remember to have ever seen such a day as this in Concord. There is no snow here (though there has been excellent sleighing at Concord since the 5th ult.), but it is very muddy, the frost coming out of the ground as in spring with us. I went to walk in the woods with R.; it was wonderfully warm and pleasant, and the cockerels crowed just as in a spring day at home. I felt the winter breaking up in me, and if I had been at home I should have tried to write poetry. They told me that this was not a rare day there. That they had little or no winter such as we have, and it was owing to the influence of the Gulf Stream, which was only sixty miles from Nantucket at the nearest or 120 miles from them. In mid-winter when the wind was S.E. or even S.W. they frequently had days as warm and debilitating as in summer. There is a difference of a degree in latitude, between Concord and New Bedford, but far more in climate. The American holly is quite common there, with its red berries still holding on, and is now their [Christmas](#) evergreen. I heard the lark sing, strong and sweet, and saw robins. R. lives in that part of New Bedford, three miles out of the town, called the Head of the River, i.e. the Acushnet River. There is a [Quaker](#) meeting-house there. Such an ugly shed without a tree or bush about it, which they call their meeting-house (without steeple of course), is altogether repulsive to me, like a powder-house or grave. And even the quietness and perhaps unworldliness of an aged Quaker has something ghostly and saddening about it — as it were a mere preparation for the grave.

R. said that pheasants from England (where they are not indigenous) had been imported to [Naushon](#), and were killed there.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



December 26, 1854: "Read not the Times. Read the Eternities." (REFORM PAPERS, 173)

THE TIMES

GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

Viking Penguin

17

Read not the Times. Read the Eternities.
"Life Without Principle"

The battle was joined. The news was out.
DEVELOPER EYES

Penguin Books USA Inc.

ISBN 0-670-84260-5 — PS3562.A515G58

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



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

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





FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

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

heard several sensible people speak well of your lecture

but would conclude that the lecture

was not generally understood.

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



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



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1855

January 4, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) made the following entry in his INDIAN NOTEBOOK by mistake, rather than in his Journal: “Being in Worcester today Jan 4th ‘55 Mr Haven at the Antiquarian Library showed me a passage in Brereton? [illegible to Thoreau; the [Reverend John Brereton](#) was the author of THE DISCOVERY OF VIRGINIA] of [Gosnold](#)’s voyage in which the copper belt of tribes — the bracelets &c are described as in Lescarbot’s — He spoke of an inscription found over 900 miles west of Montreal & mentioned by Kalm in some arctic language. Did I extract it? Of an English inscription on mica found in the breast of an Indian’s remains (I think at grave yards) dated about the time of the early Virginia settlements. Also prob[ably] an Alabama hoax an individual Lat[in] inscription on stone dates 1200 something.”

PETER KALM

HOAXES



[Thoreau](#) delivered “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” at the Worcester Lyceum. After the lecture Stephen C. Earle, sixteen years old, wrote in his journal

Went in the evening to a lyceum lecture by Thorough [sic] of Concord. It was a strange sort of a lecture. The subject was “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul.” His lecture did not seem to have much to do with his subject. I slept part of the evening.¹

1. THE JOURNALS OF STEPHEN C. EARLE, 1853-1858, ed. Albert B. Southwick, Worcester MA: Worcester Bicentennial Commission, 1976, page 30. (Joel Myerson found this piece of information.)

No doubt at least one other member of the audience — Thoreau’s friend H.G.O. Blake — was stimulated by what he heard. Blake, who had been corresponding with Thoreau for seven years, could hardly have overlooked that many of the ideas and images in the letters he had received from Thoreau were in “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”.

THOREAU’S SERMON

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

- “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” on December 6, 1854 at Railroad Hall in [Providence](#)
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FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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- “LIFE MISSPENT” on Sunday morning, October 9, 1859 to the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)’s 28th Congregational Society in Boston Music Hall
- “LIFE MISSPENT” on Sunday, September 9, 1860 at Welles Hall in Lowell.]

[Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

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

CHINESE CIVIL WAR

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

*Concord Mass Jan 6th
1855*

Mr Ricketson,

I am pleased to hear from the shanty whose inside and occupant I have seen. I had a very pleasant time at Brooklawn, as you know,—and thereafter at Nantucket. I was obliged to pay the usual tribute to the sea, but it was more than made up to me by the hospitality of the Nantucketers. Tell Arthur that I can now compare notes with him, for though I went neither before nor behind the mast, since we had n’t any—I went with my head hanging over the side all the way.

In spite of all my experience I persisted in reading to the Nantucket people the lecture which I read at New Bedford, and I found them to be the very audience for me. I got home Friday night after being lost in the fog off Hyannis.

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

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

Last night I returned from lecturing in Worcester—

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

Come directly to our house.

Please remember me to Mrs Ricketson, & also to the

{One-half page missing}

young folks

Yrs

Henry D Thoreau



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

[Giacomo Costantino Beltrami](#) died at the age of 76, presumably in the small “Franciscan” cell he had constructed for himself in his large palazzo on his Azienda estate in Filottrano, Ancona, [Italy](#).

The knick-nacks he had brought back from his travels in [Minnesota](#) and [Mexico](#) are now on display in the glass cases of the Beltrami Museum in Filottrano, for what that is worth. A bronze bust has been sculpted by Vittorio Morelli:





FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

January 9, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was musing in his journal on literary style: “What a strong and healthy, but reckless, hit-or-miss style had some of those early writers of New England, like Josselyn and William Wood and others elsewhere in those days; as if they spoke with a relish, smacking their lips like a coach-whip, caring more to speak heartily than scientifically true. they are not to be caught napping by the wonders of nature in a new country....” He was concluding that “certainly Josselyn’s generation stood nearer to Nature, nearer to the facts, than this, and hence their books have more life in them.” Writers like [John Josselyn](#) “use a strange, coarse, homely speech which cannot always be found in the dictionary, nor sometimes be heard in polite society, but which brings you very near to the thing itself described.”

[Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

*Shanty, Brooklawn
9 Jan '55—*

*Dear Walden,
I have just received
your very welcome reply. I am also
happy to learn of your safe arrival
home, and was much amused
by your account of your voyage
to Nantucket — also that you found
an appreciating audience there.
You address me as Mr Ricketson.
What did I do while you were here to
warrant so much deference —*

Page 2
*I pass for a rather aristocratic
man among big folk, but did'nt
suppose you knew it. You should
have addressed “Dear Brooklawn”
Johnson in his Tour to the Hebrides
says they have a custom in those
isles of giving their names to their
chieftains or owners — As, Col
Rasay, Much, etc of which
they are the Lairds. You are the
true & only Laird of Walden
& as such I address you. You
certainly can show a better title to
Walden Manor than any other. It
is just as we lawyers say, you
hold the fee.*

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DANIEL RICKETSON

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*You did'nt think of find such knowing
folks this way altho' you had travelled
a good deal in Concord.
By the way I have heard several
sensible people speak well of your lecture
before the N.B. Lyceum; but conclude
it was not generally understood.
Arthur My son & I have begun a series of
^ pilgrimages to old farm houses —
we dont notice any short of a hundred
years old.
I am much obliged to you and your
mother for your kind invitation. My
intention is to attend the Anti-Slavery
meetings in Boston Wednesday & Thursday
24 & 25 this month & and shall*

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*endeavor to get up to Concord
for part of a day.
I wish you would come to Boston at
that time. You will find me at
the Tremont House, where I shall
glad be to see you.
^ Mrs. Ricketson and the "young folks"
wish to be kindly remembered to you.
I have had a present of a jackknife
found upon a stick of timber in an
old house, built in — and supposed
to have been left there by the carpenters.
The house is over one hundred years
old & the knife is very curious.
So I conclude this rambling epistle
Yours exceedingly
"Mr Ricketson"
Present my compliments to Mr Channing*

January 26, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford, Massachusetts](#).



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

BROOKLAWN, N. BEDFORD,
26 Jan., 1855.

DEAR SIR,— I fully intended to have gone to Boston yesterday; but not being very well, deferred it until to-day, and now we are visited by a severe snowstorm, so that I fear the railway track may be obstructed. I shall not, therefore, be able to reach Concord this time. My only fear is that you may have gone to Boston in expectation of meeting me there; but as I have not heard from you to this effect I have no very strong reason to think so, and hope that you have not.

I should like very much to see Concord and its environs with the Laird of Walden, and hope at no very distant time to do so, should it meet his pleasure. I hope also to see your lordship again here, and to visit with you some of our rural retreats.

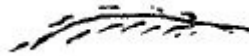
Yours,
D. RICKETSON.
H.D. Thoreau, Esq.,
Concord, Mass.



January 26. A fine snow falling, spoiling all prospect of skating on this broad ice. Is not good skating the surest sign of snow or foul weather?

To continue the 26th: —
P. M. — To Walden.

A thick, driving snow, something like, but less than, that of the 19th. There is a strong easterly wind and the snow is very damp. In the deepest hollows on the Brister Hill path it has already lodged handsomely. Suppose you descend into the deepest circular one, far beneath the sweep of the blustering wind, where the flakes at last drop gently to their resting-places, There is a level, white circular floor, indicating ice beneath, and, all around, the white pines, under an accumulating snowy burthen, are hung with drooping; white wreaths or fans of snow. The snow on pitch pines takes the forms of large balls, on white pines often of great rolling-pins. Already the trees are bending in all directions into the paths and hollows as here.



The birches here are bowed inward to the open circle of the pond-hole, their tops apparently buried in the old snow. Nothing can be prettier than the snow on the leafless shrub oaks, the twigs are so small and numerous, little snowy arms crossing each other at every imaginable angle, like a whirligig. It is surprising what a burden of snow already rests on little bare twigs hardly bigger than a knitting-needle, both as they stand perpendicularly and horizontally. The great damp flakes come and soon bridge across the interval, even two inches over, between the forks of such twigs where they are horizontal, one sticking to another. It rests on such horizontal twigs commonly in the form of a prism resting on one corner



(vertical section where no wind). And in many places, where the wind is felt, the little walls of snow are built out at an angle with the perpendicular, in the direction whence the snow comes:



(a vertical section or end). Damp as it is, it [is], it is like swan's-down, as if it lay as light as well as thick. As it is with these shrub oaks, so with the largest trees in the stiller parts of the woods, and even the lowest (lead limbs of the white pines are not prevented by the upper from bearing their part of the burden.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

I am afraid I have not described vividly enough the aspect of that lodging Snow of the 19th and to-day partly. Imagine the innumerable twigs and boughs of the forest (as you stand in its still midst), crossing each other at every conceivable angle on (very sick from the ground to thirty feet in height, with cash its zigzag wall of snow four or five inches high, so innumerable at different distances one behind another that they completely close up the view like a loose-woven downy screen, into which, however, stooping and winding, you ceaselessly advance. The wintriest scene, -which perhaps can only be seen in perfection while the snow is yet falling, before wind and thaw begin. Else you miss, you lose, the delicate touch of the master. A coarse woof and warp of snowy batting, leaving no space for a bird to perch.

I see where a partridge **[Ruffed Grouse]** **Bonasa umbellus (Partridge)** has waddled through the snow still falling, making a continuous track. I look in the direction to which it points, and see the bird just skimming over the bushes fifteen rods off.

The plumes of pitch pines are first filled up solid, then they begin to make great snowy *casse-têtes*, or pestles. In the fields the air is thick with driving snow. You can only see a dozen rods into its woof and warp. It fills either this ear or that and your eyes with hard, cutting, blinding scales if you face it. It is forming shelly drifts behind the walls, and stretches in folds across the roads; but in deep, withdrawn hollows in the woods the flakes at last come gently and deviously down, lodging on every twig and leaf, and forming deep and downy and level beds between and on the ice of the pools. The lowermost twigs support not less snow but more.

In many places where you knew there was a thrifty young wood, there appears to be none, for all is bent down and almost completely buried in the snow, and you are stepping over them. The pitch pines are most round-headed, and the young white oaks are most leaved at top, and hence suffer most.

What changes in the aspect of the earth! one day russet hills, and muddy ice, and yellow and greenish pools in the fields; the next all painted white, the fields and woods and roofs laid on thick. The great sloshy pools in the fields, freezing as they dried away, look like bread that has spewed in the baking, the fungi of a night, an acre in extent; but trust not your feet on it, for the under side is not done; there the principle of water still prevails.

Methinks that after any great storm in winter, whether of snow or rain, the equilibrium of the air is again disturbed and there comes a high wind shaking down the snow and drying up the water.



February 1, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) took another day-long [skating](#) trip.

He wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

Concord Feb 1st '55

Dear Sir,

I supposed, as I

did not see you on the

24th or 25th, that some track

or other was obstructed; but

the solid earth still holds

together between New Bedford

and Concord, and I trust

that as [t]his time you staid

away, you may live to come

another day. I did not go

to Boston, for with regard

to that place, I sympathize with

one of my neighbors, an old man,

who has not been there since

the last war, when he

was compelled to go— No, I



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*have a real genius for staying
at home.
I have been looking
of late at Bewick's tail-pieces in the "Birds" — all they
have of him at Harvard. Why*

BEWICK

Page 2
*will he be a little vulgar at
times? Yesterday I made an ex-
cursion up our river — skated
some thirty miles in a few
hours, if you will believe
it— So with reading &
writing & skating, the night
comes round again.
Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau.*

Page 3
*Postage: pd
{upside down: PAID 3}
Postmark: CONCORD
FEB
I
MASS.
Address: Daniel Ricketson Esq
New Bedford
Mass*

[Thoreau](#) wrote to Ann E. Brown in Brattleboro.

*Concord Feb 1st '55
Dear Madam,
I have not
contemplated visiting Brattle-
boro next summer, as you
have heard; but it is pleasant
to entertain, if only for a mo-
ment the idea of such an
excursion. I should like very
much to walk in your woods,
which are more primitive than*

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**DANIEL RICKETSON****FRIEND RICKETSON****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

*ours, and especially in com-
pany with Mr[]Frost, of
whom I have heard through
Mr[]Russell & Miss Ann Whiting.
Be assured that whenever
I may come to Brattleboro, and
I feel many attractions drawing
me that way, I shall remem-
ber the spirit of your very kind
and hospitable invitation.
Yrs respectfully
Henry D. Thoreau[.]*



February 1. As usual these broad fields of ice could not be left uncovered over the third day. It began to spit a little snow at noon, just enough to show on the ice, the thickness of a blanket, though not on the ground,— I dissipated there both by the warmth and irregularity
At 4 P. M., I find that the river rose last evening to within eight and a half inches of the rise of April 23d, 1852, and then began to fall. It has now fallen about four inches. Accordingly, the river falling all day, no water has burst out through the ice next the shore, and it is now one uninterrupted level white blanket of snow quite to the shore on every side. This, then, is established, — that, the river falling four inches during the day, though it has been as warm as yesterday, there has been no overflow along the shore. Apparently the thin recent ice of the night, which connects the main body with the shore, bends and breaks with the rising of the mass, especially in the morning, under the influence of the sun and wind, and the water establishes itself at a new level
As I skated up the river so swiftly yesterday, now here now there, past the old kingdoms of my fancy, I was reminded of [Landor's](#) "Richard the First." "I sailed along the realms of my family; on the right was England, on the left was France [on the right was Sudbury, on the left was Wayland;]
[The brackets in this paragraph are Thoreau's.]

LANDOR'S "RICHARD THE FIRST"

little else could I discover than sterile eminences and extensive shoals. They fled behind me; so pass away generations; so shift, and sink, and die away affections." "I debark in Sicily." That was Tall's Island. "I sail again, and within a day or two [an hour or two?] I behold, as the sun is setting, the solitary majesty of Crete, mother of a religion, it is said, that lived 2000 years. [That was Nobscot surely.] Onward, and many specks bubble up along the blue Ægean [these must have been the muskrat-houses in the meadows], every one [I have no doubt] the monument of a greater man [being?] than I am."
The swelling river was belching on a high key, from ten to eleven. Quite a musical cracking, running like chain lightning of sound athwart my course, as if the river, squeezed, thus gave its morning's milk with music. A certain congealed milkiness in the sound, like the soft action of piano keys, — a little like the cry of a pigeon woodpecker, — a-week a-week, etc. A congealed gurgling, frog-like. As I passed, the ice forced up by the water on one side suddenly settled on another with a crash, and quite a lake was formed above the ice behind me, and my successor two hours after, to his wonder and alarm, saw my tracks disappear in one side of it and come out on the other. My seat from time to time is the springy horizontal bough of some fallen tree which is frozen into the ice, some old maple that had blown over and retained some life for a year after in the water, covered with the great shaggy perforate parmelia. Lying flat, I quench my thirst where it is melted about it, blowing aside the snow-fleas. The great arundo in the Sudbury meadows was all level with the ice. There was a great bay of ice stretching up the Pantry and up Larned Brook. I looked up a broad, glaring bay of ice at the last place, which seemed to reach to the base of Nobscot and almost to the horizon. Some dead maple or oak saplings, laid side by side, made my bridges by which I got on to the ice along the watery shore. It was a problem to get off, and another to get on, dryshod. You are commonly repaid for a longer excursion than usual, and being outdoors all day, by seeing some rarer bird for the season, as yesterday a great hawk.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

August 10, Friday: Calvin Wheeler Philleo's novel TWICE MARRIED: A STORY OF CONNECTICUT LIFE (New York: Dix & Edwards, 10 Park Place; London: Sampson Low & Son) was reprinted from Putnam's Monthly.

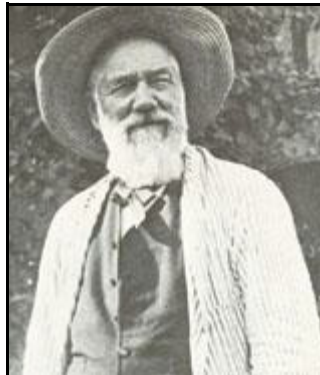
TWICE MARRIED, A NOVEL

According to the Massachusetts census of 1855 the Thoreau household consisted of "[John Thoreau](#), 69, M[ale]; [Cynthia](#), 69, F[emale]; [Henry D.](#), 38, M[ale]; [Sophia E.](#), 34, F[emale]; [Sophia Dunbar](#), 74, F[emale]; [Louisa Dunbar](#), 69, F[emale]." [Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau](#) and [Louisa Dunbar](#) were listed as born in New Hampshire, all others in Massachusetts. The father was listed as "Manufacturer," [Henry Thoreau](#) as "Gentleman," and (of course) no occupations were listed for homemakers.⁶ (The census taker for [Concord](#) was

**DUNBAR
FAMILY**

SOPHIA E. THOREAU

Sheriff Sam Staples.)



Aug. 10. P.M. — To Nagog. Middle of huckleberrying. — (then no more entries until August 19th)

6. Volume 21 in the Massachusetts State Archives in Boston. The historian [Lemuel Shattuck](#), the lawyer Moses Prichard, and the manufacturer William Monroe were also listed by census taker Sam Staples as gentlemen. [Waldo Emerson](#) was listed almost appropriately as "Writer of Books" and [Ellery Channing](#) almost appropriately as "Do Nothing" (see [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) drawing made in 1856).



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

September: “Gentleman” [Henry Thoreau](#) (so listed on the federal census) visited his friend [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#), explored [Middleborough](#) and Fairhaven, and returned by train from Plymouth. If the locomotive used on this train was a new one, it may have looked like this, for this was “A good Standard Type” built by Danforth Cooke & Company in 1855:



FRIEND RICKETSON

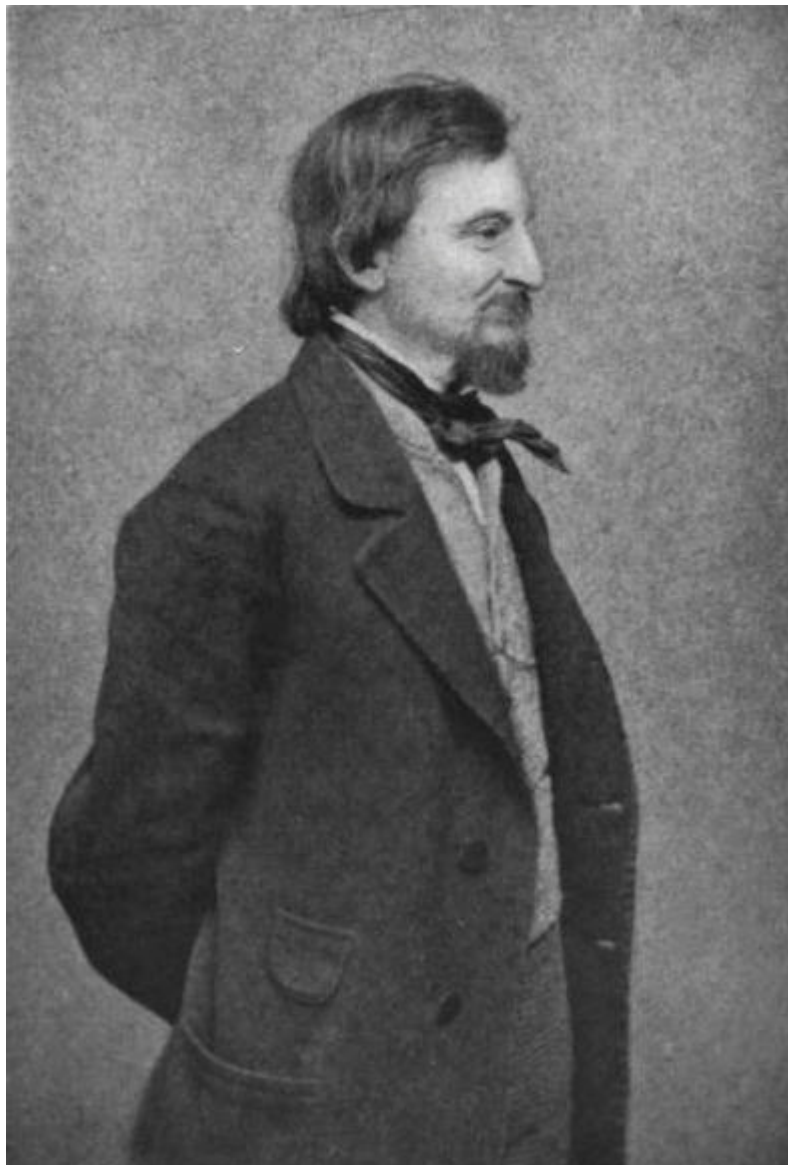
DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

September 23, Sunday: From [New Bedford](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) (pictured below in profile because of his problem with one eye) wrote to [Henry Thoreau](#), mentioning his use of the [pipe](#) and adding that the [tobacco](#) involved had (allegedly) not been grown by [slaves](#):

*How charmingly your Channing, & I dove-tailed together— Few men
such smoke pipes as we did —the real Calumet— the tobacco that we
smoked was free labour produce.*

ELLERY CHANNING



*Brooklawn, Sunday p.m
Sept 23d 1855.
Dear Thoreau,
Here am I at home*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

again seated in my shanty. My mind is constantly reverting to the pleasant little visit I made you & so I thought I would sit down and write you. I regret exceedingly that I was so interrupted in my enjoyment while at Concord by my "aches & pains." My head troubled me until I had got within about 20 mi. of home, when the pain passed off & my spirits began to revive. I hope that your walks etc with me will not harm

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you and that you will soon regain your usual health & strength, which I trust the cooler weather will favour. I could advise you not to doctor, but just use your own good sense. I should have insisted more on your coming on with me had I not felt so ill & in such actual pain the day I left — but I want you to come before the weather gets uncomfortably cool. I feel much your debtor, for through you & your Walden I have found my hopes & strength in these matters which I had before found none to sympathize with., ~~that~~ You have more than any other to me discovered the true secret of living comfortably in this world & I hope more & more to be able to put it into practice, in the mean time you will

Page 3

be able to extend your pity and charity. You are the only 'millionaire' among my acquaintance. I have heard of people being independently rich, but you are the only one I have ever had the honour of knowing — How charmingly your Channing, & I dove-tailed together — Few men such smoke pipes as we did — the real



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*^ Calumet — the tobacco that we
smoked was free labour produce.
I have 'nt lost sight of of Solon Hos-
mer, the wisest looking man in Concord,
and a real 'feelosopher'! I want you to
see him & tell him not to take down
the old house, where the feelosofers met.
I think I should like to have the large
chamber for an occasional sojourn
to Concord. It might be easily
tinkered up so as to be a comfortable
roost for a feelosopher — a few old*

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*chairs, a table, bed etc would
be all sufficient, then you and
I could come over in your punt
and rusticate. What think of it. In the
mean time come down to Brooklawn, and
look about with me. As you are a little
under the weather, we will make our
peregrinations with horse & waggen
(or I am so much your debter in the
real & having but little of the same
currency to offer in exchange, I have taken
[from home] bits of paper I have a scrap
which will have a marvelous effect
upon the owner of the Iron Horse whose
back I want you to straddle & gallop
down to Tarkiln Hill.)
With much regard to Channing this [Damsel]
for her [tay] & my kind remembrances to your
parents & sister I remain
Yours very truly
Dnl Ricketson
P. S.
I should like to have Channing to come with you
Please invite him from me. You can wear your
old clothes here.*

*(Horizontal along left margin of page 4)
Please come by Sat. next as the weather is getting cool.*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

September 26, Wednesday: State Whigs and Republicans convened in Syracuse and formed a coalition under Thurlow Weed. An anti-slavery stand was stressed, rather than alcoholic prohibition. The Free Democratic and Liberty parties nominated Stephen A. Douglas for secretary of state and anti-slavery orator Lewis Tappan for comptroller.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to H.G.O. Blake.

*Concord Sep 26th 55
Mr Blake,
The other day I thought that
my health must be better,—that
I gave at last a sign of vitality,—
—because I experienced a slight cha-
grin. But I do not see how
strength is to be got into my legs
again. These months of feeble-
ness have yielded few if any
thoughts, though they have
not passed without serenity, such
as our sluggish Musketaquid
suggests. I hope that the harvest
is to come. I trust that you
have at least warped up
the stream a little daily, holding
fast by your anchors at
night, since I saw you—
and have kept my place
for me while I have been
absent.*

*Mr Ricketson
of New Bedford has just
made me a visit of a
day and a half, and I
have had a quite good
time with him. He and*

FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON

Page 2

*Channing have got on par-
ticularly well together. He is a
man of very simple tastes, not-
withstanding his wealth, a lover
of nature, but, above all, sin-
gularly frank and plain-spoken.*

ELLERY CHANNING

FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

[GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM](#)

I think that you might enjoy meeting him. Sincerity is a great but rare virtue, and we pardon to it much complaining, and the betrayal of many weaknesses[.] R. says of himself that he sometimes thinks that he has all the infirmities of genius, without a hair-pillow, &c[]expresses a great and awful uncertainty with regard to "God", "Death," his "immortality", says, "If I only knew"—&c. He loves Cowper's Task better than any thing else,—& thereafter perhaps Thompson, Gray, & even Howitt. He has evidently suffered for want of sympathising companions. He says, that he sympathises with much in my books, but much in them is nought to him— "namby-pamby",— "stuff",—

Page 3

"mystical". Why will not I having common sense, write in plain English always,—teach men in detail how to live a simpler life, &c.,—not go off into—? But I say, that I have no scheme about it,—no designs on men at all; and, if I had, my mode would be to tempt them with the fruit, and not with the manure. To what end do I lead a simple life at all, pray? That I may teach others to simplify their lives?—and so all our lives be simplified merely, like an [a]lgebraic formula?— Or not, rather, that I may make use of the ground I have



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*cleared—to live more worthily
and profitably? I would fain
lay the most stress forever
on that which is the most
important,—imports the most
to me,—though it were only (what
it is likely to be) a vibration
in the air. As a preacher, I
should be prompted to tell men
not so much how to get their*

Page 4

*wheat bread cheaper,—as of
[the] bread of life compared
with which that is bran. Let
a man only taste these loaves,
and he becomes a skilful econ-
omist at once. He'll not
waste much time in earning
those. Dont spend your time
in drilling soldiers who may turn
out hirelings after all, but
give to undrilled peasantry a
country to fight for. The schools
begin with what they call the
elements, and where do they
end?
I was glad to hear the other
day that Higginson and Brown
were gone to Ktadn; it must
be so much better to go to than *or Abolition*
a [W]oman's [R]ight's Convention;— [better still], ^ to the delecta-
ble primitive mounts within you, which you have
dreamed of from your youth
up,—& seen perhaps in the
horizon,—but never climbed.
But how do you do?
Is the air sweet to you?*

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*Do you find anythin[g] at
which you can work[] accomplish-
ing something solid from day to*



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*day? Have you put sloth
& doubt behind considerably?
—had one redeeming dream
this summer? —I dreamed
last night that I could vault
over any height it pleased me.
That was something, and I
contemplated myself with a
slight satisfaction in the morn-
ing for it.
Methinks I will write to
you, methinks you will be
ready to hear[—] We will stand
on solid foundations to one
another—I a column planted
on this shore, you on that.
We meet the same sun
in his rising. We are built
slowly, and have come to our
bearing; we will not mutually
fall over that we may
meet, but will grandly
and eternally guard the
straights. Methinks I see an
inscription on you, which the
architect made, the stucco*

Page 6
*being worn off to it— The name
of that ambitious worldly king
is crumbling away— I see it toward
sunset in favorable lights. Each
must read for the other as
might a sailer by. Be sure
you are star-y-pointing still.
How is it on your side?
I will not require an answer
until you think I have paid
my debts to you.
I have just got a letter from
Ricketson urging me to come
to New Bedford,—which possibly I
may do. He says, I can wear my*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*old clothes there.
Let me be remembered in
your quiet house.
Henry D. Thoreau.*

WILLIAM HOWITT



"To what end do I lead a simple life at all, pray?
That I may teach others to simplify their lives?
—and so all our lives be simplified merely, like an
algebraic formula?— Or not, rather, that I may make
use of the ground I have cleared — to live more
worthily and profitably?"

— Henry Thoreau, September 26, 1855





FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

A WEEK: We have heard much about the poetry of mathematics, but very little of it has yet been sung. The ancients had a juster notion of their poetic value than we. The most distinct and beautiful statement of any truth must take at last the mathematical form. We might so simplify the rules of moral philosophy, as well as of arithmetic, that one formula would express them both. All the moral laws are readily translated into natural philosophy, for often we have only to restore the primitive meaning of the words by which they are expressed, or to attend to their literal instead of their metaphorical sense. They are already **supernatural** philosophy. The whole body of what is now called moral or ethical truth existed in the golden age as abstract science. Or, if we prefer, we may say that the laws of Nature are the purest morality. The Tree of Knowledge is a Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. He is not a true man of science who does not bring some sympathy to his studies, and expect to learn something by behavior as well as by application. It is childish to rest in the discovery of mere coincidences, or of partial and extraneous laws. The study of geometry is a petty and idle exercise of the mind, if it is applied to no larger system than the starry one. Mathematics should be mixed not only with physics but with ethics, **that** is **mixed** mathematics. The fact which interests us most is the life of the naturalist. The purest science is still biographical. Nothing will dignify and elevate science while it is sundered so wholly from the moral life of its devotee, and he professes another religion than it teaches, and worships at a foreign shrine. Anciently the faith of a philosopher was identical with his system, or, in other words, his view of the universe.



Sept. 26. Went up Assabet for fuel. One old piece of oak timber looks as if it had been a brace in a



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

bridge. I get up oak rails here and there, almost as heavy as lead, and leave them to dry somewhat on the bank. Stumps, partially buried, which were brought by the freshet from some newly cleared field last spring; bleached oak trees which were once lopped for a fence; alders and birches which the river ice bent and broke by its weight last spring. It is pretty hard and dirty work. It grieves me to see how rapidly some great trees which have fallen or been felled waste away when left on the ground. There was the large oak by the Assabet, which I remember to have been struck by lightning, and afterward blown over, being dead. It used to lie with its top down-hill and partly in the water and its butt far up. Now there is no trace of its limbs, and the very core of its trunk is the only solid part, concealed within a spongy covering. Soon only a richer mould will mark the spot.



September 27, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

Concord Sep 27th '55

Friend Ricketson,

I am sorry that you were obliged to leave Concord without seeing more of it—its river and woods, and various pleasant walks, and its worthies. I assure you that I am none the worse for my walk with you, but on all accounts the better. Methinks I am regaining my health, but I would like to know first what it was that ailed me. I have not yet conveyed your message to Hosmer, but will not fail to do so. That idea of occupying the old house is a good one—quite feasible,—and you could bring your hair-pillow with you. It is an inn in



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Concord which I had not thought of—a philosophers inn. That large chamber might make a man's ideas expand proportionably. It would be well to have an interest in some ol d chamber in a derserted house in every part of the country which attracted us. There would be no such place to receive one's guests

as that. If old furniture is fashionable, why not go the whole-house at once? I shall endeavor to make Hosmer believe that the old house is the chief attraction of his farm, & that it is his duty to preserve it by all honest appliances. You might take a lease of it in perpetuo, and done with it.

I am so wedded to my way of spending a day—require such broad margins of leisure, and such a complete ward+robe of old clothes, t hat I am ill fitted for going abroad. Pleasant is it sometimes to sit, at home, on a single egg all day, in your own nest, though it may prove at last to be an egg of chalk. The old coat that I wear is Concord—it is my morning robe & study gown, my working dres s and suit of ceremony, and my night-gown after all. Cleave to the simplest ever—Home—home—home. Cars sound lik e cares to me.

I am accustomed to think very long of going anywhere,—am slow to move. I hope to hear a response of the oracle first.

However I think that I will try the effect of your talisman on the iron horse next Saturday, and dismount at Tarkiln Hill. Perhaps y our sea air will be good for me.

I conveyed your invitation to Channing but he apparently will not come.

Excuse my not writing earlier—but I had not decided.

Yrs

Henry D. Thoreau.



Sept.27. Collecting fuel again this afternoon, up the Assabet.

Yesterday I traced the note of what I have falsely thought the *Rana palustris*, or cricket frog, to its true source. As usual it sounded loud and incessant above all ordinary crickets and led me at once to a bare and soft sandy shore. After long looking and listening, with my head directly over the spot from which the sound still came at intervals (as I had often done before), I concluded, as no creature was visible, that it must issue from the mud, or rather slimy sand. I noticed that the shore near the water was upheaved and cracked as by a small mole-track and, laying it open with my hand, I found a mole cricket (*Gryllotalpa brevipennis*). Harris says that their burrows “usually terminate beneath a stone or clod of turf.” They live on the roots of grass and other vegetables, and in Europe the cor- responding species does a great deal of harm. They “avoid the light of day, and are active chiefly during the night.” Have their burrows “in moist and soft ground, particularly about ponds.” “There are no house crickets in America.”

Among crickets “the males only are musical.” The “shrilling” is produced by shuffling their wing-covers together lengthwise. French call crickets cri-cri. Most crickets die on approach of winter, but a few survive under stones.

See furrows made by many clams now moving into deep water.

Some single red maples now fairly make a show along the meadow. I see a blaze of red reflected from the troubled water.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

September 29, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was sent, by [Ticknor & Co.](#) in Boston, a royalty payment for the sale of 344 copies of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) in the amount of \$51.⁶⁰ along with an expression of corporate condolences:

Boston, Sept. 29, 1855

*H. D. Thoreau
In a/c with W.D. Ticknor & Co
Walden—
On hand last settlement 600 Cops.
Sold Since last a/c 344
remaining on hand—256 Cops
Sales 344 Cops @ 15¢ is \$51.60*

*Dear Sir,
We regret, for your sake as well as ours, that a larger
number of Walden has not been sold.
We enclose our check for Fifty One⁶⁰/₁₀₀ Dollars for sales
to date.*

*Ever Respy
W. D. Ticknor & Co.
Henry D. Thoreau Esq
Concord
Mass.*



**Men who regretted for Thoreau's sake as well as their own
that a larger number of Walden has not been sold.**



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

On this day [Thoreau](#) was studying [James Ellsworth De Kay](#)'s MOLLUSCA OF NEW YORK.

MOLLUSCA, VOLUME V



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Soon he would be reading in [George Bancroft](#)'s A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, FROM THE DISCOVERY OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT,



George Bancroft

BANCROFT'S US, I

BANCROFT'S US, II

BANCROFT'S US, III

in [Richard Hildreth](#)'s THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, FROM THE DISCOVERY OF THE CONTINENT TO THE ORGANIZATION OF GOVERNMENT UNDER THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION (New York: Harper



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

& Brothers, Publishers, 82, Cliff Street, 1848-1852),

HILDRETH'S US, I

HILDRETH'S US, II

HILDRETH'S US, III

in the 4th volume of the [Reverend Samuel Purchas](#)'s *HAKLUYTUS POSTHUMUS* OR PURCHAS HIS PILGRIMES, CONTAYNING A HISTORY OF THE WORLD, IN SEA VOYAGES, & LANDE TRAVELS, BY ENGLISHMEN AND OTHERS, or perhaps A RELATION OR IOURNALL OF THE BEGINNING AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE ENGLISH PLANTATION SETTLED AT PLIMOTH, IN NEW-ENGLAND, BY CERTAINE ... (Imprinted at London for Henry Fetherstone at ye Signe of the Rose in Pauls Churchyard, 1625), or perhaps THE PRINCIPAL NAVIGATIONS, VOYAGES, TRAFFIQUES & DISCOVERIES OF THE ENGLISH NATION: MADE BY SEA OR OVERLAND TO THE REMOTE & FARTHEST DISTANT QUARTERS OF THE EARTH AT ANY TIME WITHIN THE COMPASSE OF THESE 1600 YEARS BY [RICHARD HAKLUYT](#) VOLUME FOUR (London: J.M. Dent & Co.; New York: E.P. Dutton & Co.)

PURCHAS'S VOLUME IV

and in the 26th volume of [Sir William Jardine](#)'s edition THE NATURALIST'S LIBRARY, a volume on whales and other mammals that had been authored by [Robert Hamilton, Esq., M.D., F.R.S.E., M.W.S., Etc.](#)⁷ (Edinburgh: W.H. Lizars; London: Henry G. Bohn, 1852 [that edition being electronically unavailable, I am forced to render for you the previous edition, of 1843]).



MAMMALIA. WHALES, ETC.

7. Some of this material on whales would find its way into CAPE COD.

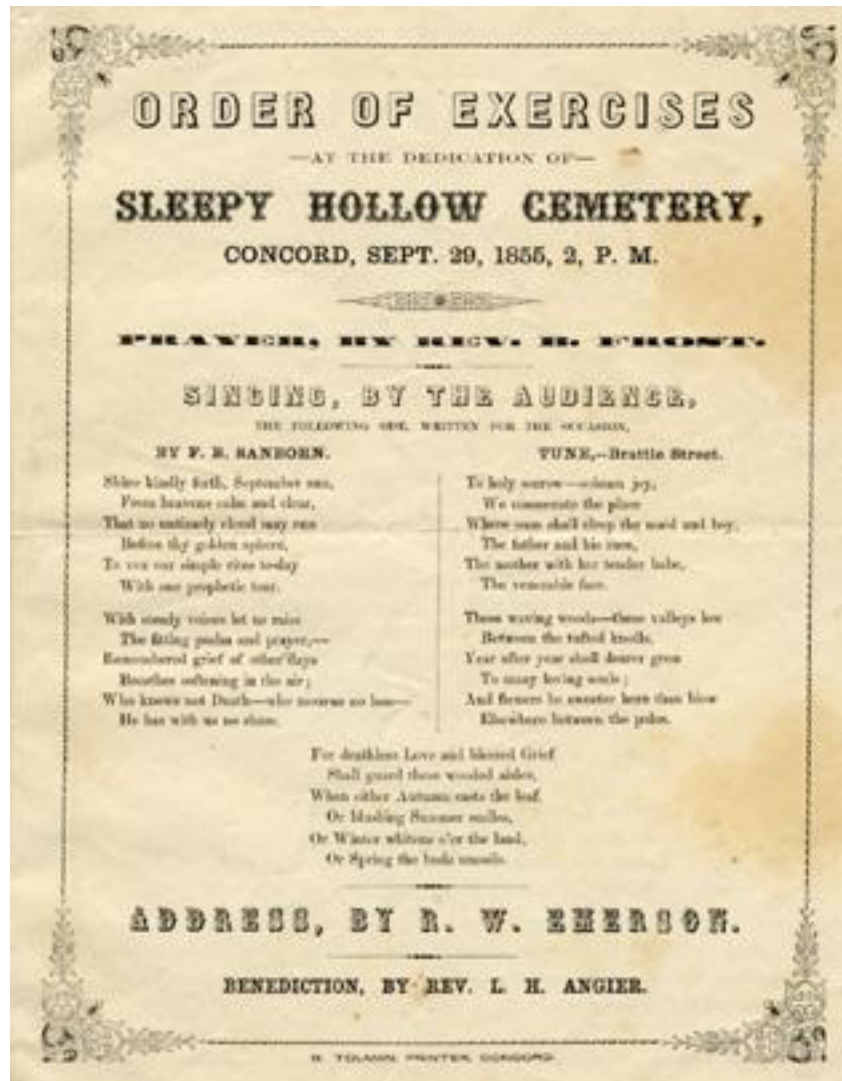


FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Additional cemetery land was consecrated in “Sleepy Hollow” adjoining Concord’s New Burial Ground, the Middlesex County Courthouse, the Concord Townhouse, and the grounds of the Agricultural Society.



[Waldo Emerson](#) dedicated the new garden cemetery as “the palm of Nature’s hand.”

“Address at the Consecration of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery”

... They have thought that the taking possession of this field ought to be marked by a public meeting and religious rites: and they have requested me to say a few words which the serious and tender occasion inspires....

The life of a tree is a hundred and a thousand years; its decays ornamental; its repairs self-made: they grow when we sleep, they grew when we were unborn. Man is a moth among these longevities....



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

... when these acorns, that are falling at our feet, are oaks overshadowing our children in a remote century, this mute green bank will be full of history....

Our use will not displace the old tenants. The well-beloved birds will not sing one song less, the high-holding woodpecker, the meadow-lark, the oriole, the robin, purple finch, bluebird, thrush and red-eyed warbler, the heron, the bittern will find out the hospitality and protection from the gun of this asylum, and will seek the waters of the meadow....

We shall bring hither the body of the dead, but how shall we catch the escaped soul?

[Also (Baker, Charles, EMERSON AMONG THE ECCENTRICS, Penguin Books, New York, 1996, pp. 397-398): "I have heard that when we pronounce the name of man, we pronounce the belief in Immortality."

"The real evidence is too subtle, or is higher than we can write down in propositions... All sound minds rest on a certain preliminary conviction, namely, that if it be best that conscious personal life shall continue, it will continue; if not best, then it will not."

"In this quiet valley, as in the palm of Nature's hand, we shall sleep well when we have finished our day."]

[Thoreau](#) had measured for the new artificial pond in the cemetery, termed "Cat Pond."

[John Shepard Keyes](#) had been active in the creation of this cemetery.

During this summer and fall almost alone and unaided I laid out the cemetery according to Clevelands plan, so far as was feasible, and with my own hands drove the stakes for the lots and saved as many trees as possible from cutting. Made all the arrangements for dedication and had a memorable address from Emerson a poem from Sanborn, an ode by Channing all delivered on a lovely September day in the glen by the lot I afterwards selected. This was followed by a sale of lots the choice for the first bringing \$50. from W^m Monroe and realizing more than I expected some fifty lots sold, and the undertaking successful Thanks to me we have a 'Sleepy Hollow' cemetery I am quite content to take my long sleep in- and for my only epitaph "The Founder of This Cemetery"

J.S. KEYES AUTOBIOGRAPHY



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Friend Daniel Ricketson had been scheduled to visit Concord again and spend time with Henry, but had canceled the visit when he learned that Ellery Channing had moved to Dorchester and would not be available in Concord. So Henry, not standing on dignity, went off to New Bedford:



Clear fine day, growing gradually cooler. Henry D. Thoreau of Concord arrived about 1 1/2 o'clock.



September 29: Go to Daniel Ricketson's, New Bedford.

At Natural History Library saw Dr. Cabot, who says that he has heard either the hermit, or else the olivaceous, thrush sing, — very like a wood thrush, but softer. Is sure that the hermit thrush sometimes breeds hereabouts. De Kay, in the New York Reports, thus describes the blackfish— [The quotation is somewhat abridged.]

"FAMILY DELPHINIDÆ.
Genus *Globicephalus*. Lesson.
The Social Whale.
Globicephalus melas.

Delphinus melas. Trail, Nicholson's Journal.
D. globiceps. Cuvier, Mem. Mus. Vol. 19.
D. deductor. Scoresby, Arct. Regions.
D. intermedius. Harlan.
Phocena globiceps. Sampson, Am. Journal."

"Length 15 to 20 feet;" "shining, bluish black above;" a narrow light-gray stripe beneath; "remarkable for its loud cries when excited."

"Black Whale-fish," "Howling Whale," "Social Whale," and "Bottle-head." Often confounded with the grampus. Not known why they are stranded. In 1822 one hundred stranded in one herd at Wellfleet. First described in a History of Greenland. In the Naturalists' Library, Jardine, I find *Globicephalus deductor* or *melas*, "The Deductor or Ca'ing Whale." First accurately described by Trail in 1809. Sixteen to twenty-four feet long. In 1799 two hundred ran ashore on one of the Shetland Isles. In the winter of 1809-10, one thousand one hundred and ten "approached the shore of Hvalfiord, Iceland, and were captured." In 1812 were used as food by the poor of Bretagne. They visit the neighborhood of Nice in May and June.

Got out at Tarkiln Hill or Head of the River Station, three miles this side of New Bedford. Recognized an old Dutch barn. R.'s sons, Arthur and Walton, were just returning from tautog fishing in Buzzard's Bay, and I tasted one at supper, — singularly curved from snout to tail.⁸

THE SLEEPY HOLLOW CEMETERY — OLD GRAVES

(Franklin Benjamin Sanborn)

My arrival to reside in Concord was at the time when old customs were changing for new ones. The settlement of Waldo Emerson here in 1834, after his return from Europe, and his first acquaintance with Thomas Carlyle, had something to do with these changes, especially after his friends began to gather round him here — the Thoreaus, John and Henry, in 1836; Alcott in 1840; Hawthorne in 1842; Ellery Channing in 1843; Margaret Fuller from

8. [Refer to DANIEL RICKETSON AND HIS FRIENDS, page 337.]

WALTON RICKETSON



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1836 to 1845 (though she never resided but only visited in Concord); and the Ripley family in 1845, inheriting the Old Manse, and receiving there Mrs. Ripley's brother, George Bradford, who had been with Hawthorne at Brook Farm, and at Plymouth with Marston Watson at his garden and nursery of "Hillside," which Thoreau surveyed and mapped for the Watsons in 1854. Mrs. Marston Watson (Mary Russell, a sister of William and Thomas Russell, Boston lawyers) had also lived in the Emerson family before her marriage, and was "The Maiden in the East" to whom Thoreau inscribed an early poem. These friends and among the Concord residents, the Hoar, Whiting and Bartlett families, and Edmund Hosmer, a sturdy farmer, with his daughters and kindred, all made up a circle especially intimate with Emerson, Alcott and Thoreau, though by no means all agreeing with the social, religious and political reformers, to which class belonged Garrison, Phillips, Theodore Parker, the Brook Farm and Fruitlands residents, and many visitors from America and Europe. Among these soon appeared Henry James, Charles Newcomb, the May family, Frederick Douglass, and other fugitive slaves, whom Mrs. Brooks, the Thoreaus, and other anti-slavery households received and cherished – helping them on their way to freedom, when pursued, as they sometimes were. My school grew in numbers during its first term, and much more in its first full year, 1855-56, near the beginning of which, in September, 1855, I was called on to make my first public appearance as a citizen – not as a voter; for I still had a voting residence in New Hampshire, where my brother and I had aided in voting down the pro-slavery Democratic party, whose leader at the time was Hawthorne's college friend, Gen. Pierce, then President of the United States. One evening, early in September, I was sitting in our Channing apartment with my sister, when Mr. Emerson called for an errand surprising to me. The Sleepy Hollow Cemetery had been purchased and was to be dedicated, and Emerson was to give the address. He was also on the Town Committee to arrange for the exercises at the grove, where the prayers, hymns and poems were read and sung; and it was in that capacity he called on me. He said, "I asked Mr. Channing for a poem on this occasion, and he has sent me a good poem, but they tell me it cannot be sung. Now will you not write for us verses that will go to some familiar tune?" He had seen some of my college verses, and others which were made to be sung, and had been sung, and he inferred from that, a capacity to do the same for Concord. I assented, and presently showed him these lines:

Ode.

Shine kindly forth, September sun,
From heavens calm and clear,
That no untimely cloud may run
Before thy golden sphere,
To vex our simple rites today
With one prophetic tear.
With steady voices let us raise



FRIEND RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

The fitting psalm and prayer;—
Remembered grief of other days
Breathes softening in the air:
Who knows not Death — who mourns no loss,—
He has with us no share.
To holy sorrow, solemn joy,
We consecrate the place
Where soon shall sleep the maid and boy,
The father and his race,
The mother with her tender babe,
The venerable face.
These waving woods, these valleys low,
Between the tufted knolls,
Year after year shall dearer grow
To many loving souls;
And flowers be sweeter here than blow
Elsewhere between the poles.
For deathless Love and blessed Grief
Shall guard these wooded aisles,
When either Autumn casts the leaf,
Or blushing Summer smiles,
Or Winter whitens o'er the land,
Or Spring the buds uncoils.

The day proved to be that prayed for; these lines were sweetly sung to the tune of St. Martin's; and in the choir I recognized the voices of some of my new friends. Mr. Emerson liked them, and printed them afterward in his "Parnassus," as he did Channing's poem, which as poetry was much better, and which also appears in "Parnassus," and in the XIth volume of the Centenary edition of Emerson, as here:

**Sleepy Hollow.
(W.E. Channing)**

No abbeys gloom, no dark cathedral stoops,
No winding torches paint the midnight air;
Here the green pine delights, the aspen droops
Along the modest pathways, and those fair
Pale asters of the season spread their plumes
Around this field, fit garden for our tombs.
And thou shalt pause to hear some funeral bell
Slow stealing o'er thy heart in this calm place;
Not with a throb of pain, a feverish knell,
But in its kind and supplicating grace
It says, "Go, Pilgrim, on thy march! be more
Friend to the friendless than thou wast before:"
Learn from the loved one's rest, serenity!
Tomorrow that soft bell for thee shall sound,
And thou repose beneath the whispering tree,
One tribute more to this submissive ground:—
Prison thy soul from malice, bar out pride!
Nor these pale flowers, nor this still field deride.
Rather to those accents of Being turn,
Where a ne'er-setting sun illumines the year
Eternal: and the incessant watch-fires burn
Of unspent holiness and goodness clear,—
Forget man's littleness, — deserve the best,—
God's mercy in thy thought and life confest!

Seldom has a finer poem been read on such an occasion. My own



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

verses were favorably received, and the late Judge Keyes, whose daughter Annie had become one of my pupils, said that I was now a citizen of Concord, and, like some French poet whom he named, as rewarded with a grave at Pere la Chaise, ought to have a burial lot granted me wherever I chose. Long afterward I bought my present lot, in which my poet-son is buried with a slab of marble from Athens above him, inscribed with a Greek line from a Roman tomb in Boetia, of the early Christian period.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

September 30, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) at [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s home in [New Bedford](#):





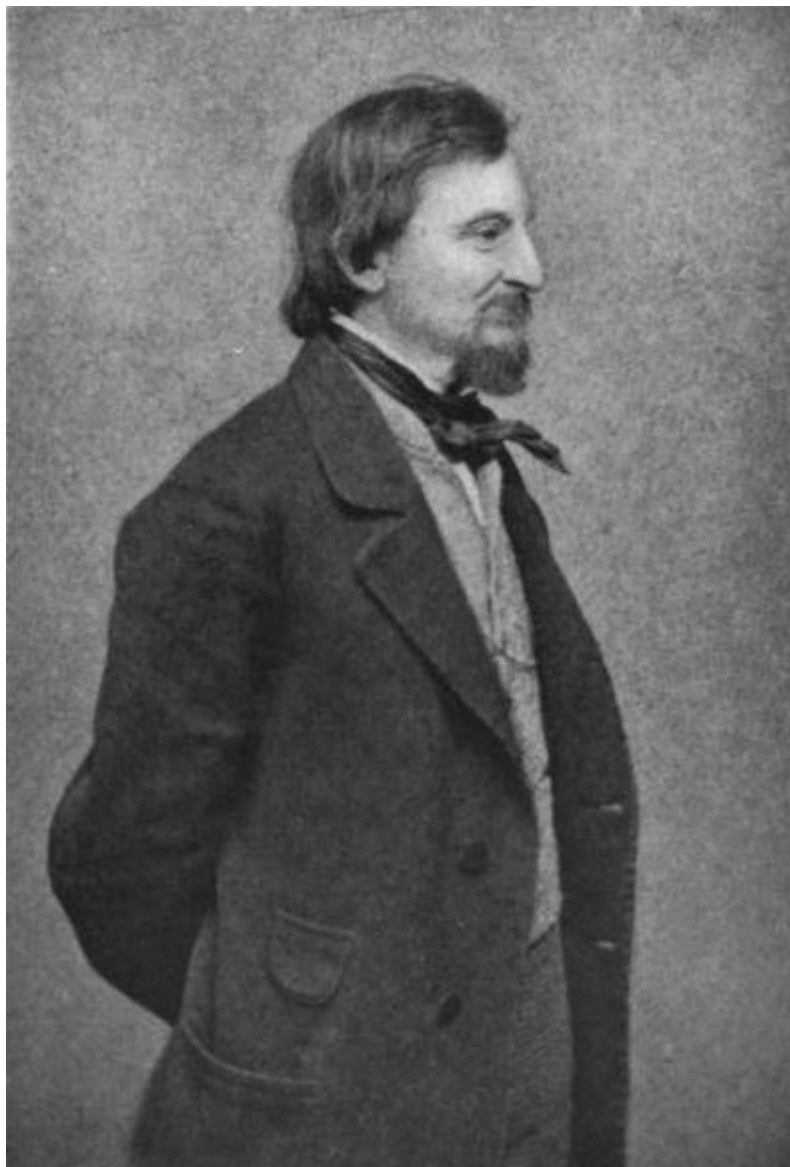
DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



Rather unsettled, but quite a fine day. Visited with Thoreau Sassaquin and Long Ponds, also "Joe's Rocks." Left about ten A.M. and returned at six P.M. in buggy wagon with old Charley, who performed his work with great spirit.



September 30: Sunday. Rode with R. to Sassacowens Pond, in the north part of New Bedford on the



FRIEND RICKETSON

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Taunton road. Called also Tobey's Pond, from Jonathan Tobey, who lives close by, who has a famous lawsuit, all about a road he built to Taunton years ago, which he has not got paid for. In which suit he told us he had spent \$30,000; employed Webster. Tobey said the pond was called from the last of the Indians who lived here 100 or 150 years ago, and that you can still see his cellar-hole, etc., on the west side of the pond. We saw floating in the pond the bottom of an old log canoe, the sides rolled up, and some great bleached trunks of trees washed up. Found two quartz arrow-heads on the neighboring fields. Noticed the Ailanthus or tree of heaven about Tobey's house, giving it a tropical look.

Thence we proceeded to Long Pond, stopping at the S. end, which is in Freetown about 9 miles from R.'s. The main part is in [Middleborough](#). It is about 4 miles long by 7/8 wide, measuring on the maps of Middleborough and of the State (a man said 5 to 15 feet deep or 20 in some places), with at least three islands in it. This and the neighboring ponds were remarkably low. We first came out on to a fine soft white sandy beach 2 rods wide near the S.E. end, and walked westerly; it was very wild, and not a boat to be seen. The sandy bottom in the shallow water from the shore to three or four rods out, or as far as we could see, was thickly furrowed by clams, chiefly the common unio, and a great many were left dead or dying high and dry within a few feet of the water. These furrows, with each its clam at the end, though headed different ways—all ways—described various figures on the bottom, some pretty perfect circles, figure 6's and 3's, whiplashes curling to snap, bow-knots, serpentine lines, and often crossing each other's tracks like the paths of rockets or bombshells. I never saw these forms so numerous. Soon we came to a stony and rocky shore abutting on a meadow fringed with wood, with quite a primitive aspect. With the stones the clams ceased. Saw two places where invisible inhabitants make fires and do their washing on the shore, some barrels or firkins, etc., still left. Some of the rocks at high-water mark were very large and wild, which the water had undermined on the edge of the woods. Here, too, were some great bleached trunks of trees high and dry. Saw a box-tortoise which had been recently killed on the rocky shore. After walking in all about 1/3 or 1/2 a mile, came again to a sandy shore, where the sand-bars lately cast up and saturated with water sank under us. There we saw, washed up dead, a great pickerel 23 inches long (we measured it on a cane), and there was projecting from its mouth the tail of another pickerel. As I wished to ascertain the size of the last, but could not pull it out, for I found it would part first at the tail, it was so firmly fixed, I cut into the larger one (though it was very offensive) and found that the head and much more was digested, and that the smaller fish had been at least fifteen inches long. The big one had evidently been choked by trying to swallow too large a mouthful. Such was the penalty it had paid for its voracity. There were several suckers and some minnows also washed up near by. They get no iron from these ponds now.

Went to a place easterly from the south end of this pond called "Joe's Rocks," just over the Rochester line, where a cousin of Thomas Morton told us that one Joe Ashley secreted himself in the Revolution around the fissures of the rocks, and being supplied with food by his friends, could not be found, though he had enlisted in the army. Returning, we crossed the Acushnet River where it takes its rise, coming out of a swamp. Looked for arrow-heads in a field where were many quahog, oyster, scallop, clam, and winkles (pyrola) shells, probably brought by the whites four or five miles from the salt water. Also saw these in places where Indians had frequented. Went into an old deserted house—the Brady house—where two girls who had lived in the family of R. and his brother had been born and bred. R. said that they were particularly bright girls and lovers of Nature; had read my "Walden;" now kept school, and have still an affection for their old house. We visited the spring they had used, saw the great willow-tree at the corner of the house, in which one of the girls, an infant in the cradle, thought that the wind began, as she looked out of the window and heard the wind sigh through it; saw how the chimney in the garret was eked out with flat stones, bricks being dear.

Arthur Ricketson showed me in his collection what was apparently an Indian mortar, which had come from Sampson's in Middleborough. It was a dark granite-like stone some ten inches long by eight wide and four thick, with a regular round cavity worn in it four inches in diameter and one and one half deep, also a smaller one opposite on the other side. He also showed me the perfect shell of *Emys guttata* with some of the internal bones, which had been found between the plastering and boarding of a meeting-house at the Head of the River (in New Bedford) which was 75 or 80 years old, and was torn down 15 or 20 years ago, supposed to have crawled in when the meeting-house was built, though it was not very near water. It had lost no scales, but was bleached to a dirty white, sprinkled with spots still yellow.

Also on this day, in the [Unitarian](#) church of Washington DC, the Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) preached a memorable sermon.⁹



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

October 1, Monday: [Henry Sabin Chase](#) was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, 1st son of [Augustus Sabin Chase](#) and Martha Starkweather Chase. After graduating from Yale College he would get married on April 4, 1889 with Alice Morton.

In Syracuse NY, the 4th annual “Jerry Celebration” sponsored by the Unitarian congregation of the Reverend Samuel Joseph May, honoring the freeing of Jerry McHenry from the federal marshals who had been seeking to “return” him to his “owner” on October 1, 1851.

Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR, wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#).

On this date’s journal entry [Henry Thoreau](#) blotted his page with an inky thumbprint which we may presume to be his own. We therefore do have a sample of our guy’s print — should any medical or genetic information ever prove through the development of forensic science to be recoverable from such an image.

ÆSOP



Oct. 1. Among R.’s books is Bewick’s “Æsop’s Fables.” On a leaf succeeding the title-page is engraved a facsimile of B.’s handwriting to the following effect:

BEWICK

RICKETSON

“Newcastle, January, 1824.
To Thomas Bewick & Son Dr.
£ s d
To a Demy Copy of Æsop’s Fables “ 18 “
Received the above with thanks
Thomas Bewick Robert Elliot Bewick.”

Then there was some fine red sea-moss adhering to the page just over the view of a distant church and windmill (probably Newcastle) by moonlight, and at the bottom of the page: —

“No. 809

Thomas Bewick

his



mark”

It being the impression of his thumb.¹⁰

A cloudy, somewhat rainy clay. Mr. R. brought me a snail, apparently *Helix albolabris*, or possibly *thyroidus*, which he picked from under a rock where he was having a wall built. It had put its stag- or rather giraffe-like head and neck out about two inches, the whole length to the point behind being about three, — mainly a neck of a somewhat buffish-white or grayish-buff color or buff-brown, shining with moisture, with a short head, deer-like, and giraffe-like horns or tentacula on its top black at tip, five eighths of an inch long, and apparently two

9. [Moncure Daniel Conway](#). PHARISAISM AND FASTING: A DISCOURSE DELIVERED IN THE UNITARIAN CHURCH, WASHINGTON CITY, ON SEPTEMBER 30, 1855, BY MONCURE D. CONWAY, MINISTER. Published by request. Pamphlet. Washington DC: Buell & Blanchard. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1855.

READ THE FULL TEXT





FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

short horns on snout. Its neck, etc., flat beneath, by which surface it draws or slides itself along in a chair. It is surprisingly long and large to be contained in that shell, which moves atop of it. It moves at the rate of an inch or half an inch a minute over a level surface, whether horizontal or perpendicular, and holds quite tight to it, the shell like a whorled dome to a portion of a building. Its foot (?) extends to a point behind. It *commonly* touches by an inch of its flat under side, flattening out by as much of its length as it touches. Shell rather darker mottled (?) than body. The tentacula become all dark as they are drawn in, and it can draw them or contract them straight back to naught. No *obvious* eyes (?) or mouth.

P.M. — Rode to New Bedford and called on Mr. Green, a botanist, but had no interview with him. Walked through Mrs. Arnold's arboretum. Rode to the beach at Clark's Cove where General Gray landed his four thousand troops in the Revolution. Found there in abundance *Anomia ephippium* (?), their irregular golden-colored shells; *Modiola plicatula* (rayed mussel); *Crepidula fornicata* (?), worn; *Pecten concentricus*, alive; and one or two more.

Returned by the new Point road, four miles long, and R. said eighty feet wide (I should think from recollection more), and cost \$50,000. A magnificent road, by which New Bedford has appropriated the sea. Passed salt works still in active operation, windmills going; a series of frames, with layers of bushes one above another to a great height, apparently for filtering. Went into a spermaceti candle and oil factory.

Arthur R. has a soapstone pot (Indian), about nine inches long, more than an inch thick, with a kind of handle at the ends, — or protuberances. A. says he uses fresh-water clams for bait for perch, etc., in ponds. I think it was to-day some one saw geese go over here, so they said.



10. Here, for comparison with Thoreau's description, is a JPEG of the actual [Thomas Bewick](#) thumbprint:



(An inky print, apparently Henry's own, also appears on this page.)



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

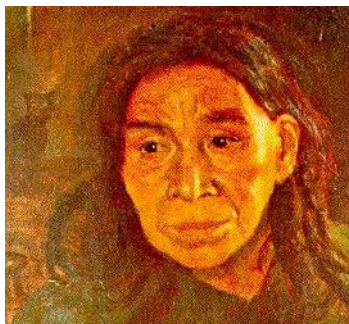
GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

October 2, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was at [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s home "Brooklawn" in [New Bedford](#):

Cloudy and windy. Left home at 8 A.M. with H.D. Thoreau and visited several of the Middleboro Ponds, spending the most part of the day among them. Home at 6 ¹/₂, dark cloudy evening. Spent an hour on the shore by Betty's Neck, so called; found the rock with the footmark upon it, though not as distinct as when I visited it in 1847, -

1749 (Footmark) Israel Felix.

Israel Felix was an old Indian preacher; the footprint Thoreau supposed to be much older than the date or the name. The rocks around bore marks of other records, but so nearly obliterated as to be hardly distinguished. Saw five loons near the shore, also a half-blood Indian woman with her husband, a negro, starting in their boat to fish. Saw also the wife of my old friend John Rosier, who was drowned in the pond several years ago. John was a half-blood Indian, being part negro. He lived in a little cabin half in a hill, with a roof over it. There are but two of the old stock remaining, one by the name of Lydia Squinn, who now lives in New Bedford, and another, a female by the name of Simonds, who lives now on Sconticut Neck. We also stopped at the old Indian burying-place near the road by Quittacus Pond.



Oct. 2. A cloudy day. Rode to "Sampson's" in [Middleborough](#), thirteen miles. Many quails in road. Passed over a narrow neck between the two Quitticus ponds, after first visiting Great Quitticus on right of road and gathering clamshells there, as I had done at Long Pond and intend to do at Assawampsett. These shells labelled will be good mementos of the ponds. It was a great, wild pond with large islands in it. Saw a loon on Little or West Quitticus from road, an old bird with a black bill. The bayonet or rainbow rush was common along the shore there.

In Backus's Account of Middleborough, Historical Collections, vol. iii, First Series: "Philip once sent an array to waylay Capt. Church in Assowamset Neck; which is in the south part of Middleborough." Perhaps this was it. Just beyond this neck, by the roadside, between the road and West Quitticus pond, is an old Indian burying-ground. R. thought it was used before the whites came, though of late by the "praying Indians." This was the



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old stage road from New Bedford to Boston. It occupies a narrow strip between the road and the pond, about a dozen rods wide at the north end, and narrower at the south, and is thirty or forty feet above the water. Now covered with a middling growth of oak, birch, hickory, etc. Chestnut oaks (perhaps *Quercus montana*) grow near there. I gathered some leaves and one large acorn, from the buggy.

There were two stones with inscriptions. R. copied one as follows:—

In memory of Jean Squeen
who died April 13th 1794 in
her 23 year. Also of Benjⁿ
who died at sea April 22 1799
in his 26th year children of
Lydia Squeen a native
When earth was made when time began
Death was decreed the fate of man

The purport of the other was that Lydia Squeen died in 1812, aged seventy-five. The other graves were only faintly marked with rough head and foot stones. All amid the thick wood. There were one or two graves without any stones, apparently not more than five or six years old.

We soon left the main road and turned into a path on the right, leading to Assawampsett Pond, a mile distant. There, too, was a fine sandy beach, the south shore of the pond, three or four rods wide. We walked along the part called Betty's Neck. This pond is, by the map of Middleborough, a little more than three miles long in a straight line northwest and southeast across Pocksha, and nearly two wide. We saw the village of Middleborough Four Corners far across it, yet no village on the shore. As we walked easterly, the shore became stony. On one large slate (?) rock with a smooth surface, sloping toward the pond at highwater mark, were some inscriptions or sculptures which R. had copied about ten years since, thus:—

1749 [foot] B. Hill Israel felix

The "B. Hill" is comparatively modern. R. said that Israel Felix was an old Indian preacher. According to Backus in Historical Collections, vol. iii, First Series, Thomas Felix was an Indian teacher in Middleborough once. The foot appeared very ancient, though pecked in only half an inch. It has squarish form and broad at the toes, like the representation of some sculptured in rocks at the West. For a long time we could discern only 1749 and B. Hill. At length we detected the foot, and after my companion had given up, concluding that the water and the ice had obliterated the rest within ten years, I at last rather felt with my fingers than saw with my eyes the faintly graven and lichen-covered letters of Israel Felix's name. We had looked on that surface full fifteen minutes in vain, yet I felt out the letters after all with certainty.

In a description of Middleborough in the Historical Collections, vol. iii, 1810, signed "Nehemiah Bennet, Middleborough, 1793," it is said, "There is on the easterly shore of Assawampsitt Pond, on the shore of Betty's-neck, two rocks which have curious marks thereon (supposed to be done by the Indians) which appear like the steppings of a person with naked feet, which settled into the rocks; likewise the prints of a hand on several places, with a number of other marks; also, there is a rock on a high hill, a little to the eastward of the old stone fishing wear, where there is the print of a person's hand in said rock."

Perhaps we might have detected more on these same rocks, had we read this before, for we saw that there was something on the next rock. We did not know of the "wear."

The same writer speaks of a settlement of Indians at "Betty's-neck (which place took its name from an ancient Indian woman by the name of Betty Sasemore, who owned that neck) where there is now eight Indian houses and eight families," between thirty and forty souls.

I was interested by some masses of pudding-stone further along, the shore. There were also a few large flat, sloping slate (?) rocks. I saw a small *Emys picta*; and a young snapping turtle, apparently hatched this summer, the whole length when swimming about three inches. It was larger than mine last April and had ten very distinct points to its shell behind. I first saw it in the water next the shore. The same Bennet quoted above adds in a postscript:—

"In the year 1763, Mr. Shubael Thompson found a land turtle in the north-east part of Middleborough, which by some misfortune had lost one of its feet, and found the following marks on its shell, viz. I. W. 1747. He marked it S. T. 1763, and let it go. It was found again in the year 1773, by Elijah Clap, who marked it E. C. 1773, and let it go. It was found again in the year 1775, by Captain William Shaw, in the month of May, who marked it W. S. 1775. It was found again by said Shaw the same year, in September, about one hundred rods distance from the place where he let it go.

"It was found again in the year 1784, by Jonathan Soule, who marked it J. S. 1784, and let it go. It was found again in the year 1790, by Joseph Soule, who marked it J. S. 1790, and let it go. It was found again in the year



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1791, by Zenas Smith, who marked it Z. S. 1791, and let it go; it being the last time it was found; 44 years from the time the first marks were put on.”

We saw five loons diving near the shore of Betty’s Neck, which, instead of swimming off, approached within ten rods as if to reconnoitre us. Only one had a black bill, and that not entirely so; another’s was turning. Their throats were all very white. I was surprised to see the usnea hanging *thick* on many apple trees and some pears in the neighborhood of this and the other ponds, as on spruce. Sheep are pastured hereabouts.

Returning along the shore we saw a man and woman putting off in a small boat, the first we had seen. The man was black. He rowed, and the woman steered. R. called out to them. They approached within a couple of rods in the shallow water. “Come nearer,” said R. “Don’t be afraid; I ain’t a-going to hurt you.” The woman answered, “I never saw the man yet that I was afraid of.” The man’s name was Thomas Smith, and in answer to R.’s very direct questions as to how much he was of the native stock, said that he was one-fourth Indian. He then asked the woman, who sat unmoved in the stern with a brown dirt-colored dress on, a regular country woman, an acre of face (squaw-like), having first inquired of Tom if she was his woman, how much Indian blood she had in her. She did not answer directly so home a question, yet at length as good as acknowledged to be half Indian, and said she came from Carver, where she had one sister, the only half-breed about here. Said her name was Sepit, but could not spell it. R. said, “Your nose looks rather Indiany.” Where will you find a Yankee and his wife going a-fishing thus? They lived on the shore. Tom said that he had seen turtles in the pond that weighed between 50 and 60. Had caught a pickerel that morning that weighed four or five pounds; had also seen them washed up with another in their mouths.

Their boat was of peculiar construction, and T. said it was called a sharper [*síc*], with very high sides and a remarkable run on the bottom aft, and the bottom boards were laid across, coming out flush, and the sides set on them; an ugly model. [DRAWING]

Tom said that Assawampsett was fifteen to twenty feet deep in deepest part. A Mr. Sampson, good authority, told me nine or ten on an average, aid the deepest place said to be thirty or more.

R. told the squaw that we were interested in those of the old stock, now they were so few. “Yes,” said she, “and you’d be glad if they were all gone.” This boat had a singular “wooden grapple,” as Tom called it, made in form of a cross, thus: [DRAWING]

with a stone within. [DRAWING]

The stones on which we walked about all the ponds were covered, now the water was low, with a hoary sort of moss which I do not remember to have seen in Concord; very fine and close to the rock.

Great shallow lakes, the surrounding country hardly rising anywhere to more than a hundred feet above them. According to Bourne’s map there are in Middleborough:—

57,937½	acres of land
5,250	acres of water
63,187½	total

Backus says that iron was discovered at the bottom of Assawampsett Pond about 1747. (Historical Collections, vol. iii, First Series.) “Men go out with boats, and make use of instruments much like those with which oysters are taken, to get up the ore from the bottom of the pond.” “It became the main ore that was used in the town.” Once one man got two tons a day; in 1794, half a ton. Yet there was then (in 1794) plenty of it in an adjacent pond which was twenty feet deep. Much of it was better than the bog ore they had been using. Dr. Thatcher says that Assawampsett Pond once afforded annually six hundred tons of ore. A man afterward discovered it in a pond in Carver, by drawing up some with a fish-line accidentally, and it was extensively used. I did not hear of any being obtained now.

There were three Praying Indian villages in Middleborough — Namassekett, Assawomsit, and Ketchiquit (Titicut), — the last in the northwest part, on Taunton River, where was an Indian weir. Winslow and company on a visit to Massasoit in June, 1621, stopped at Nemasket, fifteen miles, the first night before “conceived by us to be very near, because the inhabitants flocked so thick upon every slight occasion amongst us, etc., etc., q. v. R. is a man of feeling. As we were riding by a field in which a man was shackling a sheep, which struggled, R. involuntarily shouted to him and asked, “What would you do?”

We left our horse and buggy at John Kingman’s and walked by Sampson’s to a hill called King Philip’s Lookout, from which we got a good view of Assawampsett and Long Ponds. There was a good-sized sailboat at Sampson’s house, now kept by a Barrows. The shores were now surrounded with pale wine-colored foliage, of maples, etc., and inland were seen the very *fresh* green and yellow of pines, contrasting with the red (*Rubus*) blackberry. The highest land appears to be about the northwest end of the ponds.

I saw at Kingman’s long-handled but small scoop nets for taking young alewives for pickerel bait. They think the white perch one of the best fish, like a cod.

Elder’s Pond, a little further north, is said to be the deepest and clearest.¹¹ Walking along the north end of Long



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Pond, while R. bathed, I found amid the rainbow rush, pipewort (*Eriocaulon*), etc., on the now broad flat shore, a very beautiful flower, pinkish rose-color, new to me, and still quite fresh, the *Sabbatia chloroides*, referred to Plymouth; ten stamens and petal divisions, about one foot high. I also observed there the very broad and distinct trail of an otter in the wet sand, to and from the water, with the mark of its tail, though Kingman did not know of any now hereabouts.

The arrowheads hereabouts are commonly white quartz.

R. says “gamble-roof.” This should be “gambrel,” apparently from the hind leg of a horse, -crooked like it.



[As we can see, on October 2, 1855 Thoreau made repeated references in his journal to the Reverend Isaac Backus’s “An Historical Account of Middleborough, in the County of Plymouth,” as it appeared in the COLLECTIONS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 1st series, volume 3, originally published in 1794 and reprinted in 1810. The article appears on pages 148-153.]



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October 4, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was still at [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s home "Brooklawn" in [New Bedford](#):



Clear and fine most of the day; shower latter part afternoon. Rode to Westport with Thoreau and examined the old Proprietor's Records of the old township of Dartmouth for the names of my ancestors.

Returning stopped upon the shore of Westport Pond in a grove of young oaks, where ourselves and old Charley ate our dinner, arriving home about 4 1/2 P.M. Showery evening.

Juan Alvarez replaced Rómulo Díaz de la Vega as interim President of [Mexico](#).

October 5, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was still at [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s home "Brooklawn" in [New Bedford](#), [Massachusetts](#):



Clear and fine, warm for the season. Left home this morning at 8 o'clock with Henry D. Thoreau, who has been on a visit with us at Brooklawn during the past week, for Plymouth; went by the way of Middleborough, crossing by Long Pond into Carver; took our dinner on the way, under some pines by the wayside, where we also baited our horse, "Billy," upon oats. Took tea at the house of B.M. [Benjamin Marston] Watson, a friend of Thoreau, who has a nursery near Plymouth, a very pleasant place, and nice people, — Mr. and Mrs. W. and the mother of Mr. W. and three young children. Rode into Plymouth after tea, and stopped for the night at Olyn's on Leyden Street.

BENJAMIN MARSTON WATSON

MIDDLEBOROUGH



Oct. 5. Rode to Plymouth with R., in his buggy.

In the north part of Rochester, went into an old uninhabited house which once belonged to John Shearman. It had the date 1753 engraved on an oblong square stone in the stone chimney, though the chimney-top had been rebuilt with the old stone. The house had a singular musty scent when we opened it. The bare joists above in the kitchen all black with smoke. In the cellar grew the apple-of-Peru, *Nicandra physalodes*, then in bloom; a *short* datura-like blossom with a large fruit-like capsule.

After passing the Neck between the two Quitticus Ponds, we turned to the right and passed by the Point road between the Great Quitticus and Pocksha Ponds. This was a mere bar, half a mile long, two or three rods wide, and built up above high water with larger stones. We rode with one wheel in the water. There was in one place a stream crossing it and two or more bridges prepared for high water. Scared up five apparently black ducks. Continued on towards Carver by small winding country roads *via* where was once Nelson's meeting-house and along the east side of Tispaquin Pond, —this was the name of the old sachem of Nemasket, —near which in a field R. picked up a young *Emys picta*'s (?) shell, which I have. Beyond this the country was almost uniformly level, sandy, — oak wood, with few dwellings. Lunched near the boundary of Carver. Passed Johns Pond and Wenham Pond and others in Carver, passing a mile or more south of Carver Green, and afterward Clear Pond in



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Plymouth. We heard the blasting at the Quincy quarries (so Watson told us) during this ride, I think even as far back as New Bedford township, very distinctly.

According to Rennet, writing, 1793 (*vide* Historical Collections), Snipatuet Pond in Rochester has one stream emptying into the sea at Mattapoissett Harbor and another, three quarters of a mile long, emptying into East Quitiquos pond. "So that, the alewife fish come into Snipatuet pond from both streams."

In a description of Carver in the Fourth Volume, Second Series, of the Historical Collections, I read: "The cast iron tea kettle was first cast at Plympton (now Carver) between 1760 and 1765. So modern is this very common utensil in New England. Wrought iron imported tea kettles were used before a copper tea kettle was first used at Plymouth, 1702." Also, "A place called 'Swan Holt' by the first planters, a little southeast of Wenham fond, denotes the former visits of that bird, the earliest harbinger of spring; for before the ice is yet broken up, the swan finds an open resting place among the ozier holts, while the kildee, flying over the land from the sea shore, soon after confirms the vernal promise." A note adds: "A species of plover, probably the 'que ce qu'il dit' of the French. It may be added that kildee is the Danish word for a spring."

Lodged at Olney's (the old Hedge) House in Plymouth.

DESCRIPTION OF CARVER



It has legs so it can sit in the ashes of the fireplace. The main handle is such that it can be lifted in and out of the fireplace with a poker. It has an attachment by which it can be tipped to fill a cup, by the use of that same poker. How handy!

MASS. HIST. COLLECTIONS



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October 6, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wound up his extended visit at [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s home "Brooklawn" in [New Bedford](#), passing through Plymouth and Boston on his way home to Concord:



Unsettled, rain in evening. Left Plymouth at 11 ¹/₂ A.M., and arrived home much fatigued about 5 P.M. My friend, H.D. Thoreau, left for Boston and home.

October 7, Sunday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) noted in his journal in regard to his new friend [Henry Thoreau](#) that:



Last Sunday [September 30th] my friend Thoreau and I spent most of the day visiting Sassaquin and Long Pond, "Joe's Rocks." I enjoyed the visit of Thoreau very much; he improves, unlike most people, upon an intimate acquaintance — modest and gentle in his manner, the best read and most intelligent man I ever knew. He is also a very good naturalist, and very much interested while here in wild plants, shells, etc. He took away with him quite a little collection of curiosities he had collected during our rambles. In Indian history I found him well informed, and as a classical scholar but few, I should judge, could compete with him. My respect for his character and talents is greater than for any man I know.

At his [Unitarian](#) church in Washington DC, the Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) delivered a memorable sermon.¹²

October 12, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

*Concord Oct 12th 1855
Mr Ricketson,
I fear that
you had a lonely and disagreeable
ride back to New Bedford, through
the Carver Woods & so on,—per-
haps in the rain, too, and I am in
part answerable for it. I feel*

12. [Moncure Daniel Conway](#). A DISCOURSE ON THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE HON. WILLIAM CRANCH, LATE CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, DELIVERED IN THE [UNITARIAN](#) CHURCH, WASHINGTON CITY, ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1855, BY MONCURE D. CONWAY, MINISTER. Pamphlet. Franck Taylor, Washington DC, 1855.

READ THE FULL TEXT





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*very much in debt to you & your
family for the pleasant days
I spent at Brooklawn. Tell Ar-
thur & Walter that the shells
which they gave me are spread
out, and make quite a show
to inland eyes. Methinks I still
hear the strains of the piano[,]
the violin[,] & the flageolet[,] [blended]
together. Excuse me for the*



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*noise which I believe drove you
to take refuge in the shanty.
That shanty is indeed a favor-
able place to expand in, which
I fear I did not enough im-
prove.
On my way through Boston,
I inquired for [Gilpin](#)'s works at
Little, Brown, & Co's;—Monroe's;*

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*Ticknor's, & Burnham's. They have
not got them. They told me at Little
Brown & Co's that his works (not
complete) in 12 vols 8^{vo}, were
imported & sold in this country 5 or
6 years ago for about 15 dollars.
Their terms for importing are
10 per cent on the cost. I copied
from "The London Catalogue of Books,
1816-51" at their shop, the fol-
lowing list of Gilpin's Works—*

*L S d "Gilpin (^m Dialogues on Various Subjects 8^{vo} 0—9—0 Ca-
dell*

Essays on Picturesque Subjects 8^{vo} " 15 " "

Exposition of the New Testament 2 vols 8^{vo} 0—16—0

*Longman—Forest Scenery, by Sir T. D. Lauder 2 vols 8 0—18—0
Smith & E*

Lectures on the Catechism, 12^{mo} 0—3—6 Longman

Lives of the Reformers 2 v. 12^{mo} " 8— " Rivington

Sermons Illustrative & Practical 8^{vo} 0—12—0 Hatchard.

" to Country Congregations, 4 v. 8^{vo} 1—16—0 Longman

Tour in Cambridge Norfolk &c 8^{vo} 0—18—0 Cadell

" of the River Wye, 12^{mo} " 4 ", with plates 0—17—0 Cadell

*Gilpin (W S (?)) Hints on Landscape Gardening Roy. 8^{vo} 1—0—0
Cadell."*

*Beside these I remember
to have read 1 volume on Prints*

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His Southern Tour (1775)



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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*Lakes of Cumberland 2 vols—
Highlands of Scotland " "
NB. There must be plates & West of England. in every volume.
I still see an image of those
Middleborough Ponds in my mind's
eye—broad shallow lakes with an
iron mine at their bottom—com-
paratively unvexed by sails—only
by Tom Smith & his squaw Sepit's
"sharper". I find my map of the
state to be the best I have seen
of that district. It is a question whether
the islands of Long Pond or Great
Quitticus offer the most attractions
to a Lord of the Isles. That plant
which I found on the shore of Long
Pond chances to be a rare & beau-
tiful flower—the Sabbatia chlo-
roides—referred to Plymouth.
In a Description of Middleborough in
the Hist. Coll. vol 3^d 1810—signed Nehe-
miah Bennet, Middleborough[,] 1793[,]—it is
said. "There is on the easterly shore of As-
sawampsitt Pond, on the shore of Betty's Neck,
two rocks which have curious marks thereon
(supposed to be done by the Indians) which
appear like the steppings of a person with*

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*naked feet which settled into the rocks,
likewise the prints of a hand on several
places, with a number of other marks;
also there is a rock on a high hill, a
little to the eastward of the old
stone fishing wear, where there is the
print of a person's hand in said rock."
It would be well to look at
those rocks again more carefully,—also
at the rock on the hill.
I should think that you would like
to explore Snipatuct Pond in Rochester[,—]
[it] is so large & near. It is an interesting
fact[,] that the alewives used to ascend*



DANIEL RICKETSON

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*to it[,]—if they do not still,—both from
Mattapoisett, & through Great Quitticus.
There will be no trouble
about the chamber in the old house,
though, as I told you, Hosmer counts
his coppers and may expect some
compensation for it. He says
“Give my respects to Mr R[.] & tell
him that I cannot be at a large ex-
pense to preserve an antiquity or curiosity.
Nature must do its work,” “But” say I,
[he] asks you only not to assist Nature.”
I find that Channing [is] gone to
his wife at Dorchester—perhaps for the winter—
& both may return to Concord in the Spring.
rs Henry D. Thoreau*

October 13, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

*Brooklawn Saty noon
13 Oct. 1855.
Dear Thoreau,
I wrote a few lines to you
this morn. before breakfast, which I took
to the post office, but since I have
received yours of yesterday, which
rather changes my mind as to coming
to Concord. I thank you for your kindness
in procuring for me information concerning
[Gilpin](#)'s work, which I shall endeavor
to procure. My ride home as you
anticipate, was somewhat dull & dreary
through Carver woods, but I escaped the
rain which did not come on until after
my arrival home about tea time. I think*

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*that you hurried away from Brooklawn. We
had just got out affairs in good train. I hope
however, that you will soon be able to come
again and spend several weeks, when we
will visit the pond in Rochester which
you mention and ~~review~~ review our*



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*rides and rambles — the Middleborough
ponds and the surroundings never tire
me. I could go every day for a long time
to them. I give my preference to the Isles
in Long Pond — we must get the Indian
name of this favorite lake of ours.
my The principal reason for my changing mind
^ in regard to going to Concord is that you
say Channing has gone & perhaps for the Winter.
Although I intended to board & lodge at
the Tavern I expected to philosophize
with you & C. by his wood-fire.
is
But this only a good reason for you to
^*

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*come to Brooklawn again. We have
some weeks of good rambling weather yet
before Winter sets in. You will be very welcome
to us all & dont feel the least hesitation
about coming if you have the desire so to do.
I am in the Shanty — Uncle James
is here with me. He came up as soon
as he heard you had gone. I have endeav-
ored to convince him that you are
perfectly harmless, but I think he
still retains a portion of his fears.
I think you would affiliate well
if you should ever come together.
Yours truly
D. Ricketson
H D Thoreau Esq
Concord
Mass.*

October 13: [Henry Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

*Brooklawn 13 Oct. '55
Dear Thoreau,
Your long lost letter came
to hand last Monday and I concluded*



DANIEL RICKETSON

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*that you had safely arrived in Concord
and had forwarded it yourself.
One week ago this morn. we parted
in Plymouth. I looked out my
window and got the last glimpse
of you going off with your umbrella &
carpet bag or valise.
Your visit here was very agreeable
to us all, and particularly to me.*

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*In fact your visit was highly successful
except in duration — being much too short.
But the principal object in my now
writing is, to inform you that I expect
to spend a few days in Concord
next week. I shall leave here
by the middle or towards the end
of the week. I shall bring my
hair pillow & some old clothes.
not I shall consider it obligating on
^ you to devote much time to me
particularly as you are an invalid
but much time as you can spare
I will be glad to avail myself
of, but I hope that Channing*

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*you and I will be able to feelosophize
a little occasionally.
I shall go directly to the Tavern
& shall insist upon putting you to no
trouble or attention ~~to me~~.
I conclude in haste, breakfast
waiting.
Yours truly
Danl. Ricketson
Tell Channing I hope to smoke
my pipe with him soon.—*

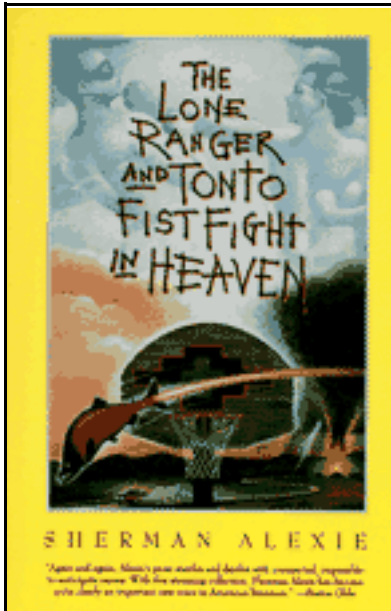


FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

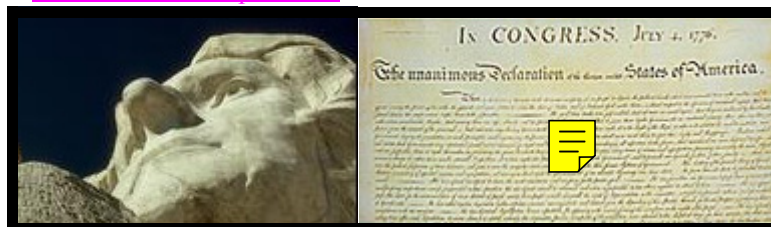
October 16, Tuesday: The white settlers along the Rogue River had been on an indiscriminate killing rampage and had achieved 23 victims, counting old men, women, and children. At this point Captain Andrew Jackson Smith opened the gates of Fort Lane and allowed the remaining native Americans menaced by this mob the protection of the federal government.



WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

“...the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.”

— [Declaration of Independence](#)



[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

Concord Oct 16th 1855
Friend Ricketson,
I have got both
your letters at once. You must
not think Concord so barren a



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place when Channing is away. There
are the river & fields left yet, and
I, though ordinarily a man of busi-
ness, should have some afternoons
& evenings to spend with you, I trust;
that is, if you could stand so
much of me. If you can
spend your time profitably here,
or without ennui, having an
occasional ramble or tête-a-tête
with one of the natives, it will
give me pleasure to have you
in the neighborhood. You see
I am preparing you for our
awful unsocial ways,--keeping
in our dens a good part of
the day, sucking our claws per-
haps.-- But then we make
a religion of it, and that you
cannot but respect.

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*If you know the taste
of your own heart & like it--
come to Concord, and I'll warrant
you enough here to season the dish
with,--aye, even though C. & E.
and I were all away. We might pad-
dle quitly up the river-- [T]hen there
are one or two more ponds to
be seen, &c--
I should very much enjoy
further rambling with you in your
vicinity, but must postpone it
for the present. To tell the
truth, I am planning to get
seriously to work after these long
months of inefficiency and idleness.
I do not know whether you
are haunted by any such demon
which puts you on the alert
to pluck the fruit of each day
as it passes, and store it safely in*

~



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*your bin. [T]rue, it is well to live
abandonedly from time to time,*

Page 3

*but to our working hours that
must be as the spile to the bung.
So for a long season I must
enjoy only a low slanting gleam
in my mind's eye from the Mid-
dleborough Ponds far away.
Methinks I am getting a
little more strength into those
knees of mine; and, for my part,
~ I believe that God does delight
in the strength of a man's legs.
Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau*

October 18, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

*Brooklawn, Oct. 18th 1855.
Dear Thoreau,
I received yours of the 16th
just yesterday. I am very sorry that
you did not conclude at once to come
to Brooklawn and finish the visit which
you so unceremoniously curtailed.
But I cannot release you on so
light grounds. I thought that you
were a man of leisure at any rate
by your philosophy which I consider
the best you are so. You appear to
be hugging your chains or endeavoring
so to do. I approve of your courage
but cannot see the desperate need*

Page 2

*of your penance.
But I must appeal to you as a
brother man, a philanthropist too.
I am in need of help. I want a
Physician & I send for you as the*



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*one I have the most confidence
in. I also enclose a small
retainer, which I beg you to avail
yourself of as I can put it to no
better purpose & meet me at
Tarkiln Hill on Saty noon the
20th [Oct.]
I am already your debtor & I beg you
to feel perfectly easy so far as our*

Page 3
*book account is concerned.
You can bring your writing with you, but
I can furnish you with stationery in
abundance & you can have as much
time for "sucking your claws" as you
wish.
Dont fail to come
by Saty. noon the 20th.
Yours truly
D Ricketson
I am in need of a physician — So Dr Thoreau
come to my relief. I need dosing with country
rides & rambles, lake scenery, cold viands &
Jack Knife dinners.
I find the following in Sterne's Koran*

Page 4
*which is the best thing I have seen
for a long time.
"Spare diet & clear skies are Apollo
and the Muses."
I have got Channing's Poems — what I
have read I should consider as
good as Tennyson's Maud, though
none resembling it.
I think however if he had observed the
Horatian advice of nine years
keeping he would have done better.
I have discovered in my cursory
examination of them some very
good things.*



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

[Thoreau](#) made a journal entry that resulted in portions of the following paragraphs from “LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE”:

Men rush to California and Australia as if the true gold were to be found in that direction; but that is to go to the very opposite extreme to where it lies. They go prospecting farther and farther away from the true lead, and are most unfortunate when they think themselves most successful. Is not our *native* soil auriferous? Does not a stream from the golden mountains flow through our native valley? and has not this for more than geologic ages been bringing down the shining particles and forming the nuggets for us? Yet, strange to tell, if a digger steal away, prospecting for this true gold, into the unexplored solitudes around us, there is no danger that any will dog his steps, and endeavor to supplant him. He may claim and undermine the whole valley even, both the cultivated and the uncultivated portions, his whole life long in peace, for no one will ever dispute his claim. They will not mind his cradles or his toms. He is not confined to a claim twelve feet square, as at Ballarat, but may mine anywhere, and wash the whole wide world in his tom. [Howitt](#) says of the man who found the great nugget which weighed twenty-eight pounds, at the Bendigo diggings in Australia: -“He soon began to drink; got a horse and rode all about, generally at full gallop, and when he met people, called out to inquire if they knew who he was, and then kindly informed them that he was ‘the bloody wretch that had found the nugget.’ At last he rode full speed against a tree, and I think however nearly knocked his brains out.” I think, however, there was no danger of that, for he had already knocked his brains out against the nugget. [Howitt](#) adds, “He is a hopelessly ruined man.” But he is a type of the class. They are all fast men. Hear some of the names of the places where they dig: -“Jackass Flat,” -“Sheep’s-Head Gully,” -“Murderer’s Bar,” etc.



Oct. 18. Last night I was reading [Howitt](#)’s account of the Australian gold-diggings, and had in my mind’s eye the numerous valleys with their streams all cut up with foul pits, ten to a hundred feet deep and half a dozen feet across, as close as they can be dug and half full of water, where men furiously rushed to probe for their fortunes, uncertain where they shall break ground, not knowing but the gold is under their camp itself; sometimes digging a hundred and sixty feet before they strike the vein, or then missing it by a foot; turned into (lemons and regardless of each other’s rights in their thirst after riches; whole valleys for thirty miles suddenly honeycombed by the pits of the miners, so that hundreds are drowned in them. Standing in water and covered with mud and clay, they work night and day, dying of exposure and dis ease. Having read this and partly forgotten it, I was thinking of my own unsatisfactory life, doing as others do without any fixed star habitually in my eye, my foot not planted on any blessed isle. Then, with that vision of the diggings before me, I asked myself why I might not be washing some gold daily, though it were only the finest particles, or might not sink a shaft down to the gold within me and work that mine. There is a Ballarat or Bendigo for you. What though it were a “Sulky Gully”? Pursue some path, however narrow and crooked, in which you can walk with love and reverence. Wherever a man separates from the multitude and goes his own way, there is a fork in the road, though the travellers along the highway see only a gap in the paling.
P.M. — To Great Meadows to observe the hummocks left by the ice.
They are digging the pond at the new cemetery. I go by Peter’s path. How charming a footpath! *Nihil humanum,*



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etc. I was delighted to find a new footpath crossing this toward Garfield's. The broad and dusty roads do not remind me of man so much as of cattle and horses. There are a great many crows scattered about on the meadow. What do they get to eat there ~ Also I scare up a dozen larks at once. A large brown marsh hawk comes beating the bush along the river, and ere long a slate colored one (male), with black tips, is seen circling against a distant wood-side. I scare up in midst of the meadows a great many dark-colored sparrows, one or two at a time, which go off with a note somewhat like the lesser redpoll's, — some migrating kind, I think. [ANNOTATION: Probably what I think must be shore larks in fall of '58.]

There is a hummock in the lower part of the meadows near the river every two or three rods, where they appeared as thick; last year, sometimes consisting of that coarse meadow-grass or sedge but quite as often of the common meadow sod. Very often it has lodged on one of those yellowish circles of the sedge, it being higher. Last winter's hummocks are not much flattened down yet. I am inclined to think that the coarse sedgy hummocks do not fall so round at first, but are wont to grow or spread in that wise when a fragment has been dropped. Perhaps the sedge is oftenest lifted because it is so coarse.

There is no life perceptible on this broad meadow except what I have named. The crows are very conspicuous, black against the green. The maple swamps, bare of leaves. here and there about the meadow, look like smoke blown along the edge of the woods. Some distinct maples, wholly stripped, look very wholesome and neat, nay even ethereal.

To-day my shoes are whitened with the gossamer which I noticed yesterday on the meadow-grass. I find the white fragments of a tortoise-shell in the meadow, — thirty or forty pieces, straight-sided polygons, — which apparently a hay-cart passed over. They look like broken crockery. I brought it home and amused myself with putting it together. It is a painted tortoise. The variously formed sections or component parts of the shell are not broken, but only separated. To restore them to their places is like the game which children play with pieces of wood completing a picture. It is surprising to observe how these different parts are knitted together by countless minute teeth on their edges. Then the scales, which are not nearly so numerous, and therefore larger commonly, are so placed over the former as to break joints always, as appears by the indented lines at their edges and the serrations of the shell. These scales, too, *slightly* overlap each other, *i.e.* the foremost over the next behind, so that they may not be rubbed off. Thus the whole case is bound together like a very stout bandbox. The bared shell is really a very interesting study. The sternum in its natural position looks like a well-contrived drag, turned up at the sides in one solid piece.

Noticed a single wreath of a blood-red blackberry vine on a yellow sand slope, very conspicuous by contrast. When I was surveying for Legross, as we went to our work in the morning, we passed by the Dudley family tomb, and Legross remarked to me, all in good faith, "Would n't you like to see old Daddy Dudley? He lies in there. I'll get the keys if you 'd like. I sometimes go in and look at him."

The upper shell of this tortoise is formed of curved rafters or ribs, which are flatted out to half an inch or five eighths in width, but the rib form appears in an elevated ridge along the middle and in a spine at the lower end, fitting firmly into a deep hole in an edge bone, and also a projection (or process?) to meet the spinal column at the upper end. Some of these plates (?) I fitted together far more closely and wonderfully, considering the innumerable slurr serrations, than any child's wooden sections of a picture. Yet it is impossible to put the whole together again, so perfectly do the plates interlock and dovetail into each other at different angles, and they could only have grown together and shrunk apart. It is an admirable system of breaking joints, both in the arrangement of the parts of the shell and in that of the scales which overlap the serrations of the former. The sternum consists of nine parts, there being an extra trigonal or pentagonal piece under the head or throat. The two middle pieces on each side curve upward to meet the edge bones, without any serration or joint at the lower edge of the sternum there; nor is there any joint in the scales there. In the upper shell there *appear to be* eight or nine small dorsal pieces, about sixteen rib pieces, and about twenty-two edge or marginal pieces; but of the parts of the upper shell I am not quite certain.

The sternums of the box turtles and the stinkpot are much flatter, *i.e.* not so much curved up at the sides, and are nearer to the upper shell. The painted tortoise has the flattest back; the *Cistudo Carolina*, the highest and fullest (with a ridge); the stinkpot, the sharpest. The *C. Blandingii* is very regularly arched. The *Emys insculpta* is of moderate elevation (with a ridge).

Those bright-red marks on the marginal scales of the painted tortoise remind me of some Chinese or other Oriental lacquer-work on waiters (?). This color fades to a pale yellow. The color is wholly in the scale above the bone. Of the bright colors, the yellow marks on tortoise-shells are the fastest.

How much beauty in decay! I pick up a white oak leaf, dry and stiff, but yet mingled red and green, October-like, whose pulpy part some insect has eaten beneath, exposing the delicate network of its veins. It is very beautiful held up to the light, — such work as only an insect eye could perform. Yet, perchance, to the vegetable kingdom such a revelation of ribs is as repulsive as the skeleton in the animal kingdom. In each case it is some



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little gourmand, working for another end, that reveals the wonders of nature. There are countless oak leaves in this condition now, and also with a submarginal line of network exposed.

Men rush to California and Australia as if the true gold were to be found in that direction; but that is to go to the very opposite extreme to where it lies. They go prospecting further and further away from the true lead, and are most unfortunate when most successful. Is not our native soil auriferous? Does not a stream from the golden Mountains flow through our native valley? and has it not for more than geologic ages been bringing down the shining particles and the nuggets? Yet, strange to tell, if a digger steal away prospecting for this true gold into the unexplored solitudes, there is no danger, alas, that any will clog his steps and endeavor to supplant him. He may claim and undermine the whole valley, even the cultivated and uninhabited portions, his whole life: long in peace, and no one will ever dispute his claim. They will not mind his cradles or his toms. He is not confined to a claim twelve feet square, as at Ballarat, but may mine anywhere, and wash the whole wide world in his tom. To rebuild the tortoise-shell is a far finer game than any geographical or other puzzle, for the pieces do not merely make part of a plane surface, but you have got to build a roof and a floor and the connecting walls. These are not only thus dovetailed and braced and knitted and bound together, but also held together by the skin and muscles within. It is a *band-box*.

December 4, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

Dear Thoreau,

I hope you do not infer from my silence, that I am not mindful of you, for I assure you that I often think of you, and always with the desire to see you again, and participate with you in our favourite pursuits. I look back with pleasure upon the visit we had from you at Brooklawn in October, and the pleasant rides and rambles, which alas! like many other noble undertakings were prematurely brought to a close, like

*“The story of the Bear and Fiddle
Begun but broke off in the middle.”*

After you left, my son Walton & myself made several excursions to the Middleborough lakes on one of which we visited the northernmost island, with which we were much pleased and there found a white arrow head nearly perfect.

I know of no spot equal to it for a retired residence, and should you ever like to try the experiment of solitary life again, I will endeavour to procure it for you — in fact I now make you the offer. If you have done “sucking your claws” which I trust in reason you have by this time, I should be very glad to have you make us a visit. Not only myself, but my whole family would be much pleased. You can have as much time to yourself as you wish — the shanty shall be at your service or a room in the house if you prefer, I mean for “sucking your claws.”

Come then by Saturday next the 8th Inst. by the mid-day train stopping at Tarkiln Hill as before. You must excuse this short epistle as I have a lame shoulder, & have been troubled considerably with rheumatism in my neck & back head of late — & am rather a valitudinarian — on the whole.



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*I hope your knees are improved— I have a passage from Homer on
knees to shew you. I send the bridle & saddle for the Iron horse.
Hoping to see you I remain
Very truly
D. R.
Brooklawn
Dec 4th 1855.*

December 22, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

*Brooklawn, Dec 22^d 1855.
Dear Friend,
Do not think from my long silence that I am unmindful of you, but
from your last letter I concluded that you were desperately bent u
pon work and so I thought in deference to your pious endeavours
that I would not disturb you.
I have had a letter from Channing who proposes to visit me in Jan^{ry}
— He writes as though he would like to obtain a place t his way for
himself & family I conclude, as he speaks of being near to school &
meeting but I should think that he had no very defin ite purpose in
the plan. I am glad that he has returned to his wife & children &
hope he will find it to his happiness & prosperity.
As I have pretty much abandoned the idea of settling or rather occa-
sionally living in Concord, I should be glad to have you spend a part,
or more if you liked, of your time this way.
I have thought that little island in Long Pond would be a good home
for you, at least in the summer, and if you would occupy it, I would
procure a lease of the same for a term of years, or purchase it for
you. Just think of the matter a little.
I should like to have a visit from you soon again, and would propose
your coming early in February. Should you like to come before, I
shall be happy to see you, and will send the talisman in time. Our
people at the Village have got up a kind of Lyceum or debating so-
ciety, & talk about a lecture occasionally. Perhaps you might meet
their wants, but they are hardly up to your antics.
I hope that your health is improved, or rather your ""precious
knees". My Wife & children affectionately remember you & I re-
main, V ery truly Yours
Dan^l. Ricketson*



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December 25, Tuesday: Rather than spend [Christmas](#) at home with his pregnant wife [Ellen](#) and his four little children –who had recently been so graciously restored to him– feckless daddy [Ellery Channing](#) elected to visit with [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel](#) mentioning having read about a horse in France that had died at the advanced age of 50 (horses normally live 20 to 25 years, with 44 years being about the maximum to be expected; perhaps the oldest horse, Old Billy who had succumbed in 1822, had survived for something like 62 years).



Concord Dec 25 '55

Friend Ricketson,

Though you have not shown your face here, I trust that you did not interpret my last note to my disadvantage. I remember that, among other things, I wished to break it to you, that, owing to engagements, I should not be able to show you so much attention as I could wish, or as you had shown to me.— How we did scour over the country! I hope your horse will live as long as one which I hear just died in the south of France at the age of 40.— Yet I had no doubt you would get quite enough of me. Do not give it up so easily— The old house is still empty—& Hosmer is easy to treat with.

Channing was here about ten days ago. I told him of my visit to you, and that he too must go and see you & your country. This may have suggested his writing to you.

That island lodge, especially for some weeks in a summer, and new explorations in your vicinity are certainly very alluring; but such are my engagements to myself that I dare not promise to wend your way – but will for the present only heartily thank you for your kind & generous offer. When my vacation comes, then look out.

My legs have grown considerably stronger, and that is all that ails me.

But I wish now above all to inform you – though I suppose you will not be particularly interested – that Cholmondeley has gone to the Crimea “a complete soldier”, with a design when he returns, if he ever returns, to buy a cottage in the South of England, and tempt me over; – but that, before going, he busied himself in buying, & has caused to be forwarded to me by Chapman, a royal gift, in the shape of 21 distinct works (one in 9 vols – 44 vols in all) almost exclusively relating to ancient Hindoo literature, and scarcely one of them to be bought in America. I am familiar with many of them & know how to prize them.

I send you information of this as I might of the birth of a child.

Please remember me to all your family—

Yrs truly

Henry D. Thoreau.



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1856

March 5, Wednesday: [William Cooper Nell](#) commemorated the anniversary of the Boston Massacre and the death of Crispus Attucks.



[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed, for George F. Duren, a woodlot belonging to S. and H. Jones, relatives of Dr. Jones of Concord, that was being sold for taxes. According to Thoreau's Field Notes book, Duren's men chained the survey "rudely." The sketch shows this eight-and-a-half acre lot to be near John LeGross, and J.D. and William Brown, therefore probably in the northwest part of Concord.



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.)

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford MA](#).

Concord Mar. 5th '56

Friend Ricketson,

I have been out of town, else I should have acknowledge[d] your letters before. Though not in the best mood for writing I will say what I can now. You plainly have a rare, though a cheap, resource in your shanty. Perhaps the time will come when every county-seat will have one — when every country-seat will be one. I would advice you to see that shanty business out, though you go shanty mad. Work your vein till it is exhausted, or conducts you to a broader one; So that C shall stand before your Shanty, & say "That is your house".

This has indeed been a grand winter for me & for all of us. I am not considering how much I have enjoyed it. What matters it how happy or unhappy we have been, if we have minded our business and advanced our affairs. I have made it a part of my busi-



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ness to wade in the snow & take the measure

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of the ice. The ice on one of our ponds was just two feet thick on the first of March. and I have to day been surveying a wood-lot where I sank about two feet at every step.

It is high time that you, fanned by the warm breezes of the Gulf Stream, had begun to “lay” — for even the Concord hens have — though one wonders where they find the raw material of egg-shells here. Beware how you put off your laying to any later spring, else your cackling will not have the inspiring early Spring sound.

I was surprised to hear the other day that Channing was in New Bedford.; When he was here last (in Dec., I think) he said, like himself, in answer to my inquiry where he lived, that he did not know the name of the place; so it has remained in a degree of obscurity to me. As you have made it certain to me that he is in New Bedford, perhaps I can return the favor by putting you on the track to his boarding house there. Mrs Arnold told Mrs Emerson where it was — and the latter thinks, though she may be mistaken, that it was at a Mrs Lindsey’s

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I am rejoiced to hear that you are getting on so bravely with him & his verses. He and I, as you know, have been old cronies.

“Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, & rill.

Together both, ere the high lawns appear’d

Under the opening eye-lids of the Morn,

We drove afield, and both together heard &c &c &c”

— — — —

“But O the heavy change” now he is gone!

The C. you have seen & described is the real Simon Pure. You have seen him. Many a good ramble may you have together. You will see in him still more of the same kind — to attract & to puzzle you. How to serve him most effectually has long been a problem with his friends. Perhaps it is left for you to solve it. I suspect that the most that you or any one can do for him is to appreciate his genius — to buy & read, & cause others to buy & read his poems. That is the hand which he has put forth to the world — take hold by that. Review them if you can. Perhaps take the risk of publishing something

Page 4

more which he may write.

Your knowledge of Cowper will help you to know C. He will accept sympathy & aid, but he will not bear questioning — unless the aspects of the sky are particularly auspicious. He will ever be “reserved & enigmatic[“,] & you must deal with him at arm’s length.

I have no secrets to tell you concerning him, and do not wish to call obvious excel-



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lences & defects by farfetched names. I think I have already spoken to you more, and more to the purpose, on this theme, than I am likely to write now — nor need I suggest how witty & poetic he is — and what an inexhaustible fund of good-fellowship you will find in him.

As for visiting you in April, — though I am inclined enough to take some more rambles in your neighborhood, especially by the sea- side — I dare not engage myself, nor allow you to expect me. The truth is, I have my enterprises now

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as ever, at which I tug with ridiculous feebleness, but admirable perseverance — and cannot say when I shall be sufficiently fancy-free for such an excursion.

You have done well to write a lecture on Cowper. In the expectation of getting you to read it here, I applied to the curators of our Lyceum.

but alas our Lyceum has been a failure this winter for want of funds. It ceased some weeks since, with a debt — they tell me, to be caried over to the nex {MS torn} years' account. Only one more lecture is to be read by a Signor somebody — an Italian — paid for by private subscription — as a deed of charity to the lecturer. They are not rich enough to offer you your expenses even, though probably a month or two ago they would have been glad of the chance.

However the old house has not failed yet. That offers you lodging for an indefinite time after you get in to it — and in the mean while I offer you bed & board in my father's house — always excepting hair pillows & new-fangled

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bedding.

Remember me to your family.

Yrs H.D.T.

Postmark: [ORD]

MASS.

Address: Daniel Ricketson Esq

New-Bedford

Mass.

May 10, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

Shanty, May 10th 1856.

Dear Mr Thoroughgood,

Had you not prepared me on my first acquaintance with you to consider you a bad correspondent, I should hardly feel satisfied at your silence. I think it great pity for one who so excels in epistolary writing should not exercise his pen more in this way. Cannot you turn over a new leaf. I have been in hopes to receive a letter from you an-



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nouncing your intention to make us a visit soon. Any time will be agreeable, except from the 14th to the 23d of June, at which time I expect to make my annual visit to Newport.— My present opinion is that you had better come about the 25th of June unless you have designed otherwise.

Channing is still here, and as much of a Sphinx or something of that sort as ever. I sometimes feel quite out of patience with him. I fear too that he is selfish. I hear bad accounts from him in this way. I pity him sincerely. It appears to me that his genius hardly warrants so great eccentricities and defects of character. I like the companionship of talented & cultivated people, perhaps too much, but there is a certain amount of good breeding Christian principle if you please, which I require in a friend. Somewhat dejected myself, generally, I am at times quite oppressed by C's. black mood. The paper on which I write was made in our Village, Accushnett, and has been lying in the garret of an old shop for over forty years — the keeper of which gave me a small quantity yesterday. I write with an old stub of a pen to have it in keeping & I suppose the sheet presents somewhat the appearance of one written by our country folks about the time we were "mulling & puking in the Nurse's arms."

We are having an old fashioned North-easter — this being the third day of his reign, or rain, or both. Turdus Melodus, Turdus Firnigin-cius, Turdus catbirdus, chewinks, Redstarts, Barn swallows, with the earlier Spring birds are here. And now my dear Heliogabulus farewell. Have you read an illustrated letter about Emerson's lecture & two Newspapers from me. "I pause for a reply."

Truly & Affectionately

Yours Dan^l Ricketson



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June 17, Tuesday: The Reverend [Theodore Parker](#) wrote to Dr. Fuster, a Viennese professor, mentioning news of [Professor Pierre Jean Édouard Desor](#).

In Worcester, [Henry Thoreau](#), H.G.O. Blake, and Theophilus Brown needed to use a carriage when they went out to Quinsigamund Pond, because they were being accompanied by [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#).

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) abandoned [Newport, Rhode Island](#) to visit [Concord](#) to see Henry, unaware that Henry had gone to Worcester. The father [John Thoreau](#) must have been very short indeed, for a man who himself stood 5'3" to have pronounced him "very short":



Left Newport this morning at five o'clock for Concord, Mass., via Providence and Boston, and arrived at C. about 12 M. The sail up the Providence or Blackstone River was very fine, the morning being clear and the air very refreshing. My object in coming to Concord was to see H.D. Thoreau, but unfortunately I found him on a visit at Worcester, but I was received with great kindness and cordiality by his father and mother, and took tea with them. Mrs. Thoreau, like a true mother, idolizes her son, and gave me a long and interesting account of his character. Mr. Thoreau, a very short old gentleman, is a pleasant person. We took a short walk together after tea, returned to the Middlesex Hotel at ten. Mrs. T. gave me a long and particular account of W.E. Channing, who spent so many years here.

CYNTHIA DUNBAR THOREAU

ELLERY CHANNING

DUNBAR FAMILY

PROVIDENCE



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Table of Altitudes



Yoda	2 ' 0 "
Lavinia Warren	2 ' 8 "
Tom Thumb, Jr.	3 ' 4 "
Lucy (Australopithecus Afarensis)	3 ' 8 "
Hervé Villechaize ("Fantasy Island")	3 ' 11"
Charles Proteus Steinmetz	4 ' 0 "
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (1)	4 ' 3 "
Alexander Pope	4 ' 6 "
Benjamin Lay	4 ' 7 "
Dr. Ruth Westheimer	4 ' 7 "
Gary Coleman ("Arnold Jackson")	4 ' 8 "
Edith Piaf	4 ' 8 "
Queen Victoria with osteoporosis	4 ' 8 "
Linda Hunt	4 ' 9 "
Queen Victoria as adult	4 ' 10 "
Mother Teresa	4 ' 10 "
Margaret Mitchell	4 ' 10 "
length of newer military musket	4 ' 10"
Charlotte Brontë	4 ' 10-11"
Tammy Faye Bakker	4 ' 11"
Soviet gymnast Olga Korbut	4 ' 11"
jockey Willie Shoemaker	4 ' 11"
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec	4 ' 11"
Joan of Arc	4 ' 11"
Bonnie Parker of "Bonnie & Clyde"	4 ' 11"
Harriet Beecher Stowe	4 ' 11"
Laura Ingalls Wilder	4 ' 11"
a rather tall adult Pygmy male	4 ' 11"
Gloria Swanson	4 ' 11"1/2
Clara Barton	5 ' 0 "
Isambard Kingdom Brunel	5 ' 0 "
Andrew Carnegie	5 ' 0 "
Thomas de Quincey	5 ' 0 "
Stephen A. Douglas	5 ' 0 "
Danny DeVito	5 ' 0 "
Immanuel Kant	5 ' 0 "



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William Wilberforce	5' 0 "
Dollie Parton	5' 0 "
Mae West	5' 0 "
Pia Zadora	5' 0 "
Deng Xiaoping	5' 0 "
Dred Scott	5' 0 " (±)
Captain William Bligh of HMS <i>Bounty</i>	5' 0 " (±)
Harriet Tubman	5' 0 " (±)
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (2)	5' 0 " (±)
John Brown of Providence, Rhode Island	5' 0 " (+)
John Keats	5' 3/4 "
Debbie Reynolds (Carrie Fisher's mother)	5' 1 "
Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher)	5' 1 "
Bette Midler	5' 1 "
Dudley Moore	5' 2 "
Paul Simon (of Simon & Garfunkel)	5' 2 "
Honore de Balzac	5' 2 "
Sally Field	5' 2 "
Jemmy Button	5' 2 "
Margaret Mead	5' 2 "
R. Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller	5' 2 "
Yuri Gagarin the astronaut	5' 2 "
William Walker	5' 2 "
Horatio Alger, Jr.	5' 2 "
length of older military musket	5' 2 "
the artist formerly known as Prince	5' 2 1/2 "
typical female of Thoreau's period	5' 2 1/2 "
Francis of Assisi	5' 3 "
Voltaire	5' 3 "
Mohandas Gandhi	5' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5' 3 "
Kahlil Gibran	5' 3 "
Friend Daniel Ricketson	5' 3 "
The Reverend Gilbert White	5' 3 "
Nikita Khrushchev	5' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5' 3 "
Truman Capote	5' 3 "
Kim Jong Il (North Korea)	5' 3 "





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Stephen A. "Little Giant" Douglas	5' 4 "
Francisco Franco	5' 4 "
President James Madison	5' 4 "
Ioséf Vissarionovich Dzugashvili "Stalin"	5' 4 "
Alan Ladd	5' 4 "
Pablo Picasso	5' 4 "
Truman Capote	5' 4 "
Queen Elizabeth	5' 4 "
Ludwig van Beethoven	5' 4 "
Typical Homo Erectus	5' 4 "
typical Neanderthal adult male	5' 4 1/2 "
Alan Ladd	5' 4 1/2 "
comte de Buffon	5' 5 " (-)
Captain Nathaniel Gordon	5' 5 "
Charles Manson	5' 5 "
Audie Murphy	5' 5 "
Harry Houdini	5' 5 "
Hung Hsiu-ch'üan 洪秀全	5' 5 "
Marilyn Monroe	5' 5 1/2 "
T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia"	5' 5 1/2 "
average runaway male American slave	5' 5-6 "
Charles Dickens	5' 6? "
President Benjamin Harrison	5' 6 "
President Martin Van Buren	5' 6 "
James Smithson	5' 6 "
Louisa May Alcott	5' 6 "
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	5' 6 1/2 "
Napoleon Bonaparte	5' 6 1/2 "
Emily Brontë	5' 6-7 "
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	5' ? "
average height, seaman of 1812	5' 6.85 "
Oliver Reed Smoot, Jr.	5' 7 "
minimum height, British soldier	5' 7 "
President John Adams	5' 7 "
President John Quincy Adams	5' 7 "
President William McKinley	5' 7 "
"Charley" Parkhurst (a female)	5' 7 "



FRIEND RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



Ulysses S. Grant	5 ' 7 "
Henry Thoreau	5 ' 7 "
the average male of Thoreau's period	5 ' 7 ¹ / ₂ "
Edgar Allan Poe	5 ' 8 "
President Ulysses S. Grant	5 ' 8 "
President William H. Harrison	5 ' 8 "
President James Polk	5 ' 8 "
President Zachary Taylor	5 ' 8 "
average height, soldier of 1812	5 ' 8.35 "
President Rutherford B. Hayes	5 ' 8 ¹ / ₂ "
President Millard Fillmore	5 ' 9 "
President Harry S Truman	5 ' 9 "
President Jimmy Carter	5 ' 9 ¹ / ₂ "
Herman Melville	5 ' 9 ³ / ₄ "
Calvin Coolidge	5 ' 10"
Andrew Johnson	5 ' 10"
Theodore Roosevelt	5 ' 10"
Thomas Paine	5 ' 10"
Franklin Pierce	5 ' 10"
Abby May Alcott	5 ' 10"
Reverend Henry C. Wright	5 ' 10"
Nathaniel Hawthorne	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Louis "Deerfoot" Bennett	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Friend John Greenleaf Whittier	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
President Dwight D. Eisenhower	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots	5 ' 11"
Sojourner Truth	5 ' 11"
President Grover Cleveland	5 ' 11"
President Herbert Hoover	5 ' 11"
President Woodrow Wilson	5 ' 11"
President Jefferson Davis	5 ' 11"
President Richard Milhous Nixon	5 ' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
Robert Voorhis the hermit of Rhode Island	< 6 '
Frederick Douglass	6 ' (-)
Anthony Burns	6 ' 0 "
Waldo Emerson	6 ' 0 "
Joseph Smith, Jr.	6 ' 0 "



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

David Walker	6 ' 0 "
Sarah F. Wakefield	6 ' 0 "
Thomas Wentworth Higginson	6 ' 0 "
President James Buchanan	6 ' 0 "
President Gerald R. Ford	6 ' 0 "
President James Garfield	6 ' 0 "
President Warren Harding	6 ' 0 "
President John F. Kennedy	6 ' 0 "
President James Monroe	6 ' 0 "
President William H. Taft	6 ' 0 "
President John Tyler	6 ' 0 "
John Brown	6 ' 0 (+)"
President Andrew Jackson	6 ' 1"
Alfred Russel Wallace	6 ' 1"
President Ronald Reagan	6 ' 1"
Venture Smith	6 ' 1 1/2"
John Camel Heenan	6 ' 2 "
Crispus Attucks	6 ' 2 "
President Chester A. Arthur	6 ' 2 "
President George Bush, Senior	6 ' 2 "
President Franklin D. Roosevelt	6 ' 2 "
President George Washington	6 ' 2 "



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Gabriel Prosser	6' 2 "
Dangerfield Newby	6' 2 "
Charles Augustus Lindbergh	6' 2 "
President Bill Clinton	6' 2 1/2"
President Thomas Jefferson	6' 2 1/2"
President Lyndon B. Johnson	6' 3 "
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.	6' 3 "
Richard "King Dick" Seaver	6' 3 1/4"
President Abraham Lincoln	6' 4 "
Marion Morrison (AKA John Wayne)	6' 4 "
Elisha Reynolds Potter, Senior	6' 4 "
Thomas Cholmondeley	6' 4 " (?)
Franklin Benjamin Sanborn	6' 5 "
Peter the Great of Russia	6' 7 "
Giovanni Battista Belzoni	6' 7 "
Thomas Jefferson (the statue)	7' 6"
Jefferson Davis (the statue)	7' 7"
Martin Van Buren Bates	7' 11 1/2"
M. Bihin, a Belgian exhibited in Boston in 1840	8'
Anna Haining Swan	8' 1"





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June 19, Thursday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [Concord](#):

EDMUND HOSMER



Walked after breakfast with Mr. Thoreau, Senr., by appointment to the cemetery and over the ridge to see Mr. Hosmer, an intelligent farmer. Purchased the life of Mary Ware, and a framed portrait of Charles Sumner, the former for Mrs. Thoreau, and the latter for her daughter Sophia.

H.D. Thoreau and his sister S. arrived home this noon from a trip to Worcester. Passed a part of the afternoon on the river with H.D.T. in his little boat, – discussed Channing part of the time. Took tea and spent the evening at Mr. T.'s (Item) H.D.T. says buy "Margaret."

CYNTHIA DUNBAR THOREAU

SOPHIA E. THOREAU

ELLERY CHANNING

JOHN THOREAU, SR.

DUNBAR FAMILY

June 20, Friday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [Concord](#):

BAKER FARM




6 P.M. Just returned from a sail on the river with Thoreau, having been all day. Bathed twice, visited the Baker farm and the Conantum farmhouse. Just going out to tea with the Thoreaus to Mrs. Brooks's, an abolitionist. Took tea at Mrs. Brooks's. I was pleased with her downright principles on the subject of slavery. Her husband appeared pleasant and agreeable, but not particularly engaged in the anti-slavery enterprise. Home at ten; retire about eleven. Mr. Thoreau, Senr., although ordinarily a quiet man, is very intelligent, and a fine specimen of the gentleman of the old school. I am strongly impressed with his sterling merits – a character of honesty illumines his countenance. Few men have impressed me so favorably.

MARY MERRICK BROOKS

NATHAN BROOKS

JOHN THOREAU, SR.



June 20, Friday: To [Baker Farm](#). Walking under an apple tree in the little Baker Farm peach orchard, heard an incessant shrill musical twitter or peeping, as from young birds, over my head, and, looking up, saw a hole in an upright dead bough, some fifteen feet from the ground. Climbed up and, finding that the shrill twitter came from it, guessed it to be the nest of a downy woodpecker [**Downy Woodpecker**  *Picoides pubescens*],



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which proved to be the case, —for it reminded me of the hissing squeak or squeaking hiss of young pigeon woodpeckers, but this was more musical or bird-like. The bough was about four and a half inches in diameter, and the hole perfectly circular, about an inch and a quarter in diameter. Apparently nests had been in holes above, now broken out, higher up. When I put my fingers in it, the young breathed their shrill twitter louder than ever. Anon the old appeared, and came quite near, while I stood in the tree, keeping up an incessant loud and shrill scolding note, and also after I descended; not to be relieved.

JAMES BAKER

June 21, Saturday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [Concord](#):



Exceedingly warm at Concord. Thermometer at 93 in the shade north side Mr. Thoreau's house, 12 M., rose to 97; spent the forenoon with Mr. Thoreau, Senr., walked down by the river and sat under the shade of the willows by the bank. I had a pleasant conversation with Miss Thoreau this P.M.; walked to Walden Pond with H.D.T. this P.M.; bathed, and crossed the pond with him in a boat we found upon the shore. Saw the Scarlet Tanager by the aid of Thoreau's glass, a bird I had never seen before. He was perched upon the topmost bough of a pine, and chanted forth his simple song with considerable earnestness for some time. R.W. Emerson called upon me this evening; talked of Channing and the Kansas affairs. Walked home with him and with Thoreau. This has been extremely warm, thermometer at 99 at 5 P.M. north side shade of Mr. T.'s house.

ELLERY CHANNING

JOHN THOREAU, SR.

SOPHIA E. THOREAU

WALDO EMERSON

A series of poems by [Louisa May Alcott](#), entitled "Beach Bubbles," began in Boston's [Saturday Evening Gazette](#).

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to Calvin H. Greene of Rochester, Michigan.

Concord Saturday

June 21st '56

Dear Sir

On the 12 ult I forwarded the two books to California, observing your directions in every particular, and I trust that Uncle Sam will discharge his duty faithfully. While in Worcester this week I obtained the accompanying daguerreotype — which my friends think is pretty good — though better looking than I.

Books & postage — — — \$2.64



FRIEND RICKETSON

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<i>Daguerreotype</i>		<i>.50</i>
<i>Postage</i>	— — —	<i><u>.16</u></i>
		<i>3.30</i>
		<i>5.00</i>
		<i><u>3.30</u></i>

*You will accordingly
find 1.70 enclosed with my shadow.
Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau*

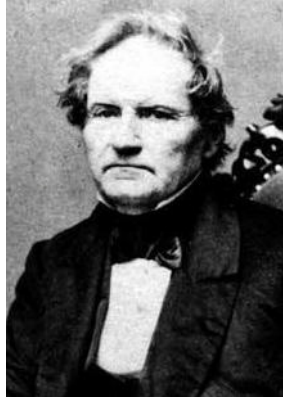


DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June 22, Sunday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) spent the forenoon in [Henry Thoreau](#)'s room copying titles of books, etc. The [Reverend Convers Francis](#) was preaching in [Concord](#) that morning, and his prooftext was Colossians 1:27



and his topic “Christ in Us the Hope of Glory.” The thermometer reaching 95 at 3PM. At 4PM Ricketson and Thoreau went over to the Emerson home for tea by prior invitation, stopping by on the way to call on Mrs. Mary Merrick Brooks. Then he, Thoreau, and Emerson went with the Emerson children to [Walden Pond](#).



Thoreau walked back from the pond with [Ellen Emerson](#) and [Edith Emerson](#) while Ricketson, [Waldo Emerson](#), and 12-year-old [Edward Waldo Emerson](#) “bathed” and discussed the birds and flowers that they had met on the way. Upon return to the Emersons, Ricketson had a chance to meet Mrs. Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley with Miss Ripley, Mrs. Marsten Goodwin, and the Reverend Francis. They visited until 9, and Ricketson was in bed back at the Thoreaus’ at 10. He had found the day very satisfactory and mused to his journal about Concord’s opportunity of becoming the famous-author [tourist trap](#) it is today:



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



My ideas of Mr. Emerson, with whom I had my second interview last night, are that he is a kind, gentle-natured man, even loving, but not what is usually termed warm-hearted. His mind does not strike me as being so great and strong as good in quality; it appears to me also limited as to its power. I should think he could rarely surprise one with any outburst of inspiration – his genius, for what he undoubtedly has, is sui generis. He is thoughtful, original, and only Emerson, and the founder of his race. It does not appear to me that he is even indebted to Carlyle, although the latter has recognized him as a kindred spirit. Emerson's strength appears to me to lie in his honesty with himself; by his honesty he has produced a genuine article in the way of thought. He is an intelligent philosopher, a recipient of the divine cordial in doses rather homœopathic, but effectual specifics for those seeking a purer and better draught than what the schools afford. He is a blessing to the age. I am much interested in Concord, and should prefer it for a residence to almost any other place. The scenery is very picturesque in and about the village, and all appears quiet and peaceful, none of the stir and bustle of New Bedford. The Concord, or Musketaquid or grass-grown river, as my friend H.D.T. has learned its meaning from the Indians, runs along the edge of the village, which is chiefly on one street, although there are several others. It is a fine stream, and remarkable for its gentle current. With Thoreau I rowed up the river several miles, and had many pleasant views from different points. Walden Pond, by the shore where Thoreau built him a little house and there lived two years, is a small but delightful little lake, surrounded by woods. It is very deep and clear, a kind of well of nature. Concord has been for a long time the home or place of temporary abode for many of our most intellectual men and women, – commencing, so far as I am informed, with Dr. Ripley, then Emerson, Margaret Fuller for a short time as a visitor, Hawthorne, G.W. Curtis, H.D. Thoreau, the true Concord aborigine, William E. Channing, 2d, poet, Hon. Samuel Hoar, and his son, ex-Judge Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar. It is also the home of Mrs. Brooks, a true and stirring abolitionist. Concord has a large number of fine old houses, and the old parsonage, once the home of Dr. Ripley and near the battle-ground, is one of the finest old homes in this county.

WALDO EMERSON

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

ELLERY CHANNING

SAMUEL HOAR

EBENEZER ROCKWOOD HOAR

EZRA RIPLEY

MARGARET FULLER

THOMAS CARLYLE



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June 23, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) went to “Brooklawn” in [New Bedford](#) with [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#). This was Ricketson’s account of it:¹³



Left Concord this A.M. with Henry D. Thoreau at 8 1/2 o'clock, and arrived home at 1 1/2 P.M., stopping one hour in Boston, visiting the Natural History rooms with H.D.T. who is a member of the Society. Thermometer at 73 – P.M. R.W. Emerson’s version of the wood-thrush as repeated to me Sunday P.M. June 22d, on our walk to Walden Pond:

He Willy Willy, Ha Willy, Willy O, Willy O.

THE BOSTON SOCIETY OF NATURAL HISTORY

The US House of Representatives considered the possibility of amending the Act of 1818.

Notice given of a bill to amend the Act of April 20, 1818. HOUSE JOURNAL, 34th Congress, 1st session, II. 1101.

June 24, Tuesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#):



Clear and fine, wind W. -Thermometer at 48 at 5 A.M. Rose early and found Thoreau walking in the garden – assisted him in fitting a press for his plants. Left home about 10 with H.D.T. for Long Pond – on the way spent an hour at Sassaquin or Tobey’s Pond, dined under an apple-tree near a spring on the Brady farm, after which bathed upon the south shore of Long Pond, and visited Nelson’s Island, one of the most beautiful and retired spots in this part of the county, made a sketch of the back side of the Brady house, and the barn, in Thoreau’s note-book. Home at 7; went with Billy and the old buggy wagon.

13. These would be the proceedings, for this year, of the Society:

PROCEEDINGS, FOR 1856



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June 25, Wednesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#):



Cooler, unsettled, and signs of rain, wind S.W. At home and about this forenoon, Thoreau busy collecting marine plants from the river side. Went to town this P.M. with Thoreau. Called at Thomas A. Greene's with T. who wished to confer with him about rare plants and those peculiar to this section – afterwards went to the city library and examined Audubon's Ornithology for a species of the sparrow which we have on our place and which as yet I have been unable to identify with any described in Wilson or Nuttall.



June 25. An abundance of the handsome corncockle (*Lychnis*), apparently in prime, in midst of a rye-field, together with morning-glories by the Acushnet shore. Black-grass in bloom, partly done. A kind of rush (?) with terete leaves and a long spike of flowers, one to two feet high, *somewhat* like a loose plantain spike. It inclines to grow in circles a foot or more in diameter. Seaside plantain and rosemary, not long out. *Veronica arvensis* one foot high (!) on the shore there. *Spergularia rubra* var. *marina*.

P.M. — Called at Thomas A. Greene's in New Bedford, said to be best acquainted with the botany of this vicinity (also acquainted with shells, and somewhat with geology). In answer to my question what were the rare or peculiar plants thereabouts, he looked over his botany deliberately and named the *Aletris farinosa*, or star-grass; the *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* (probably *interrupta* of Gray), which he thought was now gone; *Proserpinaca pectinacea*, at the shallow pond in Westport where I went last fall with Ricketson; *Panax trifolium*. That chenopodium-like plant on the salt-marsh shore, with hastate leaves, mealy under sides, is *Atriplex patula*, not yet out.

[Brewer](#), in a communication to Audubon (as I read in his hundred(?) -dollar edition), makes two kinds of song sparrows, and says that Audubon has represented one, the most common about houses, with a spot in the centre of the breast, and [Wilson](#) the other, more universally spotted on the breast. The latter's nest will be two feet high in a bush and sometimes covered over and with an arched entrance and with six eggs (while the other has not more than five), larger and less pointed than the former's and apparently almost wholly rusty-brown. This builds further from houses. [*Vide* June 23, 1860.]



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

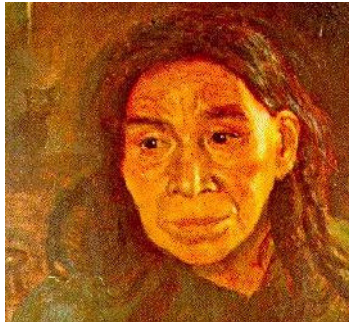
GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June 26, Thursday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#):



Cloudy morning and light rain. Cleared off by noon very fine and warm. Made an excursion to the end of Sconticut Neck with my friend Thoreau, in search of marine plants, &c. On our return called to see an old Indian woman by the name of Martha Simonds living alone in a little dwelling of but one room. It was very interesting to see her, as she is not only a pure blooded Indian, but the last of her tribe, probably the Nemaskets. Her complexion was tawny, and her straight black hair was mixed with gray; we undoubtedly saw a genuine Indian woman. Arrived home from our excursion to Sconticut about 5.

Martha Simonds or Simon or Simons was the last of the native Americans in Fairhaven. Despite the title of Albert Bierstadt's painting "The Last of the Narragansetts" which he would present to the railroad magnate



Henry Huttleston Rogers in hope of currying favor in regard to an invention for railway cars, she was not a [Narragansett](#) but a Wampanoag. As might be expected, except for Thoreau's and Ricketson's visit and notes, not a whole lot is known about her.

In the process of meeting this native woman, Thoreau encountered a [Quaker](#) minister, her neighbor, who exuded a version of racist condescension:



LOUDON

June 26. Thursday. In Loudon's "Encyclopædia of Agriculture" *far* (of the Romans) is translated Indian corn or *zea*!

According to Audubon's and Wilson's plates, the *Fringilla passerina* has a for the most part clear yellowish-white breast (*vide* May 28th), but the Savannah sparrow no conspicuous yellow on shoulder, a yellow brow, and white crown line. Rode to Sconticut Neck or Point in Fair Haven, five or six miles, and saw, apparently, the *F. savanna* near their nests (my seringo note), restlessly flitting about me from rock to rock within a rod. Distinctly yellow-browed and spotted breast, not like plate of *passerina*. Audubon says that the eggs of the Savannah sparrow "are of a pale bluish color, softly mottled with purplish brown," and those of the yellow-winged sparrow are "of a dingy white, sprinkled with brown spots." The former is apparently my seringo's egg of May 28th. Is not Nuttall mistaken when he describes the notes of the Savannah sparrow in March in Georgia as "very long, piping, and elevated" and says that they sometimes have a note like a cricket? Audubon refers to the last note only.

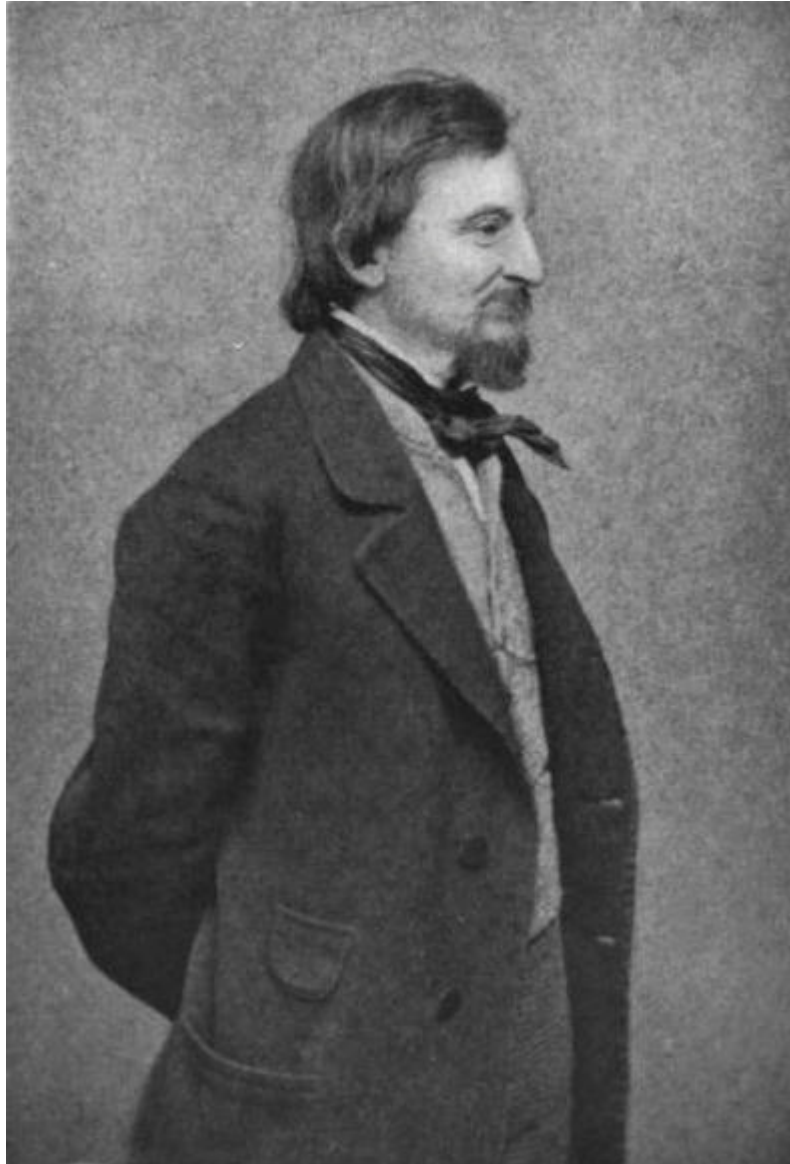
Saw a farmer on the Neck with one of Palmer's patent wooden legs. He went but little lame and said that he did his own mowing and most of his ordinary farm work, though plowing in the present state of his limb, which had not yet healed, wrenched him some. He had lost a leg just below the knee, and was supported mainly on his



FRIEND RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM





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thigh above the stump.

The older houses about New Bedford, as on this neck (and one a hundred years old is an old one), have commonly stone chimneys, which are agreeable to my eye and built with more taste than brick ordinarily, i.e. more elaborately. Yet they are now pulled down and brick substituted, or else concealed with a coat of mortar! This neck, like the New Bedford country generally, is very flat to my eye, even as far inland as Middleborough. When R. decided to take another road home from the latter place, because it was less hilly, I said I had not observed a hill in all our ride. I found on the rocky and rather desolate extremity of this point the common *Oxalis stricta* on the seashore, abundant, going to seed; apparently carrots (?) naturalized; atriplex not yet out; beach pea, still out and going to seed. An abundance of the small iris in the field near by. It was thick weather, after a drizzling forenoon, and we could just see across Buzzard's Bay from the point to Falmouth. Mattapoisett was the point next above on this side. I had been expecting to find the aletris about New Bedford, and when taking our luncheon on this neck what should I see rising above the luncheon-box, between me and R., but what I knew must be the *Aletris farinosa*; not yet out, but one near by would open apparently in two or three days.

I was struck by the number of quails thereabouts, and elsewhere in this vicinity. They keep up an incessant whistling these days, as also about R.'s house, within a stone's throw of it; and I several times saw them in the middle of the road in front of his house, in coveys, and on the road fence there. Also saw cowbirds in flocks on the road there. Around R.'s shanty was heard an incessant whistling of quails, and, morning and evening, the strain of the bay-wing [Vesper Sparrow, *Pooecetes gramineus*], and some rather feeble purple finches, young males without the purple, dark-colored.

Talked with a farmer by name of Slocum, hoeing on the Neck, a rather dull and countrified fellow for our neighborhood, I should have said. Asked him, by chance, about getting to Cuttyhunk, if it was safe to cross the bay in a whale-boat. Yes, or "Ye-e-s," his boat was only some twelve feet long and went over two or three times a year. His relations lived there. Perhaps he understood navigating here. Well, he'd been round the world considerably. "Have you been master of a whaler?" Yes, he'd been to most all parts of the world.

Heard of and sought out, the hut of Martha Simons, the only pure-blooded Indian left about New Bedford. She lives alone on the narrowest point of the Neck, near the shore in sight of New Bedford. Her hut stands some twenty-five rods from the road on a small tract of Indian land, now wholly hers. It was formerly exchanged by a white man for some better land, then occupied by Indians, at Westport, which he wanted. So said a Quaker minister, her neighbor. The squaw was not at home when we first called. It was a little hut not so big as mine. *Vide* sketch by R., with the bay not far behind it. No garden; only some lettuce amid the thin grass in front, and a great white pile of clam and quahog shells on one side. She ere long came in from the seaside, and we called again. We knocked and walked in, and she asked us to sit down. She had half an acre of the real tawny Indian face, broad with high cheek-bones, black eyes, and straight hair, originally black but now a little gray, parted in the middle. Her hands were several shades darker than her face. She had a peculiarly vacant expression, perhaps characteristic of the Indian, and answered our questions listlessly, without being interested or implicated, mostly in monosyllables, as if hardly present there. To judge from her physiognomy, she might have been King Philip's own daughter. Yet she could not speak a word of Indian, and knew nothing of her race. Said she had lived with the whites, gone out to service when seven years old. Had lived part of her life at Squaw Betty's Neck, Assawampsett Pond. Did she know Sampson's? She'd ought to; she'd done work enough there. She said she was sixty years old, but was probably nearer seventy. She sat with her elbows on her knees and her face in her hands and that peculiar vacant stare, perhaps looking out the window between us, not repelling us in the least, but perfectly indifferent to our presence.

She was born on that spot. Her grandfather also lived on the same spot, though not in the same house. He was the last of her race who could speak Indian. She had heard him pray in Indian, but could only understand "Jesus Christ." Her only companion was a miserable tortoise-shell kitten which took no notice of us [notice the cat behind Martha Simons in Albert Bierstadt's painting above, very dim at the center of the left margin]. She had a stone chimney, a small cooking-stove with fore legs, set up on bricks within it, and a bed covered with dirty bed-clothes. Said she hired out her field as pasture; better for her than to cultivate. There were two young heifers in it. The question she answered with most interest was, "What do you call that plant?" and I reached her the aletris from my hat. She took it, looked at it a moment, and said, "That's husk-root. It's good to put into bitters for a weak stomach." The last year's light-colored and withered leaves surround the present green star like a husk. This must be the origin of the name. Its root is described as intensely bitter. I ought to have had my hat full of plants. A conceited old Quaker minister, her neighbor, told me with a sanctified air, "I think that the Indians were human beings; dost thee not think so?" he only convinced me of his doubt and narrowness.

CAT



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June 27, Friday: It was a clear warm day after some rain and sharp lightning during the night. [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) and [Henry Thoreau](#) spent the forenoon in the Shanty, involved in ornithology in particular and the philosophy of life in general, and then in the afternoon they took Ricketson's son [Walton Ricketson](#) with them in a carriage to Freetown and Fairhaven and onto the steamer *Eagle's Wing*¹⁴ to [Naushon Island](#) in the Elizabeth Islands, returning at 6:30PM.¹⁵ Ricketson would sum up the day and its experiences in his 1858 publication HISTORY OF NEW BEDFORD (shown on a following screen).



14. A “steamer” would be a ship powered at least in part by a steam engine, but which might also have sails.

15. The Berg Collection in the New York Public Library contains a manuscript fragment: “June 27— 56 At Naushon I see / a common wild”



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



On the afternoon of the 27th of June, 1856, in company with a congenial friend, I visited this island. Leaving New Bedford, in less than two hours our gallant steamer, the *Eagle's Wing*, landed us at Hadley's harbor, upon the east end of the island. Our object being to see the natural beauties and productions of this comparatively unmolested realm of nature, we at once proceeded into the ancient woods, where we were soon amply rewarded by a sight of some of the noblest trees and forest ranges we had ever seen. The beeches, oaks, and other trees here grow to a large size, many of them undoubtedly of great age. Soon after our entrance we were greeted by the sight of a beautiful fawn, that stood gazing at us from a thicket at a short distance, but quickly bounded away from our view. The island being private property, the native deer are still preserved; but at certain seasons, we regret to say, these beautiful and noble creatures are hunted and shot. Naushon is the largest of the Elizabeth Islands, and is about seven miles in length and a mile and a quarter in breadth. It was formerly the property of the Hon. James Bowdoin, a Governor of Massachusetts, by whom it was bequeathed to his nephew, James Bowdoin, and by him bequeathed to his nephew, James Temple Bowdoin, who resided in London. It is now the property, by purchase, of William W. Swain, of New Bedford, and John M. Forbes, of Milton. The old mansion-house upon this island, which has been for many years the summer residence of the elder proprietor, Mr. Swain, was built by said James Bowdoin, an old bachelor, who died there while seated in his chair. The house was closed for many years, and had the reputation of being haunted, and was occasionally visited from this cause by the curious.... [W]e saw a grapevine, which my companion thought might have dated back to the time of Gosnold, that measured twenty-three inches in circumference six feet from the ground, firmly interlaced with a sturdy beech, each apparently striving for the mastery.... Passing out of the woods, we stopped upon a rising ground to view the hospitable mansion of Mr. Swain, which stands upon an elevated spot at the northeast part of the island, commanding a fine view of the broad landscape around, the bay, and the adjoining main. This house, the same before spoken of, is a large old-fashioned mansion, fronting the north, hip-roofed, with several tall chimneys, which with its ample piazzas presents an imposing and agreeable appearance. During the past year (1857) this house has been enlarged by the addition of a wing upon each side, and in other respects materially improved by the proprietors. Mr. Swain is familiarly known as "the governor," but truly he belongs to a more gallant and noble class, the ancient Lords of the Isles....



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June 28, Saturday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#):



Clear and fine. Thoreau and Arthur [??] went up the river botanizing.

The series of poems by [Louisa May Alcott](#), entitled “Beach Bubbles,” continued in Boston’s [Saturday Evening Gazette](#).

Having abandoned his Oregon homestead, [John Beeson](#) placed an article in the [Argus](#) of Oregon City. The basis for dealing fairly with local Indians, he asserted, was that to do this was to “do good, love truth, be just and fair to ALL, exalt the RIGHT, though every ism fall.”

June 29, Sunday: The [Reverend Convers Francis](#) preached in [Concord](#). His prooftext for the morning service was Matthew 10:42 and his topic was “The Worth of the Cup of Cold Water.” His prooftext for the afternoon service was Mark 10:21 and his topic was “The One Thing Lacking.”



[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#):

Very warm, wind S.W. fresh. Thermometer at 87 during the middle of the day. Walked this P.M. with Thoreau down as far as the Indian burial hill on Coggeshall farm, and after tea rode with him round Tarkiln Hill and home by Nash Road; talked widely, and retired at 10.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

June 30, Monday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#):



Warm and clear. rode to the Middleboro' Ponds with Thoreau. Visited Haskell's Island, so-called, in Great Quittacus Pond, from where we bathed and ate our dinner upon the west shore of the Island, then rode to Assawampsett and visited the old meeting-house now fast falling to decay and abuse, and King Philip's look-out, so called.

July 1, Friday[?]: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#):



ELLERY CHANNING

A fine day, cooler than for some days. Thermometer at 75, 12 hours, noon: wind N.W. This I attribute to the heat lightning in the east last evening. Rode to town this morning with Thoreau, visited Arnold's [??] garden with him. Channing came up to tea to see Thoreau and spend the evening and night. Thoreau and Channing spent the evening in the Shanty. Retired at 10.

July 2, Saturday[?]: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#):



ELLERY CHANNING

Clear and fine, cool this morning. Thermometer at about 50, 5 A.M. My friend H.D. Thoreau left in the early train this morning for his home at Concord, Mass. Took him to the Tarkiln Station. Channing, who spent the night with us, left about 9 to walk to town. During the visit of my friend Thoreau we have visited the [Middleborough Ponds](#) twice, [the Island Naushon](#), Sconticut Neck, etc. His visit has been a very pleasant one to myself and family. He is the best educated man I know, and I value his friendship very much. His health is quite poor at present, and I fear he will hardly reach old age, which from his unconcern in regard to it the more strengthens my fears for his loss.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

September 20, Thursday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal:



Left home this P.M. in 3:40 train for Boston and Concord, Mass., where I arrived about 7 1/2 P.M. On my arrival at Concord sent a lad for H.D. Thoreau who I went to visit; he soon came; went to his father's house; called on Wm. E. Channing and then to the hotel.

On pages 37-8 of John Carlos Rowe's *AT EMERSON'S TOMB* we discover [Waldo Emerson](#) condescending to address a meeting of the Woman's Rights Convention in Boston. Imagine the howls of outrage we'd be hearing from the Thoreau-contemners had he ever said any of the sorts of thing which Emerson was seeing fit to throw in these women's faces!

[next screen]

September 21, Friday: [Ellery Channing](#) came to his father [Doctor Walter Channing](#)'s home in Boston from New Bedford, Massachusetts to visit his ailing estranged wife [Ellen Fuller Channing](#). His sister Barbara Channing observed that he was "prepared," or preparing himself, for Ellen's eventual inevitable death.¹⁶

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [Concord](#):



Poor sleep at hotel. Thoreau called at 8. Walked with him to Walden Pond and saw the location of the Shanty where he lived alone some two years, bathed and visited the cliff and several other hills to obtain views of the pond and surrounding country, which is very picturesque, and the Concord River constantly seen in its meandering course through the neighboring fields, &c. Dined with Thoreau at his father's house; after dinner went on the river with Thoreau and Channing; called at an old farmhouse and saw a Mr. Hosmer, a friend of my companions; visited old battleground; saw the old mansion where Hawthorne formerly lived. Took tea with R.W. Emerson, in whose family Thoreau is quite at home, having been an inmate there. Suffered from embarrassment or rather a sense of incongruity in my being at Emerson's. I spent the night with Channing, who kindly made a good bed for me, the one at the hotel being so poor.

EDMUND HOSMER

WALDO EMERSON

September 22, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Benjamin B. Wiley](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#):

16. For some six months, which in Ellery's inconstant universe would be like six light years, this father had been able to hold a steady newspaper job paying a respectable income of \$500 per year, and had been actively engaged in a process of reestablishing a relationship with his children.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Excusing himself on the grounds he was too busy editing Margaret Fuller's *MEMOIRS*, Emerson had declined Lucy Stone's invitation that he address the women's rights convention held in Worcester in 1851. As Allen points out, five years later, he did accept an invitation to "address a Woman's Rights Convention in Boston, and on September 20 he delivered an address called simply 'Woman.'" His attitude toward women had not basically changed since 1851, but he had come around to accepting "the benefits of [public] action having for its object a benefit to the position of Woman.'" Emerson's argument in "Woman" relies on key transcendentalist concepts to urge woman's subordination to man and thus maintenance of the existing patriarchal ideology, even as Emerson endorses women's claims to such basic rights as education, property, voting, and judicial process. In effect, Emerson employs his rhetoric to mystify women in a way that comes dangerously close to what Emerson had accused Webster of doing to abolitionists. In his opening paragraphs, Emerson endorses most of the popular stereotypes of 19th-century American bourgeois men and women. Men are strong, and women are delicate. "Man is the will, and Woman the Sentiment." Man is the "rudder," and woman is the "sail" in the "ship of humanity." Women are decorative and "embellish trifles," which explains for Emerson why "no mastery in either of the fine arts ... has yet been obtained by them, equal to the mastery of men in the same." Given Margaret Fuller's careful account of the achievements of women in politics and the arts throughout history in *WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY*, it seems especially ignorant of Emerson to make such a claim about women so shortly after editing Margaret Fuller's *MEMOIRS*. Yet for all his fitful admiration of Fuller's intellect, he nonetheless identifies her in his Journals and letters with the sort of dilettantism that lacks "mastery" in literature. Even her noted skills as a conversationalist, not only in general social converse but also in her structured "Conversations" with women in Boston, are treated by Emerson as examples of women's special talent for conversation and thus the medium of their "social influence": "But there is an art which is better than painting, poetry, music, or architecture – better than botany, geology, or any science; namely, Conversation.... Conversation is our account of ourselves" (Woman, 340). Through their conversation "and their social influence," Emerson argues, "Women are ... the civilizers of mankind. What is civilization? I answer, the power of good women" (Women, 340). To be sure, these are common patriarchal clichés in this period, and Emerson works hard to connect them with his transcendental values: "Society, conversation, decorum, flowers, dances, colors, forms, are their homes and attendants.... More vulnerable, more infirm, more mortal than men, they could not be such excellent artists in this element of fancy if they did not lend and give themselves to it. They are poets who believe their own poetry" (Women, 343). In short, women are more **transcendental** for Emerson than men, at least as far as visionary experience is concerned: "There is much in their nature, much in their social position which gives them a certain power of divination.... Women know, at first sight, the characters of those with whom they converse.... And in every remarkable



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*Concord Sep 22^d '56
Dear Sir
I would advi[s]e not
to take a revolver or other weapon
of defen[c]e. It will affect the in-
nocence of your enterprise. If you
chance to meet with a wolf or a
dangerous snake, you will be luckier
than I have been, or expect to be. When
I went to the White Mts I carried
a gun to kill game with, but wisely
left it at ~~the~~ Concord N.H. As
for a knapsack, I should say
wear something water-tight & com-
fortable, with two or three pockets
to keep things separate. Wear
old shoes; carry no thin clothes.
Do not forget needle and thread
and pins, a compass, and the
best pocket map of the [county]
obtainable.
Yrs in haste
Henry D. Thoreau*

{written perpendicular to text at bottom of page:
Postmark: CONCORD
SEP
22
MASS.
Address: B. B. Wiley Esq
Providence
R.I.}



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), who was often afflicted with headaches which seemed to focus upon his left eye, the one that had been injured, to his journal, while staying in [Ellery Channing](#)'s bachelor home in [Concord](#):



Rose with headache, breakfast with Channing who lives alone, having separated from his wife and children for what reason I do not know, but he appears to me to be a kind and quiet man with extreme eccentricity. Thoreau came in, we spent the forenoon in conversation; among other matters Channing suggested the plan of an independent periodical, &c. Left at 1 P.M. and arrived at Tarkiln Hill about 7 P.M. The visit, except excessive fatigue and headache, was very pleasant and will be long remembered by me. My respect for Thoreau was much increased, he is not only a man of great natural powers, but of extreme acquirements and very much of a gentleman.

That late evening, unbeknownst to Friend Daniel, in the home of her father-in-law [Doctor Walter Channing](#) on Bowdoin Street in Boston and under his care, his host's estranged wife [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) was dying of complications from her last pregnancy and childbirth. Dr. Channing and his daughter Barbara Channing ([Ellery](#)'s sister) were at the bedside:

She has seemed more feeble each day, and to-day had two faint turns wh[ich] alarmed me – but after tea revived and spoke quite brightly and said she w[ou]ld sit up till 10 – Then I helped her to bed, and she sat down on the edge, and began to struggle terribly for breath – I call'd father and we held her and gave her brandy and applied hot water to her chest but soon she sunk and died very gently at the last.

Barbara commented that everyone had “thought she might live till Jany [January] and I hoped still more.”



Sept. 22. A rainy day. Tried some pennyroyal tea, but found it too medicinal for my taste. Yet I collect these herbs, biding the time when their use shall be discovered.

September 23: From the [Rhode Island](#) diary of John Hamlin Cady (1838-1914): “A plot has been discovered in [Texas](#) among the slaves in one of the towns to rise & kill the whites. The ringleaders were hung.”

SERVILE INSURRECTION

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

September 24: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

Brooklawn, 24 Sept.

1856.

Dear Friend,

Yours of the 23d is

received, and I notice what you say

in regard to Mr Alcott's class;

but I fear that I shall hardly prove able

to undertake the business of obtaining

one for him. It is entirely out of my line

and very much averse to my taste

to solicit from anyone. People are

so ready to ride a "high horse," as soon

as you present anything to them that

is left for their consideration or decision,

that I shrink at once from any such

collision. Still should anything turn

up whereby I may effect the object through

a third party, I shall be very glad

so to do. In the meantime I am ready

to listen to any suggestions Mr Alcott

may make to me in the premises.

I am sorry that I shall not have

the pleasure of ~~your~~ a visit from

Page 2

you this Fall, but as you need com-

panionship so much less than I do,

I suppose the pleasure would not

be reciprocal were we to meet.

I am becoming quite a historical sketcher

and have already commenced publishing

a history of New Bedford, or rather

of the old township of Dartmouth,

which included New Bedford, also

the township of Westport, Fairhaven

& the present Dartmouth.

Have you ever observed how many

of the Indian names of rivers, lakes

etc end in et? Assawampset,

Acushnet, Pascamanset, etc etc.

I am informed by a person who appear-

ed to have some knowledge of the Indian



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*words that et signifies water —
The Taunton River was called Nemasket
for several miles from its outlet from
the Middleborough Ponds — then Tetiquet
or Tetiquid — now I come to my object —
did ~~was~~ not your own Musketaquid
have the final syllable quet? If
the fact can be established that et
meant water I should have no hesita-
tion in making the alteration.—*

Page 3

*Please remember me most truly to
your family, and to Mr Emerson & his,
when you next meet him.*

*Trusting that when the right time
comes around we shall meet once
more,*

I remain,

Yours faithfully

D. Ricketson

*Arthur left this morn. on a cruise
to Nomans Land, stopping
at Cutty[hunk] to investigate
Gosnold's ruins.— I suppose he
will spend the night there. He
has for a companion, a brother salt,
a ship-master, and their vessel
is an open boat with two sails—
fore & aft rig.*

*Wally has built & launched a fine
little sailing craft with keel &
centre-board. May the Fates
reverse your decision.—*

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**FRIEND RICKETSON****DANIEL RICKETSON****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

December 22, Monday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#):

WALDO EMERSON**JOSEPH RICKETSON**

Rode to the Tarkiln Hill station at noon in expectation somewhat of seeing Mr. R.W. Emerson, but he did not come. At the depot in town while awaiting the arrival of the P.M. train from Boston, had an adventure with a coachman who abused his horse. Rather successful on my part. Mr. Emerson arrived, took him to brother Joseph's to tea, heard his lecture before the Lyceum. He came out with me and spent the night. His lecture without a name very good.

December 23, Tuesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal:

WALDO EMERSON**FRANKLIN B. SANBORN**

Spent an hour in the Shanty with Mr. Emerson and accompanied him to Boston in the mid-day train; he introduced me to the Athenæum; called at the anti-Slavery Fair in Winter St.

Met Mr. E. by agreement and went to Concord with him and passed the night. Found an agreeable and hospitable companion, Mr. Sanborn, the teacher, and a Mr. Abbott, sophomore of Cambridge. Called at Mr. Emerson's in the evening.

FRANCIS ELLINGWOOD ABBOT

Meanwhile, that day, [Henry Thoreau](#) had been surveying a lot belonging to Deacon [Francis Jarvis](#) on the north-west side of Walden Street opposite Brister's lot. This had been part of the Stratton family's land earlier, and appeared again on the survey of December 8, 1857 of Sheriff Sam Staples's plot.

BRISTER'S HILL

In his personal copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), Thoreau jotted: "Surveying for Cyrus Jarvis Dec. 23 '56 - he shows me a deed of this lot containing 6 A. 52 rods all on the W. of the Wayland Road — & consisting of plowland, orchading [*sic*?] & woodland - sold by Joseph Straton to Samuel Swan of Concord In holder Aug. 11th 1777."

[WALDEN](#): Farther down the hill, on the left, on the old road in the woods, are marks of some homestead of the Stratton family; whose orchard once covered all the slope of Brister's Hill, but was long since killed out by pitch-pines, excepting a few stumps, whose old roots furnish still the wild stocks of many a thrifty village tree.

**PEOPLE OF
WALDEN****JOSEPH STRATON**



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

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

http://www.concordlibrary.net/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.)

December 24, Wednesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [Concord](#):

WALDO EMERSON

ELLEN EMERSON

EDITH EMERSON

EDWARD EMERSON

ELLERY CHANNING

BAKER FARM

Breakfasted with Mr. Emerson and his daughters Ellen and Edith, and his son Edward, fine young people. Left Mr. E.'s and walked with Thoreau in the P.M. to Walden Pond, and through the woods to "Baker Farm," immortalized by Thoreau and Channing in prose and verse. The walking hard on account of snow about eight inches deep; got back at ten. Spent evening in house. T. read Channing's poem on Baker Farm and some other of C.'s pieces which he thinks better than almost any other poet. Thoreau saw a fox before us and there were numerous traces across the road in the woods. Enjoyed the walk though quite tired out.

JAMES BAKER

[WALDEN](#): O Baker Farm!

"Landscape where the richest element
Is a little sunshine innocent." * *

"No one runs to revel
On thy rail-fenced lea." * *

"Debate with no man hast thou,
With questions art never perplexed,
As tame at the first sight as now,
In thy plain russet gabardine dressed." * *

"Come ye who love,
And ye who hate,
Children of the Holy Dove,
And Guy Faux of the state,
And hang conspiracies
From the tough rafters of the trees!"



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

(I don't know where exactly this material ought to be situated, but while [Eddie Emerson](#) was at age 12, he dug a tunnel in the snow about six feet long, got people to come out and watch, and crawled inside with a lamp so that they could see the glow through the snow. He shouted out at the people watching so they could hear how his voice was muffled. The people who assembled for this demonstration included [Henry Thoreau](#).)



JAMES BAKER

DANIEL RICKETSON

December 24: P.M. More snow in the night and to-day, making nine or ten inches. To Walden and [Baker Farm](#) with Ricketson, it still snowing a little. Turned off from the railroad and went through Wheeler or Owl Wood. The snow is very light, so that sleighs cut through it and there is but little sleighing. It is very handsome now on the trees by the main path in Wheeler Wood, where on the weeds and twigs that rise above the snow, it rests just like down, light towers of down with the bare extremity of the twig peeping out above. We push through the light dust, throwing it before our legs as a husbandman grain which he is sowing. It is only in still paths in the woods that it rests on the trees much.

Am surprised to find Walden still open in the middle. When I push aside the snow with my feet the ice appears quite black by contrast. There is considerable snow on the edge of the pine woods where I used to live. It rests on the successive tiers of boughs, perhaps weighing them down so that the trees are opened into great flakes from top to bottom. The snow collects and is piled up in little columns like down about every twig and stem, and this is only seen in perfection, complete to the last flake, while it is snowing, as now.

Returned across the pond and went to [Baker Farm](#).

Noticed at E. end of westernmost Andromeda Pond the slender spikes of *Lycopus* with half a dozen distinct little spherical dark brown whorls of pungently fragrant or spicy seeds, somewhat nutmeg-like or even like flagroot when bruised. I am not sure that the seeds of any other mint are thus fragrant now. It scents your handkerchief or pocketbook finely when the crumbled whorls are sprinkled over them.

It was very pleasant walking there before the storm was over, in the soft subdued light. We are also more domesticated in nature when our vision is confined to near and familiar objects.

Did not see a track of any animal till returning near the Wells meadow field, where many foxes (?) two of whom I had a glimpse of, had been coursing back and forth in the path and near it for 3/4 of a mile; they had made quite a path.

I do not take snuff. In my winter walks I stop and bruise between my thumb and fingers the dry whorls of the *Lycopus* or water-horehound, just rising above the snow, stripping them off, and smell that. that is as near as I come to the Spice Islands. That is my smelling-bottle, my ointment.

FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1857



March 28, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

Concord Mar. 28th
1857

Friend Ricketson,
If it chances
to be perfectly agreeable
and convenient to you, I
will make you a visit
next week, say Wednesday
or Thursday, and we will
have some more rides to
Assawampse[tt] and the
sea-shore. Have you
got a boat on the former
yet? Who knows but we
may camp out on the
island?
I propose this now be-
cause it will be more
novel to me at this sea-
son, and I should like
to see your early birds &c.

Page 2
papers have all come safely
to hand, & I thank you
for them. I see that they
will be indispensable me-
moires pour servir. By
the way, have you read
Church's History of Phillip's
War, and looked up the
localities? It should make
part of a chapter.
I had a long letter from
Cholomondeley lately, which
I should like to show you
I will expect an
answer to this straight-



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

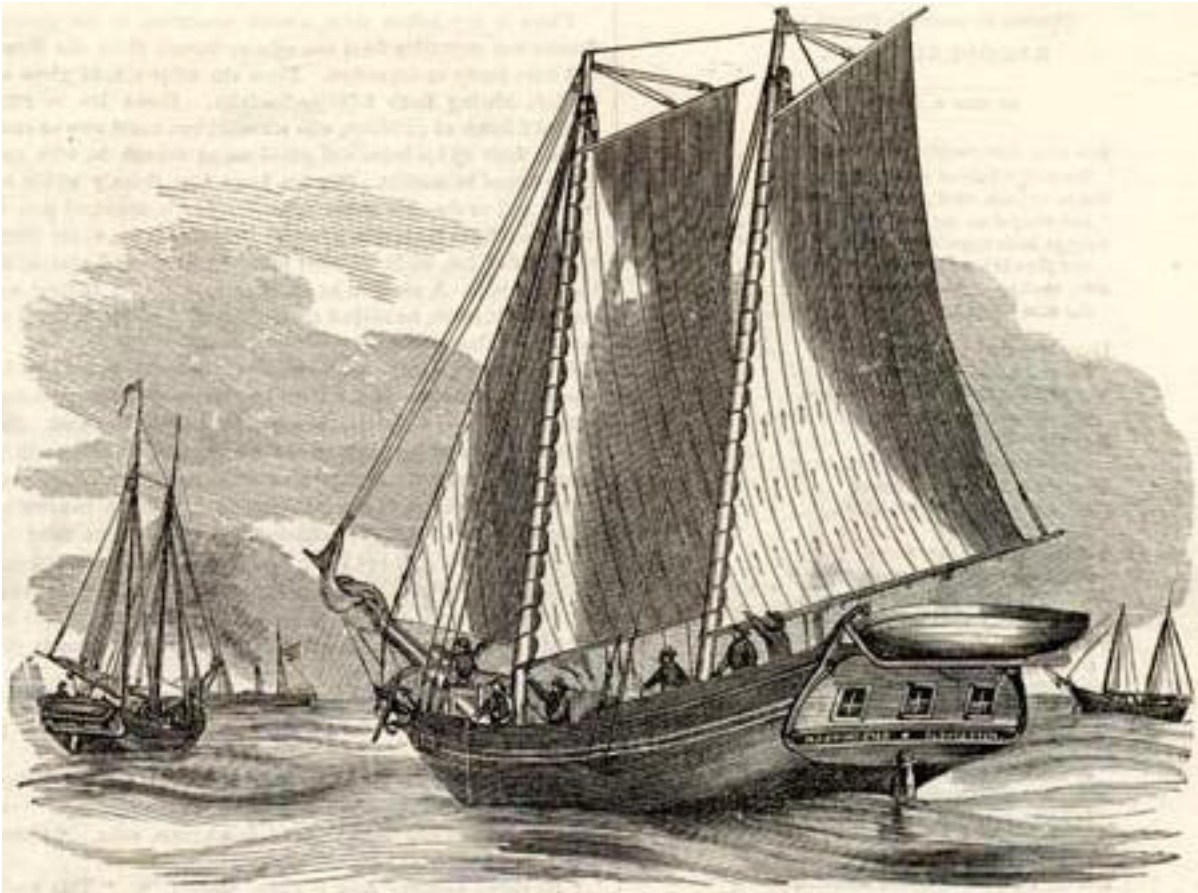
*way— But be sure you
let your own convenience
& inclinations rule it.
Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau
P.S. Please remember me to your
family.*

For some couple of decades, while Gloucester's fishermen had been engaged in the George's Bank fisheries, on average one vessel had been lost per year with all on board. "Some of the vessels have probably been tripped by the current running in an opposite direction to the wind, and being thrown over on the beam-ends and been unable to recover before they filled and sunk; others have probably drifted into shoal water and been dashed to pieces by the breakers, while some have undoubtedly been struck by a sea when at anchor, and before they could recover, their hatches would burst open and the vessel fill and sink. Many have undoubtedly been run over and sunk by larger vessels. On those, crews would not suspect they were thus hurrying shipmates to a watery grave; and where two vessels have been missing at a time, it is supposed they have come in contact with each other during a gale with such force as to cause both to sink almost immediately."

The previous year had been an exceptional one, with not a single vessel lost with her crew, but to this point in this spring there had been three close calls: one fishing vessel had nearly been sunk at its anchor and had only saved itself by cutting its cable, another, tripped by the current, was able to recover but in so doing lost one man, and a third vessel narrowly escaped being sunk when a bark, colliding with her, carried away her

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bowsprit.



However, it was announced on this day that the schooner Oolong, a first-class vessel of 85 tons that had sailed for George's Bank on February 18th, long overdue, was presumed to have sunk with all hands. A vessel had been sighted on the Bank for a week or more and had been presumed to be the Oolong, and had on March 1st been noticed to get under way, low in the water because weighed with a large catch of fish. Now it was being supposed that she must have been lost during a severe gale which had occurred on March 2d, together with her crew of nine men. The Oolong had been built at Essex in 1852 and was valued with her outfits at \$3800. Two thirds of the vessel had belonged to Mr. Aaron D. Wells and was insured by the Gloucester Mutual Fishing Insurance Office in the amount of \$2000. The other third had belonged to the widow of Captain Kendall and some residents of Gouldsboro ME and had been uninsured. The seven married men in her crew had left about twelve orphaned children:

- Captain James M. Kendall, 37 years of age, leaving a widow in Gloucester
- George Juliar, about 28 years, leaving a widow in Gloucester
- Daniel Sullivan, about 32 years, leaving a widow in Gloucester
- Thomas A. Sinclair, about 27 years, leaving a widow in Gloucester
- James Hunter, about 28 years, leaving a widow in Gloucester
- John Williams, about 35 years, leaving a widow in Gloucester
- William Olson, about 31 years, leaving a widow in Gloucester
- John Anderson, about 27 years




FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

- John Graham, about 23 years



March 28. 8.30 A.M. — Up river to Fair Haven by boat.
A pleasant morning; the song of the earliest birds, *i.e.* tree sparrows, (now decidedly) and song sparrows and bluebirds, in the air. A red-wing's gurgle [**Red-winged Blackbird**  *Agelaius phoeniceus*] from a willow. ...

March 29, Sunday: [Walden Pond](#) thawed.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

*New Bedford
Sunday A.M*

2[9] March '57

*Dear Thoreau,
I have just rec^t
your note of the 28th at my brothers
and hasten a reply for the P.O.
before I leave for Brooklawn.
Nothing would give me more
pleasure than a visit from you
at any time. It will be perfectly
agreeable to myself and family
at this present time, and I shall
duly expect you on Wednesday
or Thursday. Should this reach
you in time for an answer I will
be at Tarkiln Hill Station
to meet you — if not, make your
appearance as early as you
wish. [You] can leave your baggage
at the depot, and I will send for it
if you do not find me or our
carriage in waiting.*

Page 2

*As Channing did not make
his usual appearance yesterday
p.m. I conclude[,] that he is
with you to day, and if he leaves
before Wednesday or [T] you may
like to have his Company herewards*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*We are getting on very nicely
together.
The early birds are daily
[C]oming[—] Song sparrows
Blue Birds, Robins, Meadow[]
larks, Blackbirds (“Gen Abercrombies”)
are already here— Frogs
croaking, but not piping yet.
And the Spring quite genial.
My historical sketches have
kept me quite busy, but agreeably
so during the past Winter. They
are quite to my surprise very
popular. I should have
hardly supposed that my
homely habits & homelier style
of composition would [have]
suited many.
Should Channing be in Concord*

Page 3
*and in the humour, he can
report my home affairs
more fully, if you wish.
Remember me to your
parents & sister and other
Concord friends, particularly
the Emersons.
I write at my brothers
an in the midst of conversa-
tion in which I am participating
You will perceive this
is not a Shanty letter. but
I am none the less cordially
Yours—
D. Ricketson
P.S.
You need not answer this if
you wish to come before Thurs.-
day.
I have had a little rheumatism
about my head & shoulders, but am
getting over it.— My spirits*



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

are not over good (consequently)

April 1, Wednesday: [Herman Melville](#)'s THE CONFIDENCE-MAN was issued. This book would fall stillborn from the press, its publishers would be forced into bankruptcy — and this particular author would not be able to publish any more novels.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

*Concord Ap. 1
1857*

*Dear Ricketson,
I got your note of welcome night before last. Channing is not here, at least I have not seen nor heard of him, but depend on meeting him in New Bedford. I expect, if the weather is favorable, to take the 4.30 train from Boston tomorrow, Thursday, [p]m—for I hear of no noon train, and shall be glad to find your wagon at Tarkiln Hill, for I see it will be rather late for going across lots.*

Alcott was here last

Page 2

week, and will probably visit New Bedford within a week or 2. I have seen all the spring signs you mention and a few more, even here. Nay I heard one frog peep nearly a week ago, methinks the very first one in all this region. I wish that there were a few more signs of spring in myself--however, I take it that there are as many within us as we think we hear without us. I am decent for a steady pace but not yet for a race. I have a little cold at present, & you speak of rheumatism about the head & shoulders. Your frost

Page 3

is not quite out. I suppose that the earth itself has a little cold & rheumatism about these times, but all these things together produce a very fair general result. In a concert, you know, we must sing our parts feebly sometimes that we may not injure the general effect. I shouldn't wonder if my two-year old invalidity had been a positively charming feature to some amateurs favorably located. Why not a blasted man, as well as a blasted tree, on your lawn? If you should happen not to see me by the train named, do not go

Page 4

again, but wait at home for me, or a note from



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*Yrs
Henry D Thoreau*



FRIEND RICKETSON

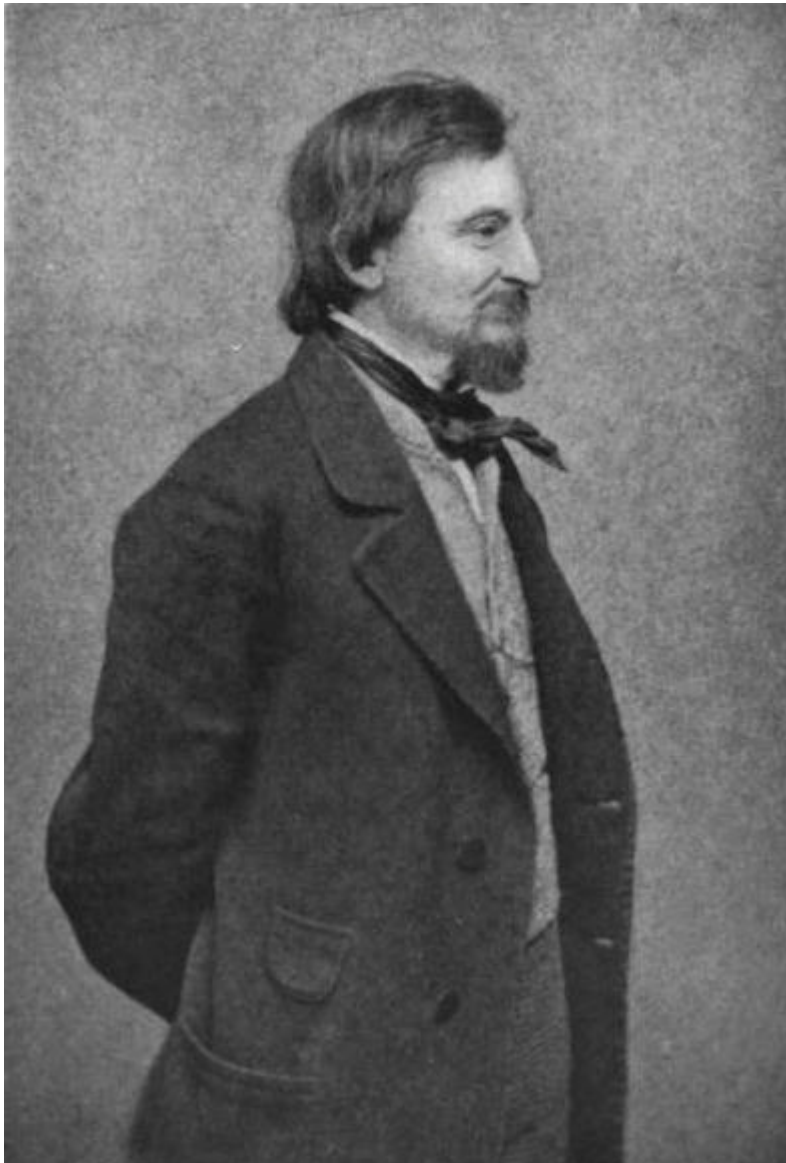
DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in New Bedford with Bronson Alcott:



Spent the day at home with Mr. Alcott; I find him a genial, highly gifted man. H.D. Thoreau arrived to-night from Concord; met him at Tarkiln Hill.



It was during one of the gatherings of Ricketson, [Ellery Channing](#), Alcott, etc. at Ricketson's home during this period that the famous incident occurred, in which [Thoreau](#) sang and danced in the parlor and heartily trod upon Alcott's toes. Thoreau had grown a full beard and Ricketson, who was 5'3" himself, was thinking that a long beard was inappropriate on a short man.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

The Improvised Dance

Like the Indian dance of old,
Far within the forest shade,
Showing forth the spirit bold
That no foeman e'er dismayed;

Like the dancing of the hours,
Tripping on with merry feet,
Triumphing o'er earthly power,
Yet with footsteps all must greet;

Like the Fauns and Satyrs, too,
Nimbly leaping in the grove,
Now unseen and then in view,
As among the trees they move;

Like the leaves by whirlwind tossed
In some forest's valley wide,
Scattered by the Autumn frost,
Whirling madly, side by side;

Thus, and still mysterious more,
Our philosopher did prance,
Skipping on our parlor floor
In his wild, improvised dance.

April 2: Thaddeus Hyatt's shallow-water steamboat *Lightfoot* arrived in Kansas City, Missouri. Two days later the Kansas City Enterprise, a weekly newspaper, printed the following notice:

STEAMER LIGHTFOOT.—A neat little steamer with the above name arrived at our wharf on Thursday under the command of our old friend Capt. Mott Morrison. She is intended for a Kansas River Packet.... This makes the fourth boat for the Kansas River the present season....



April 2: Go to New Bedford. A great change in the weather. I set out apple trees yesterday, but in the night it was very cold, with snow, which is now several inches deep. On the sidewalk in Cambridge I see a toad, which apparently hopped out from under a fence last evening, frozen quite hard in a sitting posture. Carried it into Boston in my pocket, but could not thaw it into life. The other day as I came to the front of the house I caught sight of a genuine wayfaring man, an oldish countryman, with a frock and a bundle strapped to his back, who was speaking to the butcher, just then driving off in his cart. He was a gaunt man with a flashing eye, as if half crazy with travel, and was complaining, "You see it shakes me so, I would rather travel the common road." I supposed that he referred to the rail-road, which the butcher had recommended for shortness. I was touched with compassion on observing the butcher's apparent indifference, as, jumping to his seat, he drove away before the traveller had finished his sentence, and the latter fell at once into the regular wayfarer's gait, bending under his pack and holding the middle of the road with a teetering gait. On my way to New Bedford, see within a couple of rods of the railroad, in some country town, a boy's box trap set for some muskrat or mink by the side of a little pond. The lid was raised, and I could see the bait on its point. A black snake was seen yesterday in the

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**FRIEND RICKETSON****DANIEL RICKETSON**[GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM](#)

Quaker burying-ground here.

[NEW BEDFORD MA](#)

April 3, Friday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford, Massachusetts](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#), Bronson Alcott, and [Ellery Channing](#):

Spent the day at home, in the Shanty during the forenoon with Mr. Alcott and Thoreau; talked on high themes, rather religious. Alcott walked to town this P.M. Thoreau and I walked as far as Woodlee with him, parted, and we crossed to the railroad and so up to Tarkiln Hill, and through the woods thence home. Channing and Alcott walked up from town together to tea.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



April 3. In Ricketson's shanty. R. has seen white-bellied swallows more than a week. I walk down the side of the river and see Walton's ice-boat left on the bank.

Hear R. describing to Alcott his bachelor uncle James Thornton. When he awakes in the morning he lights the fire in his stove (all prepared) with a match on the end of a stick, without getting up. When he gets up he first attends to his ablutions, being personally very clean, and cuts off a head of tobacco to clean his teeth with, eats a hearty breakfast, sometimes, it was said, even buttering his sausages. Then he goes to a relative's store and reads the Tribune till dinner, sitting in a corner with his back to those who enter. Goes to his boarding-house and dines, eats an apple or two, and then in the afternoon frequently goes about the solution of some mathematical problem (having once been a schoolmaster), which often employs him a week.

FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON

NEW BEDFORD MA

WALTON RICKETSON

April 4, Saturday: A story by [Louisa May Alcott](#) appeared in Boston's Saturday Evening Gazette, entitled "Little Sunbeam."



April 4. Saturday. Walk down the shore of the river. A Dutchman pushes out in his skiff after quahogs. He also took his eel-spear, thinking to try for eels if he could not get quahogs, for, owing to the late cold weather, they might still be buried in the mud. I saw him raking up the quahogs on the flats at high (?) tide, in two or three feet of water. He used a sort of coarse, long-pronged hoe. Keeps anchoring on the flats and searches for a clam on the bottom with his eye, then rakes it up and picks it off his rake.

Am not sure what kind of large gulls I see there, some more white, some darker, methinks, than the herring gull. R. tells me that he found dead in his piazza the south side of his house, the 23d of last January, the snow being very deep and the thermometer -12° at sunrise, a warbler, which he sent to Brewer. I read Brewer's note to him, in which he said that he took it to be the Sylvicola coronata and would give it to the Natural History Society, thinking it remarkable that it was found at that time. R. says that he discovered "for the first time its nest in the heart of Nova Scotia near Parrsboro mountains [I think last season]. It was the only new egg of that trip. Yet I felt well repaid, for 'no other white man had ever before seen that egg to know it,' as Audubon says of another species."

Caught a croaking frog in some smooth water in the railroad gutter. Above it was a uniform (perhaps olive?) brown, without green, and a yellowish line along the edge of the lower jaws. It was, methinks, larger than a common Rana palustris. Near by was its spawn, in very handsome spherical masses of transparent jelly, two and a half to three inches in diameter, suspended near the surface of some weed, as goldenrod or aster, and consisting of globules about a third of an inch in diameter, with a black or dark centre as big as a large shot. Only these black centres were visible at a little distance in the water, and so much the more surprising and interesting is the translucent jelly when you lift it to the light. It even suggested the addition of cream and sugar, for the table. Yet this pool must have been frozen over last night! What frog can it be?

NEW BEDFORD MA

FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON



April 5. Sunday. Arthur R. has been decking a new Vineyard boat which he has bought, and making a curb about the open part.

P. M. — Walked round by the ruins of the factory. See in many places the withered leaves of the aletris in rather low ground, about the still standing withered stems. It was well called husk-root by the squaw.

Arthur says that he just counted, at 9.30 P. M., twenty toads that had hopped out from under the wall on to the sidewalk near the house. This, then, is apparently the way with the toads. They very early hop out from under walls on to sidewalks in the warmer nights, long before they are heard to ring, and are often frozen and then crushed there. Probably single ones ring earlier than I supposed. I hear the croaking frogs at 9.30 P. M., also the speed speed over R.'s meadow, which I once referred to the snipe, but R. says is the woodcock, whose other



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

strain he has already heard.

ARTHUR RICKETSON

NEW BEDFORD MA

FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON

April 6, Monday: A steamer frigate driven by a screw was commissioned in the US Navy, the [USS Niagara](#). This vessel would participate in the laying of the 1st transatlantic telephone cable, would interdict slave traffic in the Caribbean, would ferry diplomats to and from Japan, and during the civil war would blockade southern ports.



April 6. P.M. — To New Bedford Library.

Mr. Ingraham, the librarian, says that he once saw frog-spawn in New Bedford the 4th of March. Take out Emmons's Report on the insects injurious to vegetation in New York. See a plate of the *Colias Philodice*, or common sulphur-yellow butterfly, male and female of different tinge. *Arcoda lanigera* is apparently the common yellow dor-bug. Arthur has *Tabanus*, the great horse-fly. Emmons says of *Scutelleridae*: "The disagreeable smelling bugs that frequent berry bushes and strawberry vines belong here.... Of this family the genus *Pentatoma* is one of the most common and feeds upon the juice of plants. Sometimes it has only to pass over a fruit, to impart to it its offensive odor." The one represented looks like the huckleberry one.

EMMONS

NEW BEDFORD MA

ARTHUR RICKETSON

EBENEZER EMMONS

April 8, Wednesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#), Bronson Alcott, and [Ellery Channing](#):



Clear and fine, spent at home. Mr. Alcott dined at B. Rodman's. Thoreau made some bayberry tallow in the Shanty; walked with him to the rocky cliff beyond Acushnet. Channing came up this P.M. Fair, clear, moonlight evening.

April 9, Thursday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#), and Bronson Alcott:



Unsettled. In town with Thoreau. Walton [his son] and Thoreau walked round the beach and the west side of Clark's Cove.

Mr. Alcott's first conversation at Mrs. Arnold's this evening; attended with the children, Mr. A. riding with us. Subject, "Descent." A successful opening.

WALTON RICKETSON



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

April 10, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) noticed among the decorations in [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s shanty a wall-motto from [Horace](#)'s ODES. We note that although he jotted down several such conceits, this stands out as the only one for which it was unnecessary to also register the name of an author.



April 10: D.R.'s Shanty is about half a dozen rods S.W. of his house (which may be one hundred rods from the road), nearly between his house and barn, is 12 x 14 feet, with 7 feet posts, with common pent roof. In building it he directed the carpenter to use western boards and timbers, though some eastern studs (spruce?) were inserted. He had already occupied a smaller shanty at "Woodlee," about a mile S. The roof is shingled, and the sides made of matched boards, and painted a light clay color, with chocolate (?) colored blinds. Within, it is not plastered, and is open to the roof, showing the timbers and rafters, and rough boards and cross-timbers overhead, as if ready for plastering. The door is at the east end, with a small window on each side of it, a similar window on each side of the building, and one at the west end, the latter looking down the garden walk. In front of the last window is a small box stove with a funnel rising to a level with the plate, and there inserted in a small brick chimney which rests on planks. On the south side of the room, against the stove, is a rude settle with a coarse cushion and pillow; on the opposite side a large low desk with some bookshelves above it; on the same side by the window, a small table covered with books; and in the N.E. corner, behind the door, an old-fashioned secretary, its pigeonholes stuffed with papers. On the opposite side as you enter is a place for fuel, which the boy leaves each morning, a place to hang greatcoats. there were two small pieces of carpet on the floor, and R. or one of his guests swept out the Shanty each morning. There was a small kitchen clock hanging in the S.W. corner, and a map of Bristol County behind the settle. The west and N.W. side is well-nigh covered with slips of paper on which are written some sentences or paragraphs from R.'s favorite books. I noticed among the most characteristic Didbin's "Tom Tackle," a translation of Anacreon's *Cicada*, lines celebrating tobacco, Milton's "How charming is divine philosophy," &c., "*Inveni requiem; Spes et Fortuna valete: Nil mihi vobiscum est: laudite nunc alios.*" (Is it Petrarch?) this is also over the door, "*Mors pallida æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas regumque turres.*" Some lines of his own in memory of A.J. Downing, "Not to be in a hurry," over the desk, and many other quotations, celebrating retirement, country life, simplicity, humanity, sincerity, &c., &c., from Cowper and other English poets, and similar extracts from newspapers. There were also two or three advertisements of cattle-show exhibitions, and the warning not to kill birds contrary to laws, he being one of the subscribers notified to enforce the act, an advertisement of a steamboat on Lake Winnepiseogee, &c., cards of his business friends. The size of different brains, from "Hall's Journal of Health," and "Take the world Easy." A sheet of blotting paper tacked up, and of Chinese characters from a tea-chest. Also a few small pictures and pencil sketches, the latter commonly caricatures of his visitors or friends, as "The Trojan" ([Channing](#)) and Van Beest; I take the most notice of these particulars because his peculiarities are so commonly unaffected. He has long been accustomed to put these scraps on his walls, and has a basket full somewhere saved from the old Shanty, though there were some quotations which had no right there. I found all his peculiarities faithfully expressed, his humanity, his fear of death, love of retirement, simplicity, &c. The more characteristic books were Bradley's Husbandry, Drake's Indians, Barber's Hist. Coll., Zimmermann on Solitude, Bigelow's Plants of Boston, &c., Farmer's Register of the first Settlers of New England, Marshall's Gardening, Vick's Gardener, John Woolman, The Modern Horse Doctor, Downing's Fruits, &c., The Farmer's Library, Walden, Dymond's Essays, Jobb Scott's Journal, Morton's Memorial, Bailey's Dictionary, Downing's Landscape Gardening, etc., The Task, Nuttall's Ornithology, Morse's Gazetteer, The Domestic Practice of Hydropathy, John Buncler, Dwight's Travels, Virgil, Young's Night Thoughts, History of Plymouth, and other Shanty books.

There was an old gun, hardly safe to fire, said to be loaded with an inextractable charge, and also an old sword over the door; also a tin sign, "D. Ricketson's office" (he having set up for a lawyer once), and a small crumpled horn; there I counted more than 20 rustic canes scattered about, a dozen or 15 pipes of various patterns (mostly the common), two spy-glasses, an open paper of tobacco, an Indian's jaw (dug up), a stuffed Bluejay, and Pine Grosbeak, and a rude Indian stone hatchet, &c., &c. There was a box with fifteen or twenty knives, mostly very large old-fashioned jack-knives, kept for curiosity, occasionally giving one to a boy or friend. A large book full of pencil sketches, "to be inspected by whomsomever," containing mostly sketches of his friends, &c., acquaintances, and himself, of wayfaring men whom he had met, Quakers, &c., &c., and now and then a verse under fence rail, or an old-fashioned house sketched on a peculiar pea-green paper. A pail of water stands behind

ANACREON

HORACE

COWPER

BARBER

BIGELOW

A.J. DOWNING

A.J. DOWNING

DWIGHT

PIPE

QUAKERS



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

the door, with a peculiar tin cup for drinking, made in France.

JONATHAN DYMOND
FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON

April 13, Monday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#), Bronson Alcott, and [Ellery Channing](#):



Rode to Quittacus Pond with Thoreau, also visited Long Pond, and took our dinner at the old Brady house. Channing came up to tea. Attended the third Conversation of Mr. Alcott at C.W. Morgan's this evening, the subject, "Diet and Health." Owing to some supposed disrespect to Christianity and the customs of Quakers, some of the members of the society left, although I think from what I know of Mr. Alcott if they had remained through his course they would have been better satisfied.

QUAKERS

There was evidently some discussion of what to do with the books sent to [Thoreau](#) by Thomas Cholmondeley that were in Sanskrit, because Thoreau of course did not read Sanskrit. [Waldo Emerson](#) wrote James Elliot Cabot and mentioned Thoreau's copy of the *Upanishads* as a book that might possibly be made available for the Boston Athenæum. "'Tis an inestimable little book, —good enough to make me hesitate to put it into the library."



April 13, Monday: To Middleboro Ponds. There was no boat on Little Quittacus, so we could not explore it. Set out to walk around it, but the water being high (higher than anciently, even, on account of dams), we had to go round a swamp at the south end about Joe's rocks, and R. gave it up. I went to Long Pond and waited for him. Saw a strange turtle, much like a small snapping turtle or very large *Sternotherus odoratus* (?), crawling slowly along the bottom next the shore; poked it ashore with a stick; it had a peculiarly square snout, and hinges to the sternum, and both parts moveable; was very sluggish, would not snap or bite, looked old, being mossy close on the edges, and the scales greenish and eaten beneath, the flesh slate colored. I saw it was new, and wished to bring it away, but had no paper to wrap it in; so I peeled a white birch, getting a piece of bark about ten inches long. Noticed that the birch sap was flowing. This bark at once curled back so as to present its yellow side outward. I rolled it about the turtle and folded the ends back, and tied it round with a strip of birch bark, making a very nice and airy box for the occasion, which would not be injured by moisture, far better than any paper, and so brought it home to Concord at last. As my coat hung in R.'s shanty, over a barrel of papers, the morning that I came away the turtle made a little noise, scratching the birch bark in my pocket. R. observed, "There is a mouse in that barrel; what would you do about it?" "Oh, let him alone," said I, "he'll get out directly." "They often get among my papers," he added. "I guess I'd better set the barrel outdoors." I did not explain, and perhaps he experimented in the barrel after my departure.¹⁷

17. In an attempt to grasp why it was that their father's friend Thoreau did not explain this scratching noise, Ricketson's children Anna and Walton, later in life, when Thoreau's journal was published and they read this comment about their father, have speculated that perhaps "it was out of consideration for Father's sensitiveness regarding all dumb animals." They would not favor the idea that it might have been merely their dad's adored friend's practical joke on their dad.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

April 14, Tuesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with [Henry Thoreau](#) and Bronson Alcott:



Raining, wind N.E. At home. In the Shanty and house conversing on high themes with Mr. Alcott and Thoreau. Walked as far as the blacksmith's shop (Terry's) just at night. Talk after tea on races, &c. Dull for want of sleep.

April 15, Wednesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal. In the evening, Bronson Alcott gave his fourth conversation of the series in [New Bedford MA](#):



H.D. Thoreau and myself left home at 6 A.M. for Tarkiln Hill, but the cars not stopping long enough for him to get on board, he was left and returned home with me. Rode to the depot with him at 10 1/2 A.M.

April 17, Friday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) with Bronson Alcott:



Attended Mr. Alcott's fifth and last conversation at C.W.M.'s; subject, "Victories," an animated discussion, in which I participated to my regret. I must retire more and more into my old habits of solitude; much society I cannot bear. Retired at 12 1/2 exhausted and nervous.



[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to Eben J. Loomis [EBEN J. LOOMIS](#).

Concord Ap. 17 '56

Dear Sir,

I have a turtle from Freetown in this state which appears to be a Sternothaerus, but it is not the S. Odoratus of our river. I believe that there is one more at least of this genus known in the States, but the Odoratus only is described in Dr. Storer's little report on our reptiles, which I have;—therefore, knowing your interest in Natural History, I take the liberty to ask you if you will copy & send me the scientific or essential part of the description, with the habitat, of the one or perhaps two others, from either Holbrook's Herpetology, or the volume on reptiles in the N.Y. State reports, which you will no doubt find in any sizeable library in Cambridge. I shall be glad to show you the creature when you come to Concord.

You will thus very much oblige yours truly



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Henry D. Thoreau

P.S. What discoveries among the birds & flowers? We had the Fringilla melodia here all the winter.

[Thoreau](#) also wrote to H.G.O. Blake:

*Concord Ap. 17th 1857
Mr Blake,
I returned
from New Bedford night
before last. I met Alcott
there & learned from him
that probably you had gone
to Concord. I am very sorry
that I missed you. I had
expected you earlier, & at
last thought that I should
get back before you came,
but I ought to have no-
tified you of my absence.
However, it would have
been too late, after I had
made up my mind to go.
I hope you lost nothing
by going a little round.
I took out the
Celtis seeds at your request,
at the time we spoke of them,*

*Page 2
and left them in the
chamber on some shelf
or other. If you have
found them, very well;
if you have not found
them, very well; but tell
Hale of it, if you see him.
My mother says
that you & Brown &
Rogers & Wasson (titles
left behind) talk of "coming
down on" me some day.
Do not fail to come
one & all, and within*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*a week or two, if possible,
else I may be gone again.
Give me a short notice,
and then come & spend
a day on Concord River—
or say that you will
come if it is fair, unless
you are confident of
bringing fair weather with
you. Come & be Concord,*

Page 3

*as I have been Worcestered.
Perhaps you came
nearer to me for not finding
me at home, for trains
of thought the more con-
nect when trains of cars
do not. If I had ac-
tually met you, you would
would have gone again, but
now I have not yet dismissed
you.*

*I hear what you say
about personal relations
with joy. It is as if you
were to say, I value the
best & finest part of
you, & not the worst. I
can even endure your very
near & real approach, &
prefer it to a shake of the
hand. This intercourse is
not subject to time or dis-
{MS torn}
{MS torn} a very long
{MS torn}tter from*

Page 4

*Cholmondeley which I wish
to show you. He speaks*



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

of sending me more books!!

If I were with you now

I could tell you much

of Ricketson, and my visit

to New Bedford, but I do

not know how it will be by

& by. I should like to have

you meet R— who is the

frankest man I know.

Alcott & he get along very

well to-gether.

Channing has returned to

Concord with me, probably

for a short visit only.

Consider this a business

letter, which you know

counts nothing in the

game we play.

Remember me particularly

to Brown.

[Henry D. Thoreau]

"tance.

["I have a new,

& faithfule" Copied from the paper cut out. H.G.O.B.]

April 18, Saturday: Clarence Darrow, who would become an honest lawyer, was born.

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [New Bedford](#) as his guest Bronson Alcott was (finally) departing:



My friend A. Bronson Alcott, who came the 31st of March, left this morning after breakfast for Boston. Mr. A. is the best representative, probably, of modern days of one of the old philosophers, and is sometimes called "Plato," or the modern Plato. From the acquaintance I have had with him I am ready to award to him the noblest character of any man I have ever met. Such men are indeed rare in any age.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

May 13, Wednesday: By this day, all the British of [India](#) had been informed by telegraph of the mutiny that was taking place at Simla. This new device for the communication of information therefore became instantly a device for the interception of information, for, according to the London [Times](#), with the British in possession of such intelligence and the natives not yet generally in possession of it, “the post was stopped, and an embargo placed on all native correspondence.” The [Times](#) went on to specifically categorize the telegraph as a weapon of war: “It is not too much to say that the telegraph saved India.”

The Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) went to the annual Western Unitarian Conference in Alton, [Illinois](#). The Supreme court had recently announced its Dred Scott decision, and Conway felt personally humiliated at this because Justice Peter Daniel, one of the justices who had declared that the black people of America were “outside the family of nations” and struck down the Missouri Compromise, was a relative of his.¹⁸

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

Concord May 13th

57

Friend Ricketson

A recent neighbor of ours, W^m W. Wheildon, having heard that you talked somewhat of moving to Concord (for such things will leak out) has just been asking me to inform you that he will rent his house, which is a furnished one, with a garden, or sell the same, if you like them. It is a large house, the third below (East of) us on the same side of the street — was built some 20 years ago partly of old material, & since altered. The garden is a very good one, of about 2 1/2 acres, with many fruit trees &c &c. Channing can tell you about it. When I ask his price, he merely answers “I think it worth \$8000. But I would rather have Mr R. see it before I speak of the price—” — It could probably be bought for a thousand or two less. Indeed I have heard \$6000 named. If you think seriously of coming to Concord to live, it will be worth your while to see it. His address is “W^m W. Wheildon, Editor of the Bunker Hill Aurora, Charlestown Mass.” — for he lives there at present. You would see his name over his office if you went there.

Since you are so much attached to New Bedford that it is doubtful if you can live any where else — would it not be safer — if you do anything about it — to hire first, with liberty to buy afterward at a price before agreed on?

My mother & sister join with me in saying that if you think it worth your while to look at the premises, we shall be glad of the opportunity to receive you with any of your family under our roof.

Since I left N.B. I have made several voyages equal to the circumnavigation of the Middleboro Ponds, and have done much work beside with my hands— In short, I am suddenly become much stouter

18. Why Conway should have been alarmed, that he had a stupid relative, is anybody's guess. Dred Scott probably had stupid relatives too, but it is not of record that he agonized over this.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

than for the past 2 years.

Let me improve this opportunity to acknowledge the receipt of "Tom Bowling" — & the May-flower — for which convey my thanks to the donor. His soul is gone aloft — his body only is epigaea repens (creeping over the earth). It has been sung & encored several times — & is duly made over to my sister & her piano —

In haste

Yours truly

Henry D. Thoreau



May 13. Work in garden. I see a toad only an inch and a quarter long; so they must be several years growing.

P. M. — To Leaning Hemlocks.

A large bunch of oat spawn in meadow water. Scare up a black duck and apparently two summer ducks. Canoe birch, how long? *Sternothærus*.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

May 15, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).



*The Shanty 15th May
1857.*

Dear Thoreau,

Yours of the 13th came to hand yesterday m. I am much obliged to you for informing me in regard to the place for sale, or to be let, in Concord. My place is not yet sold, and my future movements depend entirely upon the result. It will soon however be determined for the



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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*present season, whether we shall move or not. I have as you are aware great local attachments; and it is hardly probable that I should be able to form new associations equal to the old,— still for my family's sake I could make a move. It would be my wish to try it for a year, as you suggest, and this may come to pass. Please accept the thanks of my family and myself for the kind offer of your mother and sister, to receive us as your guests. It is quite possible that myself and daughters will accept your invitation week after next,— say the 27th Inst. (Wednesday for a day or two, and bring you back with us, to finish your visit, which it will require the whole of June to accomplish. A large fish-hawk was shot yesterday on an oak tree between our house & the shore road — measuring over 5 ft. in alar extent— He is alive — his wing only being broken. Please write
Your friend
D.R.
I can go to the Hotel with my hair pillow, or take Channing's room. Channing has returned and appears to be settled for some time to come.
Where is "Father Alcott"
I think on the whole, we had pretty good times with you, Alcott, & E—*



May 15. Black currant at R. W. E.'s.

Abel Hosmer thought that the *Salix alba* roots might reach half a dozen rods into his field as big as your finger. Thought that they made the grass grow as much as the locust; only they made it rough plowing by throwing the plow out.

May 16, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

*Concord May 16
'57
Friend Ricketson,
I should have
told you perhaps, that
Mr Wheildon said that
he should be obliged to
decide very soon about
the letting of his house*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

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*this year. Cant you come
next week on Wednesday
(the 20th)?
There are two other
reasons for an earlier
visit. My mother &
sister were thinking to go
to Boston to attend the
anniversaries week after
next — & I to Cape Cod,
in order to leave time for
a visit to Maine in June.
(So you see, I must*

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*not think of New Bedford.)
However, if it
is more convenient to
you, do you come the
day you proposed, & my
mother & sister will be
at home; but you
must not count certainly
on meeting me.
Alcott passed through
Concord last Sunday, on
his way home, but I did
not see him.
If you wait till the 27th
& still design to look at
Wheildon's place, it will
be well for you to write to
him now—
I shall be glad to intro-
duce Misses Anna
& Emma to our river
& to Ellen & Edith Emerson.
Yrs Henry D. Thoreau*



May 16. P. M.—To Hill for pines.
The meadows are now mostly bare, the grass showing itself above the water that is left, and an unusual number of swallows are flying low over it. A yellow lily out, and, on the hill, a red cedar, maybe a day.

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**DANIEL RICKETSON****FRIEND RICKETSON****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

May 17, Sunday: The army loyal to the British colonialists marched upon Delhi, [India](#) but was vastly outnumbered by the Sepoy mutineers and was encircled.



[Henry Swasey McKean](#) committed suicide in Boston at the age of 47 (his unfortunate child would be, what, five years of age?). According to page 240 of ANNUAL OBITUARY NOTICES OF EMINENT PERSONS *WHO HAVE DIED IN THE UNITED STATES*. FOR 1857. BY HON. NATHAN CROSBY. / FOR BEHOLD THE LORD, THE LORD OF HOSTS, DOETH TAKE AWAY FROM JERUSALEM AND FROM JUDAH THE STAY AND THE STAFF. * * * THE MIGHTY MAN AND THE MAN OF WAR; THE JUDGE AND THE PROPHET, AND THE PRUDENT AND THE ANCIENT; THE CAPTAIN OF FIFTY AND THE HONORABLE MAN, AND THE COUNSELLOR, AND THE CUNNING ARTIFICER, AND THE ELOQUENT ORATOR. — ISAIAH III. 1.3. (Boston: Phillips, Sampson and Company, 1858),

His temperament was sensitive, and inclined to melancholy, which at times caused mental aberration, in a paroxysm of which he lost his life.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

In HARVARD REMINISCENCES, published by Ticknor and company in Boston in 1888, we find the following remark by the Reverend Andrew Preston Peabody, who had known him while he was tutoring in Latin:

He was a man of accurate and elegant scholarship, of refined taste, and pure character. I was very intimate with him during my tutorship, but saw him only once for a few minutes afterward.

Per pages 142-3, NECROLOGY OF ALUMNI OF [HARVARD COLLEGE](#), 1851-52 TO 1862-63 by Joseph Palmer (published and printed by J. Wilson and son, 1864):

At the time of his death he was meditating a change of occupation, and proposing to engage in some literary employment.... His temperament was sensitive, and inclined to melancholy, which affected him to such a degree, as to induce, occasionally, mental alienation, in a paroxysm of which he ended his life with his own hand.



May 17. P. M. — Round Walden.

Gold-thread is abundantly out at Trillium Woods. The yellow birch catkins, now fully out or a little past prime, are very handsome now, numerous clusters of rich golden catkins hanging straight down at a height from the ground on the end of the pendulous branches, amid the *just* expanding leaf-buds. It is like some great chandelier hung high over the underwood. So, too, with the canoe birch. Such black as I see is not quite so forward yet. The canoe, yellow, and black birches are among the handsomest trees when in bloom. The bunches of numerous rich golden catkins, hanging straight down on all sides and trembling in the breeze, contrast agreeably with the graceful attitude of the tree, commonly more or less inclined, the leaves not being enough expanded to conceal them in the least. They should be seen against evergreens on a hillside,— something so light and airy, so graceful. What nymphs are they?

What was that peculiar spawn on a submerged alder stem seen the 13th? It looked like a fresh light-colored fungus, flattish and circular, a third of an inch over, and waving in the water, but, taken out, hung down longer. In the midst of this jelly were minute eggs.

I just notice the fertile sweet-fern bloom on *tall* plants, [An others.] where the sterile catkins are falling off above it. Most plants have none.

Two cocoons of apparently the *Attacus Promethea* on a small black birch, the silk wound round the leafstalk.

May 18, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

*The Shanty, 18th May
1857.*

*Dear Thoreau,
It did not occur
to me until after sending
my last note to you, that
the time we proposed to
visit you fell within the
Anniversary week, or
I should not have set
that time; and might*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Page 2

*then have made an
arrangement to have
visited you at the time
you propose--But Arthur
and Walton left this morning
in their boat for the Elizabeth
Islands and No man's
Land to be absent until
Saty night. Furthermore
as we have no present pros-
pects of adopting Concord
for a future home, and the
whole project is so novel
and problematical, ~~that~~*

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*it appears much better
to drop the matter for the
present at least.
We are all thankful
for your ~~own~~ and mother's and
sister's kindness as well
as your own.
Trusting that your proposed
journey will prove profitable
and satisfactory, I remain
Very truly yours
D. Ricketson
H.D. Thoreau*



May 18. P. M.—To Bateman's Pond via Yellow Birch Swamp with Pratt.

Pratt says he saw the first rhodora and cultivated pear out yesterday. Many are now setting out pines and other evergreens, transplanting some wildness into the neighborhood of their houses. I do not know of a white pine that has been set out twenty-five years in the town. It is a new fashion. Judging from the flowering of such of the plants as I notice, this is a backward season. There is a very grand and picturesque old yellow birch in the old cellar northwest the yellow birch swamp. Though this stands out in open land, it does not shed its pollen yet, and its catkins are not much more than half elongated, but it is very beautiful as it is, with its dark-yellowish tassels variegated with brown. Yet in the swamp westerly the yellow birches are in full bloom, and many catkins strew the ground. They are four or five inches long when in bloom. They begin to shed their pollen at the base of the catkin, as, I think, other birches do.

In the yellow birch and ash swamp west of big yellow birch, I hear the fine note of cherry-birds, much like that of young partridges, and see them on the ash trees. *Viola Muhlenbergii* abundantly out, how long? The fever-bush in this swamp is very generally killed, at least the upper part, so that it has not blossomed. This is especially



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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the case in the swamp; on higher ground, though exposed, it is in better condition. It appears to have been killed in the spring, for you see the unexpanded flower-buds quite conspicuous. Pratt shows me the fringed gentian stems by a swamp northeast of Bateman's Pond, but we find no traces of a new plant, and I think it must be annual there. The violet wood-sorrel is apparently later than the *Oxalis stricta*, not now so forward, lower, and darker green, only a few of the leaves showing that purplish mark. Hear the peep, how long? In woods close behind Easterbrook's place, whence it probably strayed, several Canada plums now in bloom, showing the pink. Interesting to see a wild apple tree in the old cellar there, though with a forward caterpillar's nest on it. Call it *Malus cellaris*, that grows in an old cellar-hole. Pedicularis, some time. The blossom-buds of the *Cornus florida* have been killed when an eighth of an inch in diameter, and are black within and fall on the least touch or jar; all over the town. There is a large tree on the further side the ravine near Bateman's Pond and another by some beeches on the rocky hillside a quarter of a mile northeast. In the swampy meadow north of this Pratt says he finds the calla. The *Rubus triflorus* is well out there on the hummocks. The white ash is not yet out in most favorable places. The red huckleberry looks more forward—blossom-buds more swollen—than those of common there. Some high blueberry. Pratt has found perfectly white *Viola pedata* behind Easterbrook place, and cultivated them, but now lost them. Says he saw two "black" snakes intertwined (copulating?) yesterday.

May 19, Tuesday: [William Francis Channing](#) and Moses G. Farmer obtained patent #17,355 for Improvements in Electro Magnetic Fire Alarm Telegraphs, a patent which they would soon sell to John N. Gamewell, whose company and successive companies still bearing the Gamewell name have manufactured nearly all the familiar "red boxes on the corner." After the first system in [Boston](#) in 1852 would come Philadelphia in 1855, St. Louis in 1858, New Orleans and Baltimore in 1860, and New-York in 1869. In the first boxes a notched code wheel was turned by a hand crank on the front of the box. This crude arrangement would soon be superceded by a spring-driven clockwork type mechanism that would drive the code wheel when actuated by yanking down a lever.

[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed a lot belonging to [Daniel Shattuck](#) near Peter Hutchinson's field and Sleepy Hollow Cemetery.



May 19. A. M.—Surveying D. Shattuck's wood-lot beyond Peter's.

See myriads of minute pollywogs, recently hatched, in the water of Moore's Swamp on Bedford road. Digging again to find a stake in woods, came across a nest or colony of wood ants, yellowish or sand-color, a third of an inch long, with their white grubs, now squirming, still larger, and emitting that same pungent spicy odor, perhaps too pungent to be compared with lemon-peel. This is the second time I have found them in this way this spring (*vide* April 28th). Is not the pungent scent emitted by wasps quite similar?

I see the ferns all blackened on the hillside next the meadow, by the frost within a night or two.

That ant scent is not at all sickening, but tonic, and reminds me of a bitter flavor like that of peach-meats.



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

May 23, Saturday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [Concord](#), to his journal:

ELLERY CHANNING

I begin to feel the loss of Channing's company, who, though a very capricious acquaintance, still possessed many tastes in common with my own. I have rarely if ever found a more companionable friend.

Left home at 10 A.M. for Concord, arriving there at 5 1/2 P.M. Walked with Thoreau this evening, and called at Mr. Emerson's. Slept at Channing's house upon an iron bedstead. Fine warm starlight eve.

Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay, distinguished English historian and former MP, responded to an American historian, Henry Stephens Randall, who had sent him a copy of his new partisan LIFE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON which had presented the American scene from the standpoint of a Jeffersonian Democrat. His response, excerpted on the following screen, illustrates the extent to which one's basal orientation toward hierarchy versus the "levelling" tendency may determine virtually everything about one's perception of the social reality, including one's perception of the direction in which safety lies:

[See the following screen]



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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Holly Lodge, Kensington,
London, May 23d, 1857.

Dear Sir,

...I have long been convinced that institutions purely democratic must, sooner or later, destroy liberty, or civilization, or both. In Europe, where the population is dense, the effect of such institutions would be almost instantaneous. What happened lately in France is an example. In 1848 a pure democracy was established there. During a short time there was reason to expect a general spoliation, a national bankruptcy, a new partition of the soil, a maximum of prices, a ruinous load of taxation laid on the rich for the purpose of supporting the poor in idleness. Such a system would, in twenty years, have made France as poor and barbarous as the France of the Carlovingians. Happily, the danger was averted; and now there is a despotism, a silent tribune, an enslaved press. Liberty is gone, but civilization has been saved. I have not the smallest doubt that if we had a purely democratic government here the effect would be the same. Either the poor would plunder the rich, and civilization would perish; or order and prosperity would be saved by a strong military government, and liberty would perish. You may think that your country enjoys an exemption from these evils. I will frankly own to you that I am of a very different opinion. Your fate I believe to be certain, though it is deferred by a physical cause. As long as you have a boundless extent of fertile and unoccupied land, your laboring population will be far more at ease than the laboring population of the Old World, and, while that is the case, the Jefferson politics may continue to exist without causing any fatal calamity. But the time will come when New England will be as thickly peopled as old England. Wages will be as low, and will fluctuate as much with you as with us. You will have your Manchesters and Birminghams, and in those Manchesters and Birminghams hundreds of thousands of artisans will assuredly be sometimes out of work. Then your institutions will be fairly brought to the test. Distress everywhere makes the labourer mutinous and discontented, and inclines him to listen with eagerness to agitators who tell him that it is a monstrous iniquity that one man should have a million, while another can not get a full meal. In bad years there is plenty of grumbling here, and sometimes a little rioting. But it matters little. For here the sufferers are not the rulers. The supreme power is in the hands of a class, numerous indeed, but select; of an educated class; of a class which is, and knows itself to be, deeply interested in the security of property and the maintenance of order. Accordingly, the malcontents are firmly yet gently restrained. The bad time is got over without robbing the wealthy to relieve the indigent. The springs of national prosperity soon begin to flow again: work is plentiful, wages rise, and all is tranquillity and cheerfulness. I have seen England pass three or four times through such critical seasons as I have described. Through such seasons the United States will have to pass in the course of the next century, if not of this. How will you pass through them? I heartily wish you a good deliverance. But my reason and my wishes are at variance, and I can not help foreboding the worst. It is



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[Lord Macaulay's letter of May 23, 1857, concluded...]

I seriously apprehend that you will, in some such season of adversity as I have described, do things which will prevent prosperity from returning; that you will act like people who should in a year of scarcity devour all the seed-corn, and thus make the next a year not of scarcity, but of absolute famine. There will be, I fear, spoliation. The spoliation will increase the distress. The distress will produce fresh spoliation. There is nothing to stop you. Your Constitution is all sail and no anchor. As I said before, when a society has entered on this downward progress, either civilization or liberty must perish. Either some Cæsar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand, or your republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century as the Roman Empire was in the fifth; with this difference, that the Huns and Vandals who ravaged the Roman Empire came from without, and that your Huns and Vandals will have been engendered within your own country by your own institutions...

I have the honor to be, dear sir, your faithful servant,

T.B. Macaulay

H.S. Randall, Esq. etc., etc., etc.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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May 23, Saturday: P.M. —To Holden Swamp by boat. This is the time and place to hear the new-arriving warblers, the first fine days after the May storm. When the leaves generally are just fairly expanding, and the deciduous trees are hoary with them, —a silvery hoariness,— then about the edges of the swamps in the woods, these birds are flitting about in the tree-tops like gnats, catching the insects about the expanding leaf-buds.



May 23. P. M.—To Holden Swamp by boat.
River still high *generally* over the meadows. Can sail across the Hubbard meadow. Off Staples wood-lot, hear the *ah tche tche chit-i-vet* of the redstart.
Tortoises out again abundantly. Each particularly warm and sunny day brings them out on to every floating rail and stump. I count a dozen within three or four feet on a rail. It is a tortoise day. I hear one regular bullfrog trump, and as I approach the edge of the Holden Swamp, the tree-toads. Hear the pe-pe there, and the redstarts, and the chestnut-sided warbler. It appears striped slate and black above, white beneath, yellow-crowned with black side-head, two yellow bars on wing, white side-head below the black, black bill, and long chestnut streak on side. Its song lively and rather long, about as the summer yellowbird, but not in two bars; *tse tse tse | te tsah tsah tsah | te sah yer se* is the rhythm. *Kalmia glauca* yesterday. Rhodora, on shore there, a little before it. Nemopanthes, a day or two.
This is the time and place to hear the new-arriving warblers, the first fine days after the May storm. When the leaves generally are just fairly expanding, and the deciduous trees are hoary with them,—a silvery hoariness,— then, about the edges of the swamps in the woods, these birds are flitting about in the tree-tops like gnats, catching the insects about the expanding leaf-buds.
I wade in the swamp for the kalmia, amid the water andromeda and the sphagnum, scratching my legs with the first and sinking deep in the last. The water is now gratefully cool to my legs, so far from being poisoned in the strong water of the swamp. It is a sort of baptism for which I had waited.
At Miles Swamp, the carpinus sterile catkins, apparently a day or two, but I see no fertile ones, unless that is one (pressed) at the southeast edge of swamp near grafted apple, and its catkins are effete! Hear the first veery strain. The small twigs of the carpinus are singularly tough, as I find when I try to break off the flowers. They bend without breaking. Sand cherry at Lupine Bank, possibly a day. Sassafras, a day or two. Fringed polygala, I hear of.
The first goldfinch twitters over, and at evening I hear the *spark* of a nighthawk.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

May 24, Sunday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [Concord](#), to his journal:



Sunday fine and warm – wind light. Thermometer at 86 above zero north side Mr. Thoreau's house at 2 P.M. Rowed upon the river with Thoreau this forenoon. Walked up Lee's Hill and visited the old Lee farm, the house having been lately burned. The barn and hen-houses are very complete affairs. Dined at Mr. Thoreau's; spent part of the P.M. in my room at Channing's house talking with Thoreau upon various topics. Took a long walk this P.M., leaving at four and returning at seven to the cliff with Mr. and Mrs. Emerson, their two daughters, Ellen and Edith, son Edward, and my friend Thoreau; had tea and spent the remainder of the evening with the Emersons. Much pleased with Mrs. E.'s fine sense and sensibility as well as humanity, topics relative to which were the principal part of my conversation with her on the walk this P.M.

ELLERY CHANNING

WALDO EMERSON

LIDIAN EMERSON

ELLEN EMERSON

EDITH EMERSON

EDDIE EMERSON



May 24. A. M.—To Hill.

White ash, apparently yesterday, at Grape Shore but not at Conantum. What a singular appearance for some weeks its great masses of dark-purple anthers have made, fruit-like on the trees!

A very warm morning. Now the birds sing more than ever, methinks, now, when the leaves are fairly expanding, the first really warm summer days. The water on the meadows is perfectly smooth nearly all the day. At 3 P. M. the thermometer is at 88°. It soon gets to be quite hazy. Apple out. Heard one speak to-day of his sense of awe at the thought of God, and suggested to him that awe was the cause of the potato-rot. The same speaker dwelt on the sufferings of life, but my advice was to go about one's business, suggesting that no ecstasy was ever interrupted, nor its fruit blasted. As for completeness and roundness, to be sure, we are each like one of the laciniae of a lichen, a torn fragment, but not the less cheerfully we expand in a moist day and assume unexpected colors. We want no completeness but intensity of life. Hear the first cricket as I go through a warm hollow, bringing round the summer with his everlasting strain.

IRISH POTATO FAMINE



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

May 25, Monday: [Italian](#) forces under [Giuseppe Garibaldi](#) defeated the Austrians at Varese, 50 kilometers northwest of Milan.

It was [Waldo Emerson](#)'s 54th birthday. In [New Bedford](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) wrote in his journal:



Rode to the Tarkiln Hill station at noon in expectation somewhat of seeing Mr. R.W. Emerson, but he did not come. At the depot in town while awaiting the arrival of the P.M. train from Boston, had an adventure with a coachman who abused his horse. Rather successful on my part. Mr. Emerson arrived, took him to brother Joseph's to tea, heard his lecture before the Lyceum. He came out with me and spent the night. His lecture without a name very good.

JOSEPH RICKETSON



[Friend Daniel](#) also completed his journal entries about his recent stay in [Concord](#):



Fine and warm summer weather. Walked through the village, over the river, north to the hills, and returned by the Battleground and the old Parsonage House. On the river with Thoreau in his boat this P.M. The excursion upon the Concord River this P.M. with Thoreau in his boat was very pleasant, although when we started I hardly felt able to walk to the boat, which was upon the shore, some distance up the river, near Fairhaven Bay. But after a bath and swim with T. I felt much refreshed and my dull headache passed gradually off. Walked alone after tea as far as the old red-painted house beyond the railroad crossing west. Halted on my return at the railroad depot, and was much interested in an ingenious young fellow who was earning his livelihood selling humming-tops, of whom I purchased one for Joseph's little boy Frank. Thoreau accompanied me to my room, and after a long talk upon character, &c., I retired at 10.



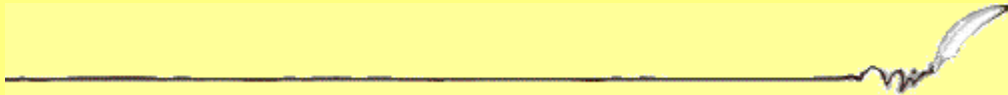
DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

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Meanwhile, [Emerson](#) was making some comments to his journal about what Ricketson had told him:

At home, Daniel Ricketson expressed some sad views of life & religion. A thunderstorm is terror to him, and his theism was judaical. Henry thought a new pear-tree was more to purpose, &c. but said better, that an ecstasy was never interrupted. A theology of this kind is as good a meter or yardstick as any other. If I can be scared by a highwayman or a thunderclap, I should say, my performances were not very high, & should at once be mended.



May 25. P. M.—With Ricketson to my boat under Fair Haven Hill.

In Hubbard's Grove, hear the shrill chattering of downy woodpeckers, very like the red squirrel's *tche tche*. Thermometer at 87° at 2.30 P. M. It is interesting to hear the bobolinks from the meadow sprinkle their lively strain along amid the tree-tops as they fly over the wood above our heads. It resounds in a novel manner through the aisles of the wood, and at the end that fine buzzing, wiry note. The black spruce of Holden's, apparently yesterday, but not the 23d. What a glorious crimson fire as you look up to the sunlight through the thin edges of the scales of its cones! So intensely glowing in their cool green beds! while their purplish sterile blossoms shed pollen on you. Took up four young spruce and brought them home in the boat.

After all, I seem to have distinguished only one spruce, and that the black, judging by the cones,—perhaps the dark and light varieties of it, for the last is said to be very like the white spruce. The white spruce cones are cylindrical and have an entire firm edge to the scales, and the needles are longer.

Though the river is thus high, we bathe at Cardinal Shore and find the water unexpectedly warm and the air also delicious. Thus we are baptized into nature.

August 18, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#):

Concord Aug 18th 1857.

Dear Sir,

Your Wilson Flagg seems a serious person, and it is encouraging to hear of a contemporary who recognizes Nature so squarely, and selects such a theme as "Barns". (I would rather "Mt Auburn" were omitted.) But he is not alert enough. He wants stirring up with a pole. He should practice turning a series of somersets rapidly, or jump up & see how many times he can strike his feet together before coming down. Let him make the earth turn round now the other way — and whet his wits on it, whichever it goes, as on a grindstone; — in short, see how many ideas he can entertain at once.

His style, as I remember, is singularly vague (I refer to the book) and before I got to the end of the sentences I was off the track. If you indulge in long periods you must be sure to have a snapper at the end. As for style of writing — if one has any thing to say, it drops from him simply & directly, as a stone falls to the ground — There are



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

no two ways about it, but down it comes, and he may stick in the points and stops wherever he can get a chance. New ideas come into this world somewhat like falling meteors, with a flash and an explosion, and perhaps somebody's castle roof perforated. To try to polish the stone in its descent, to give it a peculiar turn and make it whistle a tune perchance, would be of no use, if it were possible. Your polished stuff turns out not to be meteoric, but of this earth. —

However there is plenty of time, and Nature is an admirable schoolmistress.

Speaking of Correspondence, you ask me if I "cannot turn over a new leaf in this line". I certainly could if I were to receive it; but just then I looked up and saw that your page was dated "May 10th" though mailed in August, and it occurred to me that I had seen you since that date this year. Looking again, it appeared that your note was written in '56!! However, it was a new leaf to me, and I turned it over with as much interest as if it had been written the day before. Perhaps you kept it so long in order that the MS & subject matter might be more in keeping with the old fashioned paper on which it was written.

I travelled the length of Cape Cod on foot, soon after you were here, and within a few days have returned from the wilds of Maine, where I have made a journey of 325 miles with a canoe & an Indian & a single white companion, Edward Hoar of this town, lately from California, — traversing the headwaters of the Kennebeck — Penobscot — & St Johns.

Can't you extract any advantage out of that depression of spirits you refer to? It suggests to me cider mills, wine-presses, &c &c — All kinds of pressure or power should be used & made to turn some kind of machinery.

Channing was just leaving Concord for Plymouth when I arrived, but said he should be here again in 2 or 3 days.

Please remember me to your family & say that I have at length learned to sing Tom Bowling according to the notes —

Yrs truly

Henry D. Thoreau



Thoreau wrote to H.G.O. Blake:

TOM BOWLINE

Concord Aug. 18th 1857.

Mr Blake,

XV^{thly}

It seems to me that you need some absorbing pursuit. It does not matter much what is is, so it be honest. Such employment will be favor-



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

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able to your development in more characteristic and important directions. You know there must be impulse enough for steerage way, though it be not toward your port—to prevent your drifting helplessly on to rocks or shoals. Some sails are set for this purpose only. There is the large fleet of scholars & men of science, for instance, always to be seen standing off and on on every coast, and saved thus from running on to reefs, who will at last run into their proper havens, we trust.

It is a pity you were not here with Brown and Rogers. I think that in this case, for a rarity, the more the merrier.

You perceived that I did not entertain the idea of our going together to Maine on such an excursion as I had planned. The more I thought of it, the more imprudent it appeared to me. I did think to have written to you before going, though not to propose your going also, but I went at last very suddenly, and could only have written a business letter, if I had tried, when there was no business to be accomplished. I have now returned, and think I have had a quite profitable journey, chiefly from associating with an intelligent Indian. My Companion, Edward Hoar, also found his account in it, though he suffered considerably from being obliged to carry unusual loads over wet & rough “carries”,—in one instance five miles through a swamp, where the water was frequently up to our knees & the fallen timber higher than our heads. He went over the ground three times, not being able to carry all his load at once. This prevented his ascending Ktadn. Our best nights were those when it rained the hardest on account of the mosquitoes.— I speak of these things, which were not unexpected, merely to account for my not inviting you.

Having returned, I flatter myself that the world appears in some respects a little larger, and not, as usual, smaller & shallower, for having extended my range. I have made a short excursion into the new world which the Indian dwells in, or is. He begins where we leave off. It is worth the while to detect new faculties in man—he is so much the more divine,—and anything that fairly excites our admiration expands us. The Indian who can find his way so wonderfully in the woods possesses so much intelligence which the white man does not, and it increases my own capacity, as well as faith, to observe it. I rejoice to find that intelligence flows in other channels than I knew— It redeems for me portions of what seemed brutish before. It is a great satisfaction to find that your oldest convictions are permanent. With regard to essentials I have never had occasion to change my mind. The aspect of the world varies from year to year, as the landscape is differently clothed, but I find that the truth is still true, & I never regret any emphasis which it may have inspired.



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Ktadn is there still, but much m ore surely my old conviction is there, resting with more than mountain breadth & weight on the world, the source still of fertilizing streams, & affording glorious views from its summit, if I can get up to it again. As the mts still stand on the plain, and far more unchangeable & permanent, stand still grouped around, farther or nearer to my maturer eye, the ideas which I have entertained—the everlasting teats from which we draw our nourishment.

H. D. T.

August 19, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in New Bedford.

*The Shanty 19th Aug.
1857.*

Dear Mr Stoic,

Your letter has done me much good. I am glad there is some one who is ready to grapple with Fate and endeavour at least, to overthrow the old tyrant. I admire your courage— May it continue, and stand you in hand throughout all the difficulties and trials of life.

I fear you are a little too severe with M^r Flagg, who gives you so ready a tribute of respect. Is not the fact of his appreciation of your book, a sufficient ground for congenial feeling & friendship?

Channing left very suddenly — of course. I am thinking of coming to Concord soon — perhaps this week, but I shall not trouble your kind family.

In haste for the post office

Yours truly

D.R.

Remember me kindly to C. & others

Hope to see you here soon.

September 7, Monday: In [New Bedford](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) was writing to [Henry Thoreau](#).

*The Shanty, Sept. 7th
1857 —*

Dear Thoreau,

*I wrote you some
two weeks ago that I
intended visiting Concord,
but have not yet found*



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*the way there. The object
of my now writing is
to invite you to make
me a visit. Walton's
small sail-boat is now*

Page 2
*in Apawampset Pond.
We took it up in our
farm waggen to the south
shore of Long-pond-(Appo
noguet) visited the
three islands in course
and passed through the
river that connects the
said ponds. This is the
finest season as to weather
to visit the ponds and
I feel much stronger
than when you were
here last spring. The*

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*boys & myself have made
several excursions to
our favourite region this
summer, but we have left
the best of it, so far as
the voyage is concerned
for you to accompany us.
We hear nothing of Channing
but conclude that he is
with you — trust he has
not left us entirely &
hope to see him again
before long. Now should*

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*my invitation prove
acceptable to you, I
should be glad to see
you just as soon after
the receipt of this as you*



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*you like to come — im-
mediately if you please.
If you cannot come and
should ~~be~~ like to see me
in Concord please
inform me, but we all
hope to see you here.
Mrs R. & the rest join in
regards & invitation.
Remember us Yrs truly
to Channing. D.R.*



September 7, Monday: P.M. —To Dodge Brook Wood. It occurred to me some weeks ago that the river-banks were not quite perfect. It is too late then, when the mikania is in bloom, because the pads are so much eaten then. Our first slight frost in some places this morning. Northwest wind to-day and cool weather; such weather as we have not had for a long time, a new experience, which arouses a corresponding breeze in us. Rhus venenata berries are whitening. Its leaves appear very fresh, of a rich, dark, damp green, and very little eaten by insects.

Go round by the north side of Farmer's (?) Wood, turn southeast into the shut-in field, and thence to Spencer Brook, a place for hawks. Bidens chrysanthemoides there; how long? There are three or four larch trees near the east edge of the meadows here. One measures two feet and seven inches in circumference at six feet from ground; begins to branch there, but is dead up to ten feet from ground, where its diameter is apparently about twelve feet; and from this it tapers regularly to the top, which is about forty-five feet from the ground, forming a regular, sharp pyramid, yet quite airy and thin, so that you could see a hawk through it pretty well. These are young and healthy trees.

Measured that large tupelo behind Merriam's, which now is covered with green fruit, and its leaves begin to redden. It is about thirty feet high, with a round head and equally broad near the ground. At one foot from the ground, it is four and a third feet in circumference; at seven feet, three and a third in circumference. The principal [branches] diverge at about fifteen or sixteen feet from the ground and tend upward; the lower ones are small and partly dead. The lowest, at about thirteen or fourteen feet from the ground, are three or four inches in diameter, and first grow out horizontally about six feet, then, making an abrupt angle, straggle downward nearly to the ground, fifteen feet from the tree. This leaves the tree remarkably open in the middle.

Returning to my boat, at the white maple, I see a small round flock of birds, perhaps blackbirds, dart through the air, as thick as a charge of shot, —now comparatively thin, with regular intervals of sky between them, like the holes in the strainer of a watering-pot, now dense and dark, as if closing up their ranks when they roll over one another and stoop downward.

December 11, Friday: The Reverend [Edward Everett Hale](#) wrote to the Chairman and Secretary of the Citizen's Ward Meeting of Boston's ward #40, to decline a nomination to its School Committee.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

*Written before my late visit
by the date shews. —*

*The Shanty, Friday
Evening Dec. 11, 1857.*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*Dear Thoreau,
I expect to go to
Boston next week, Thursday
17th with my daughters
Anna & Emma to attend
the Anti-Slavery Bazaar.
They will probably return home
the next day & I proceed
to Malden for a day or two.
After which I may proceed
to Concord if I have your
permission & if you will
be at home, for without you
Concord would be quite
poor & deserted, like to*

Page 2

*the place some poet, perhaps
Walter Scott describes
“When thro’ the desert walks the lapwing flies
And tires their echoes with unceasing cries.”
—— Channing says I can take
his room in the garret of his
house, but I think I should
take to the tavern. Were you
at Walden I should probably
storm your castle & make good
an entrance, and perhaps,
as an act of generous heroism
allow you quarters while I
remained. But in sober truth
I should like to see you and
sit or lie down in your room
& hear you growl once more
thou brave old Norseman —
thou Thor, thunder-god-man
I long to see your long beard,*

Page 3

*which for a short man is rather
a stretch of imagination or under-
standing — C. says it is terrible
to behold — but improves you*



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*mightily.
How grandly your
philosophy sits now in these
trying times. I lent my Walden
to a broken merchant lately
as the best panacea I could
afford him for his troubles.
You should now come out
& call together the lost sheep
of Israel, thou cool headed
pastor, no Corydon forsooth
but a genuine Judean —
fulminate from the banks of
Concord upon the banks of Discord
& once more set ajog a pure*

Page 4

*curren(t)cy whose peaceful-tide
may wash us clean once
more again. Io Pean!
Is “Father Alcott” in your city?
I should count much on seeing
him too — a man who is
All-cot should not be without
a home at least in him chosen
land.
Dont be provoked at my nonsense
for anything better would be like
“carrying coals to Newcastle.”
I would sit at feet of Gamaliel.
So farewell for the present,
with kind remembrances to
your family I remain faithfully
Your friend
P. S. D. Ricketson
If I can't come, please
inform me. —*



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

December 18, Friday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in Concord, to his journal:



Took tea with Thoreau and spent the evening with him and his father's family. Parker Pillsbury, the anti-slavery lecturer, there. Took Channing's room for lodging, hard bed, poor sleep. Cleared this P.M.





FRIEND RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Carleton Mabee's BLACK FREEDOM

Americans at large often held the abolitionists responsible for the war. They argued that the abolitionists' long agitation, strident as it often was, had antagonized the South into secession, thus beginning the war, and that the abolitionists' insistence that the war should not end until all slavery had been abolished kept the war going. In 1863 the widely read New York Herald made the charge devastatingly personal. It specified that by being responsible for the war, each abolitionist had in effect already killed one man and permanently disabled four others. ... While William Lloyd Garrison preferred voluntary emancipation, during the war he came to look with tolerance on the abolition of slavery by military necessity, saying that from seeming evil good may come. Similarly, the Garrisonian-Quaker editor, Oliver Johnson, while also preferring voluntary emancipation, pointed out that no reform ever triumphed except through mixed motives. But the Garrisonian lecturer Pillsbury was contemptuous of such attitudes. Freeing the slaves by military necessity would be of no benefit to the slave, he said in 1862, and the next year when the Emancipation Proclamation was already being put into effect, he said that freeing the slaves by military necessity could not create permanent peace. Parker Pillsbury won considerable support for his view from abolitionist meetings and from abolitionist leaders as well. Veteran Liberator writer Edwin Percy Whipple insisted that "true welfare" could come to the American people "only through a **willing** promotion of justice and freedom." Henry C. Wright repeatedly said that only ideas, not bullets, could permanently settle the question of slavery. The recent Garrisonian convert, the young orator Ezra Heywood, pointed out that a government that could abolish slavery as a military necessity had no antislavery principles and could therefore re-establish slavery if circumstances required it. The Virginia aristocrat-turned-abolitionist, Moncure Daniel Conway, had misgivings that if emancipation did not come before it became a fierce necessity, it would not reflect true benevolence and hence could not produce true peace. The Philadelphia wool merchant, Quaker Alfred H. Love, asked, "Can so sublime a virtue as ... freedom ... be the offspring of so corrupt a parentage as war?" The long-time abolitionist Abby Kelley—the speak-inner and Underground Railroader—predicted flatly, if the slave is freed only out of consideration for the safety of the Union, "the hate of the colored race will still continue, and the poison of that wickedness will destroy us as a nation." Amid the searing impact of the war—the burning fields, the mangled bodies, the blood-splattered hills and fields—a few abolitionists had not forgotten their fundamental belief that to achieve humanitarian reform, particularly if it was to be thorough and permanent reform, the methods used to achieve it must be consistent with the nature of the reform. ... What abolitionists often chose to brush aside was that after the war most blacks would still be living in the South, among the same Confederates whom they were now trying to kill.

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

December 19, Saturday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in Concord, to his journal:



PARKER PILLSBURY

WALDO EMERSON

ABBA ALCOTT

ANNA ALCOTT

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

ELIZABETH ALCOTT

MAY ALCOTT

FRANKLIN B. SANBORN

ELLERY CHANNING

Clear and colder; accompanied Thoreau on a survey of woodland near Walden Pond this forenoon, dined with him at his father's, afternoon at my lodgings with Thoreau and Parker Pillsbury. R.W. Emerson also joined us at the close of the P.M. Took tea with Mr. Emerson, called on Mrs. Alcott and her daughters, whom I found very agreeable and intelligent people; one daughter I did not see, being quite ill, probably not to recover. Mr. Sanborn called there, with whom I returned to my room, he occupied with a sister Channing's house.

December 20, Sunday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in Concord, to his journal:



Clear and cool, walked this forenoon with Thoreau to the high land northeast of the village about three miles; ate our dinner of brown bread and cheese on the lee side of a stone wall. Took tea with Mr. Emerson and spent the evening alone with him by his parlor wood fire. Left at 9 ¹/₂. Called on Thoreau at his room on my return, to bed at 11 ¹/₂. My conversation with Mr. Emerson upon Oriental literature.



December 20, Sunday: A.M. -To Easterbrooks Country with Ricketson.

A hen-hawk circling over that wild region. See its red tail.

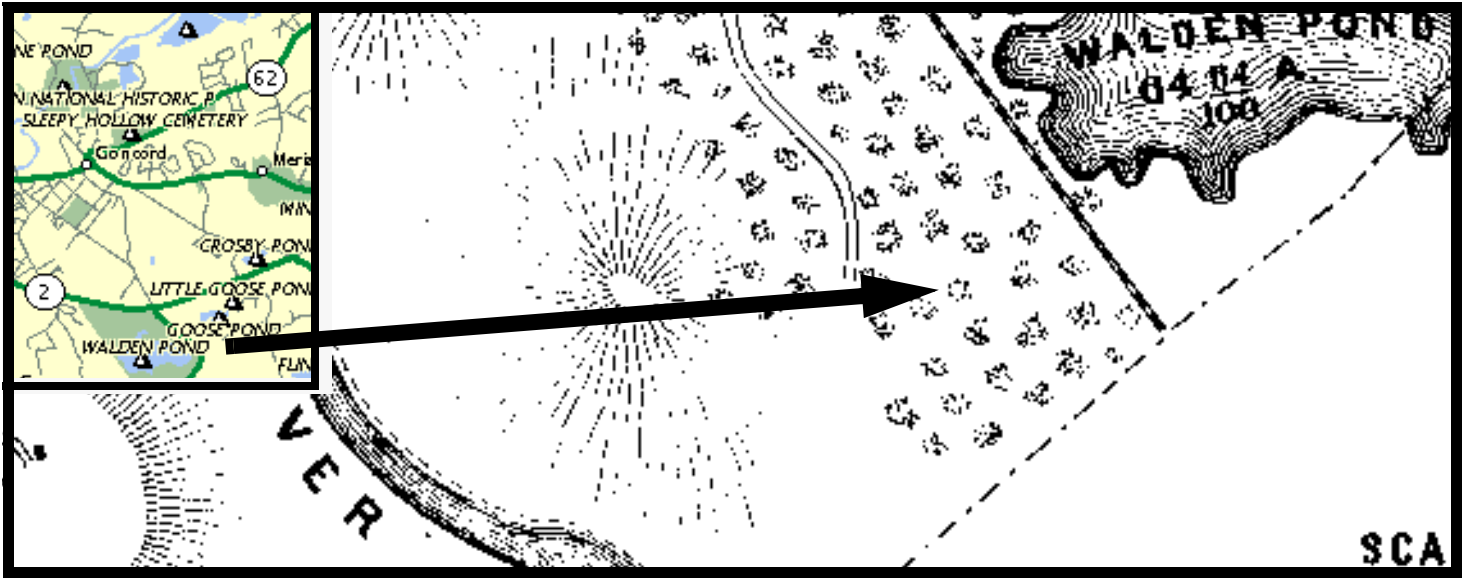
The cellar stairs at the old Hunt house are made of square oak timbers; also the stairs to the chamber of the back part of apparently square maple (?) timber, much worn. The generous cellar stairs!



December 21, Monday: Walking over the Andromeda Ponds between Walden and Fair Haven, which have only frozen just enough to bear me, I see in springy parts, where the ice is thin, good-sized pollywogs wiggling away, scared by the sound of my steps and cracking of the ice. They appear to keep in motion in such

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**FRIEND RICKETSON****DANIEL RICKETSON****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

muddy pond-holes, where a spring wells up from the bottom till midwinter, if not all winter.





DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1858

June 18, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

The Shanty, 18 June

1858

Respected Friend,

It is so long a time since any correspondence has passed between us, that it may be well the silence should be broken.

I have always felt a little obtrusive in my relationship with you, but your uniform kindness and forbearance has given me fresh courage to continue my delinquences in this particular; yet I could not reasonably blame you at anytime for declining any further intimacy.

You should make due allowances for me, and look upon me, as more like other people than yourself. Your consistency of character is remarkable, the most so of any person I have ever known, and I fear that you may not always sufficiently apologise for the failings of others. I am full of contrarieties, and often feel like a leaf upon the wind or tide of life. For several years last past, I have suffered from low spirits, which I conclude to be somewhat constitutional with me — fearful though undefined forebodings of the future, and sad retrospectives often haunt my imagination. Even nature in her sweetest season at such times seems only to render the sadness deeper. But enough of this to which I would not ever have averted had I not thought you could bear it.

I see but little of Channing in these days. I often found his peculiarities very oppressive to me. He seems to lack sympathy in his nature, which however he never gave me any reason to expect from him. We all need sympathy at times, do we not? — a kind word or look may be like the balm of Gilead to the wounded spirit.

But my chief object in writing you at this time is to say, that a visit from you would be very acceptable. You have never been here in summer I think & a few sniffs of our sea air might refresh you at this season. Please consult the rural deities in this particular & inform me of their response.

With kind regard to your family

I remain, your friend

Dan^l Ricketson

Pardon any ego-isms

[see MS p. —drawing] Please remember me to my good friends Alcott and Emerson.

P.S. Since writing this sheet, I find an old envelope with the enclosed



FRIEND RICKETSON

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long forgotten notes to you, & now send. D.R.

Comment about [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading “The Atlantic Monthly” in the Boston [Transcript](#) 2:1.

When Mr. Thoreau finished his books, “Walden,” &c., it seems to us that he exhausted what powers he had, and now must of necessity repeat himself.



June 18. How dogs will resort to carrion, a dead cow or horse, half buried, no matter how stale, — the best-bred and petted village dogs, and there gorge themselves with the most disgusting offal by the hour, as if it were a season of famine! Surely they are foul creatures that we make cossets of.

DOG

P.M. — To Walden to see a bird’s nest, a red-eye’s, in a small white pine; nest not so high as my head; still laying. A boy climbs to the cat owl’s nest and casts down what is left of it, -a few short sticks and some earthy almost turfy foundation, as if it were the accumulation of years. Beside much black and white skunk-hair, there are many fishes’ scales (!) intimately mixed with its substance, and some skunk’s bones.

E. Bartlett has found three bobolinks’ nests. One or more of them lie thinks has been covered by the recent flood. A little boy brings me an egg of Wilson’s thrush, which he found in a nest in a low bush about a foot from the ground.

Coming across the level pasture west of E. Hubbard’s swamp, toward Emerson’s, I find a young *Emys insculpta*, apparently going to lay, though she had not dug a hole. It was four and a quarter inches long by three and a half wide, and altogether the handsomest turtle of this species, if not of any, that I have ever seen. It was quite fresh and perfect, without wound or imperfection; its claws quite sharp and slender, and the annual striae so distinct on all the scales above and below that I could count them with ease. It was nine years old, though it would be like an infant among turtles, the successive striae being perfectly parallel at equal distances apart. The sternum, with a large black spot on the rear angle of each scale and elsewhere a rich brown color, even reminded me of the turtle-shell of commerce. While its upper shell was of a uniform wholesome brown, very prettily marked indeed, not only by the outlines of the scales, but more distinctly by the lines of prominences raying out from the starting-point of each scale, perfectly preserved in each year’s growth, a most elaborate coat of mail, worthy the lifelong labor of some reptilian Vulcan. This must have been a belle among the *E. insculpta*. Nevertheless I did discover that all the claws but one of one hind foot were gone! Had not a bird pecked them off? So liable are they to injury in their long lives. Then they are so well-behaved; can be taken up and brought home in your pocket, and make no unseemly efforts to escape. The upper shell was remarkably spreading and curving upward on the rear edges.

June 29, Tuesday: [Panama Canal](#) engineer George Washington Goethals was born in Brooklyn.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to H.G.O. Blake [H.G.O. BLAKE](#).

CONCORD, June 29, 1858, 8 A.M.

MR. BLAKE, — Edward Hoar and I propose to start for the White Mountains in a covered wagon, with one horse, on the morning of





DANIEL RICKETSON

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Thursday the 1st of July, intending to explore the mountain tops botanically, and camp on them at least several times. Will you take a seat in the wagon with us? Mr. Hoar prefers to hire the horse and wagon himself. Let us hear by express, as soon as you can, whether you will join us here by the earliest train Thursday morning, or Wednesday night. Bring your map of the mountains, and as much provision for the road as you can, — hard bread, sugar, tea, meat, etc., — for we intend to live like gipsies; also, a blanket and some thick clothes for the mountain top.

June 30, Wednesday: Calvin Wheeler Philleo died in Suffield, Connecticut (a 2d novel, GERARD CARLTON, would appear posthumously, in 1866).

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

CONCORD, June 30, 1858.

FRIEND R—:—

I am on the point of starting for the White Mountains in a wagon with my neighbor E—H—, and I write to you now rather to apologize for not writing, than to answer worthily your three notes. I thank you heartily for them. You will not care for a little delay in acknowledging them, since your date shows that you can afford to wait. Indeed, my head has been so full of company, &c., that I could not reply to you fitly before, nor can I now.

As for preaching to men these days in the Walden strain, is it of any consequence to preach to an audience of men who can fail, or who can be revived? There are few beside. Is it any success to interest these parties? If a man has speculated and failed, he will probably do these things again, in spite of you or me.

I confess that it is rare that I rise to sentiment in my relations to men, — ordinarily to a mere patient, or may be wholesome good-will. I can imagine something more, but truth compels me to regard the ideal and the actual as two things.

Channing has come, and as suddenly gone, and left a short poem, "Near Home," published (?) or printed by Monroe, which I have hardly had



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time to glance at. As you may guess, I learn nothing of you from him.
You already foresee my answer to your invitation to make you a summer visit: I am bound for the mountains. But I trust that you have vanquished, ere this, those dusky demons that seem to lurk around the Head of the River. You know that this warfare is nothing but a kind of nightmare, and it is our thoughts alone which give those unworthies any body or existence.
I made an excursion with B—, of Worcester, to Monadnock, a few weeks since. We took our blankets and food, spent two nights on the mountain, and did not go into a house.
A— has been very busy for a long time repairing an old shell of a house, and I have seen very little of him. I have looked more at the houses which birds build. W— made us all very generous presents from his nursery in the spring. Especially did he remember A—.
Excuse me for not writing any more at present, and remember me to your family.
Yours,
H. D. THOREAU.



DANIEL RICKETSON

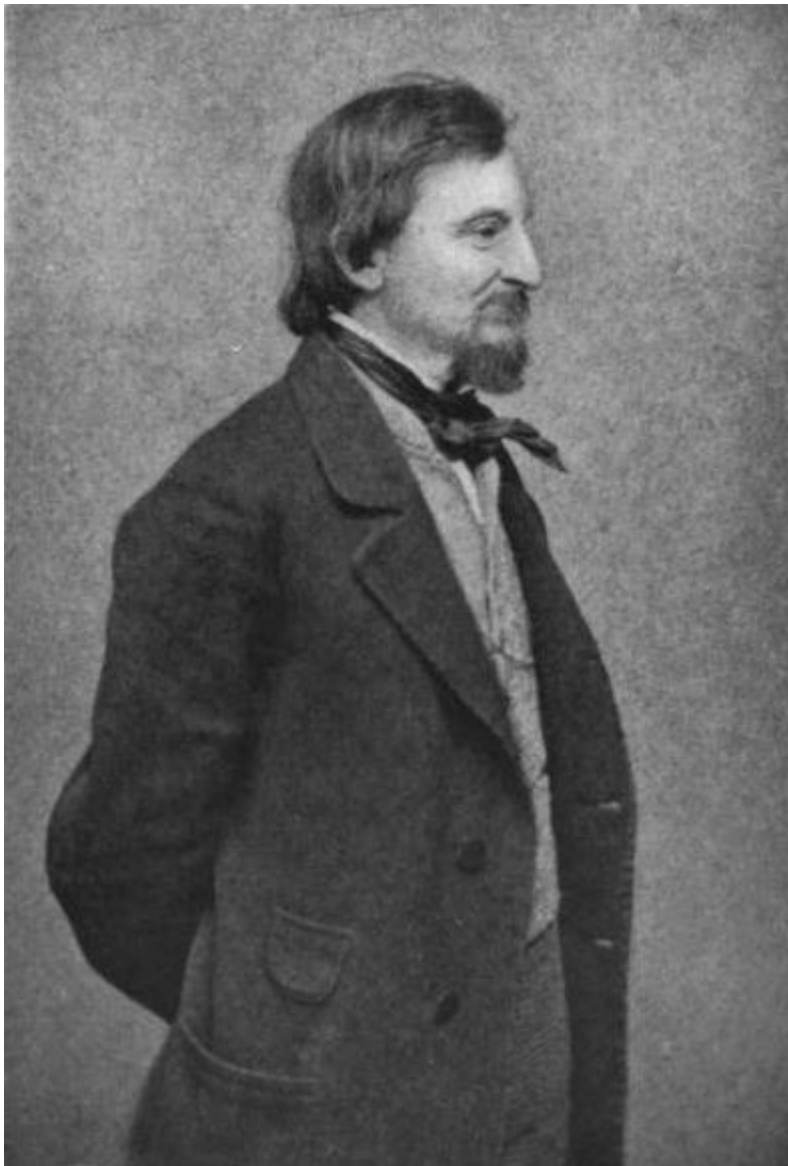
FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

August 20, Friday: Donati's [comet](#) was beginning to exhibit traces of a tail.

SKY EVENT

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s A HISTORY OF [NEW BEDFORD](#), INCLUDING A HISTORY OF THE OLD TOWNSHIP OF DARTMOUTH & THE PRESENT TOWNSHIPS OF WESTPORT, DARTMOUTH & FAIRHAVEN (this has been republished as of 1996 and is therefore not available for total download, but we do have online the version of the Ricketson history of New Bedford that was published in 1803).¹⁹



VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

In his biography of Thoreau, [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) indicates that despite [Michael Flannery](#)'s early rising, "Up early enough to see a frost in August!" and abundant energy and cheerfulness and gratefulness for all the help given to him, the Flannery family would never be able to repay all of the money it had borrowed in the period of its crisis:

When Sophia left Concord to live and die in Bangor, among her cousins, she gave me a small note of hand, which Flannery had signed for money lent him in some pinch, with instructions to receive payment if he was able to pay, but in any case to give him up the note, which I did.

THOREAU ON THE IRISH



August 20: Edward Hoar has found in his garden two or three specimens of what appears to be the *Veronica Buxbaumii*, which blossomed at least a month ago. Yet I should say the pods were turgid, and, though obcordate enough, I do not know in what sense they are "obcordate-triangular." He found a *Viburnum dentatum* with leaves somewhat narrower than common and wedgeshaped at base. He has also the *Rudbeckia speciosa*, cultivated in a Concord garden.

Flannery tells me that at about four o'clock this morning he saw white frost on the grass in the low ground near Holbrook's meadow. Up early enough to see a frost in August!

MICHAEL FLANNERY

P. M. – To Poplar Hill and the Great Fields.

It is still cool weather with a northwest wind. This weather is a preface to autumn. There is more shadow in the landscape than a week ago, methinks, and the creak of the cricket sounds cool and steady.

The grass and foliage and landscape generally are of a more thought-inspiring color, suggest what some perchance would call a pleasing melancholy. In some meadows, as I look southwesterly, the aftermath looks a bright yellowish-green in patches. Both willows and poplars have leaves of a light color, at least beneath, contrasting with most other trees.

Generally there has been no drought this year. Nothing in the landscape suggests it. Yet no doubt these leaves are, compared with themselves six or eight weeks ago, as usual, "horny and dry," as one remarks by my side. You see them digging potatoes, with cart and barrels, in the fields on all hands, before they are fairly ripe, for fear of rot or a fall in the price, and I see the empty barrels coming back from market already.

Polygonum dumetorum, how long?

November 22, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

Concord Nov. 22^d 1858

Friend Ricketson

I thank you for your "History," Though I have not yet read it again, I have looked far enough to see that I like the homeliness of it; that is the good old-fashioned way of writing as if you actually lived where you wrote. A man's interest in a single bluebird, is more than a complete, but dry, list of the fauna & flora of a town. It is also a considerable advantage to be able to say at any time, If R. is not

19. Thoreau, in his letter to Ricketson on November 22, 1858, would comment that "I like the homeliness of it, that is, the good, old-fashioned way of writing as if you actually lived where you wrote." Emerson, in a letter to Ricketson on October 11, 1869, would comment that "It is written with good sense and with selection, and with affection."



DANIEL RICKETSON

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*here, here is his book. Alcott being here and inquiring after you (whom he has been expecting) I lent the book to him almost immediately. He talks of going west the latter part of this week. Channing is here again, as I am told, but I have not seen him. I thank you also for the account of the trees. It was to my purpose, and I hope that you got something out of it too. I suppose that the cold weather prevented your coming here. Suppose you try a winter walk or skate—
Please remember me to your family—
Yrs H.D.T.*

[Thoreau](#) continued a survey he made for the estate of Heartwell Bigelow on December 25, 1857. He made surveys for the estate of a woodlot near Walden Street east of the present Fairyland, and of the old woodlot which had belonged to Caleb Bates, Sr.



November 22. In surveying Mr. Bigelow's wood-lot today I found at the northeasterly angle what in the deed from the Thayers in '8 was called "an old stump by the wall." It is still quite plain and may last twenty years longer. It is oak.

This is quite a pleasant day, but hardly amounting to Indian summer. I see swarms of large mosquito-like insects dancing in the garden. They may be a large kind of Tipuli~. Had slender ringed abdomens and no plumes. The river is quite low,—about as low as it has been, for it has not been very low.

About the first of November a wild pig from the West, said to weigh three hundred pounds, jumped out of a car at the depot and made for the woods. The owner had to give up the chase at once, not to lose his passage, while some railroad employees pursued the pig even into the woods a mile and a half off, but there the pig turned and pursued them so resolutely that they ran for their lives and one climbed a tree. The next day being Sunday, they turned out in force with a gun and a large mastiff, but still the pig had the best of it,—fairly I [Excursions, p. 279; Riv. 342.]frightened the men by his fierce charges,—and the dog was so wearied and injured by the pig that the men were obliged to carry him in their arms. The pig stood it better than the dog. Ran between the gun man's legs, threw him over, and hurt his shoulder, though pierced in many places by a pitchfork. At the last accounts, he had been driven or baited into a barn in Lincoln, but no one durst enter, and they were preparing to shoot him. Such pork might be called venison.

December 6, Monday: Documentation of the [international slave trade](#), per W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: "Report of the Secretary of the Navy." —HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 35 Cong. 2 sess. II. pt. 4, No. 2, pt. 4, pp. 5, 13-4.

President James Buchanan reported to the houses of Congress:

The truth is, that Cuba in its existing colonial condition, is a constant source of injury and annoyance to the American people. It is the only spot in the civilized world where the African slave trade is tolerated; and we are bound by treaty with Great Britain to maintain a naval force on the coast of Africa, at much expense both of life and treasure, solely for the purpose of arresting slavers bound to that island. The late serious difficulties between the United States and Great Britain respecting the right of search, now so happily terminated, could never have arisen if Cuba had not afforded a market for slaves.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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As long as this market shall remain open, there can be no hope for the civilization of benighted Africa....

It has been made known to the world by my predecessors that the United States have, on several occasions, endeavored to acquire Cuba from Spain by honorable negotiation. If this were accomplished, the last relic of the African slave trade would instantly disappear. We would not, if we could, acquire Cuba in any other manner. This is due to our national character.... This course we shall ever pursue, unless circumstances should occur, which we do not now anticipate, rendering a departure from it clearly justifiable, under the imperative and overruling law of self-preservation (HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 35th Congress, 2d session, II. No. 2, pages 14-5. See also HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 35th Congress, 2d session, II. No. 2, pages 31-3).

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford MA](#) that he would like to bring Thomas Cholmondeley to his home "Brooklawn" for a visit.

*Concord Dec 6th 1858
Friend Ricketson,
Thomas Cholmondeley,
my English acquaintance,
is here, on his way to the
West Indies. He wants to
see New Bedford, a whaling
town. I tell him that
I would like to introduce
him to you there, thinking
more of his seeing you than
New Bedford. So we propose
to come your way to-morrow.
Excuse this short notice,
for the time is short. If, on
any account, it is in-
convenient to see us, you
will treat us accordingly.
Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau*

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Address: *Daniel Ricketson Esq
New Bedford
Mass
Please forward
immediately*

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Go out at 9 A.M. to see the glaze. It is already half fallen, melting off. The dripping trees and wet falling ice will wet you through like rain in the woods. It is a lively sound, a busy tinkling, the incessant brattling and from time to time rushing, crashing sound of this falling ice, and trees suddenly erecting themselves when relieved of their loads. It is now perfect only on the north sides of woods which the sun has not touched or affected. Looking at a dripping tree between you and the sun, you may see here or there one or another rainbow color, a small brilliant point of light. Yesterday it froze as it fell on my umbrella, converting the cotton cloth into a thick stiff glazed sort of oilcloth, so that it was impossible to shut it.

December 7, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) checked out, from [Harvard Library](#), Enrico “Iron Hand” de Tonti’s *RELATION DE LA LOUISIANA OU MISSISSIPPI PAR LE CHEVALIER DE TONTI* (1734).²⁰



20. Henry, Chevalier de Tonti was born in Gaeta, Italy in about 1650, a son of Lorenzo Tonti. He entered the French army as a cadet and served in addition in the French navy. In 1678 he accompanied René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle (1643-1687) to Canada. In 1680, during an exploration of the Mississippi he was left in command of Fort Crevecoeur on the Illinois River near Peoria, Illinois. After making an unsuccessful attempt to found a settlement in Arkansas, in 1685 he took part in an expedition of the Western Indians against the Senecas. He twice went down the Mississippi to its mouth while in search of La Salle, and then needed to go down the river a third time to meet M. D'Iberville. During September 1704 he died at Fort Saint Louis (now Mobile, Alabama). There is a report by him in Margry's *RELATIONS ET MEMOIRES*, and an English translation of this report, “An Account of Monsieur de la Salle's Last Discoveries in North America. Presented to the French King, and Published by the Chevalier Tonti, Governour of Fort St. Louis, in the Province of the Illinois ...,” would be printed in London by J. Tonson, S. Buckley, and R. Knaplock in 1698 and reprinted in New-York in 1814. Refer to Benjamin Franklin French's *HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS OF LOUISIANA AND FLORIDA* (Volume I, 1846).



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Thoreau also checked out Volume IV of the five volumes of Benjamin Franklin French's HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS OF LOUISIANA, EMBRACING MANY RARE AND VALUABLE DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE NATURAL, CIVIL AND POLITICAL HISTORY OF THAT STATE. COMPILED WITH HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES, AND AN INTRODUCTION... (New York: Wiley & Putnam). Part I of this, Historical Documents from 1678-1691, contains La Salle's memoir of the discovery of the Mississippi, Joutel's journal, and Hennepin's account of the Mississippi. Part II contains Marquette and Joliet's voyage to discover the Mississippi, De Soto's expedition, and [\[Dr. Daniel\] Coxe's "Carolana."](#) Part III contains La Harpe's journal of the establishment of the French in Louisiana, Charlevoix's journal, etc. Part IV, the volume from which Thoreau was extracting into his Indian Notebook #11, printed in 1852, contains narratives of the voyages, missions, and travels among the Indians, by Marquette, Joliet, Dablon, Allouez, Le Clercq, La Salle, Hennepin, Membre, and Douay, with biographical and bibliographical notices of these missionaries and their works, by John Gilmary Shea, and contains the 1673 Thevenot chart of the "R. Mitchisipi ou grand Riviere" indicating the native tribes along its tributaries, "Carte de la decouverte faite l'an 1673. dans l'Amerique Septentrionale."

THE MITCHISIPI RIVER

Part V contains Dumont's memoir of transactions with the Indians of Louisiana, from 1712 to 1740, and Champégnny's memoirs.

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[Thoreau](#) also checked out [Jean-Frédéric Bernard](#)'s *RECUEIL DE VOYAGES AU NORD, CONTENANT DIVERS MÉMOIRES TRÈS UTILES AU COMMERCE & À LA NAVIGATION, 1715-1738* (A Amsterdam, Chez J.F. Bernard), and would make extracts in his Indian Notebook #11. According to the edition statement contained in the 4th volume, this is the 4th edition of the work and Volume 2 had been printed in 1715, Volumes 1 and 3 in 1716, Volume 6 in 1723, Volume 5 in 1724, Volume 7 in 1725, and Volume 8 in 1727 (of the final two of the 10 volumes, Volumes 9 and 10, this 1732 printing says nothing, of course because they had not yet been put through the press).



Unfortunately, Google Books has scanned so far of these ten volumes only Volume 4 — so that is all I am able to provide for you here:

JEAN-FRÉDÉRIC BERNARD

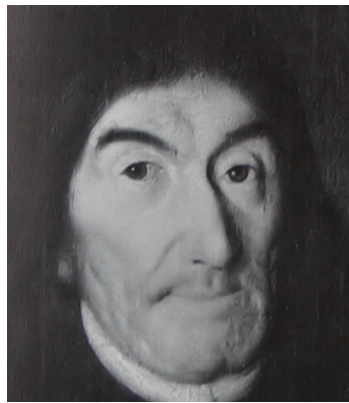


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[Thoreau](#) also checked out [Father Louis Hennepin](#)'s *VOYAGES | CURIEUX ET NOUVEAUX | DE MESSIEURS | HENNEPIN & DE LA BORDE, | OU L'ON VOIT UNE DESCRIPTION TRÈS PARTICULIERE, D'UN GRAND PAYS DANS L'AMERIQUE, ENTRE LE | NOUVEAU MEXIQUE, & LA MER GLACIALE, AVEC UNE RELATION CURIEUSE DES | CARAIBES SAUVAGES DES ISLES ANTILLES DE L'AMERIQUE, | LEURS MŒURS, COÛTUMES, RELIGION &C. | LE TOUTE ACCOMPAGNÉ DES CARTES & FIGURES NECESSAIRES. | [Emblem.] | A AMSTERDAM, AUX DEPENS DE LA COMPAGNIE. MDCXI* (this was an exact reprint of the edition of 1704, with merely a slight change to the title page).



[Sieur de la Borde](#) is a mysterious figure, for all we know for sure is that he worked, perhaps as a lay brother, for a short period with Jesuit missionaries, especially with Father Simon at the mission on St. Vincent Island in the Antilles.



I am guessing that he was part of the Langlade family that had come over from Castle Sarrasin in Bassee, Guyenne, France (at first known as the family Mouet de Moras) that had settled at Trois-Rivières, Québec in

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1668, and I am guessing that his full name was [Louis Mouet De Moras, Sieur de la Borde](#) and that he was the 4th of the sons of Pierre Mouet, Landlord of Moras, who was an ensign in the Carignan-Salières regiment, with Marie Toupin, Madame de Moras (born on August 19, 1651 at Québec, died on March 13, 1722/1723 at Trois-Rivières),

1. — MOUET, PIERRE, (1) b 1639, fils de Bertrand et de Marthe de Thosin, de Castel-Sarrasin, en Basse Guyenne; s 24 nov. 1693.
TOUPIN, Marie, [TOUSSAINT I.
s 14 mars 1723.
Pierre, b 1^{er} nov. 1669; m 18 avril 1694, à Elizabeth JUTRAS; s 31 oct. 1708. — *Jacques*, b 26 janv. 1672. — *René*, b 1^{er} mars 1674. — *Louis*, (2) b 9 oct. 1676; s 27 mars 1699. — *Michel*, b 20 janv. 1679; m 30 janv. 1725, à Catherine DESJORDIS. — *Marie-Madeleine*, b 2 juillet 1681; s 8 déc. 1703. — *Joseph*, b 21 juillet 1683. — *Thérèse*, b 14 mars 1688; m 27 oct. 1715, à Michel TROTIER.

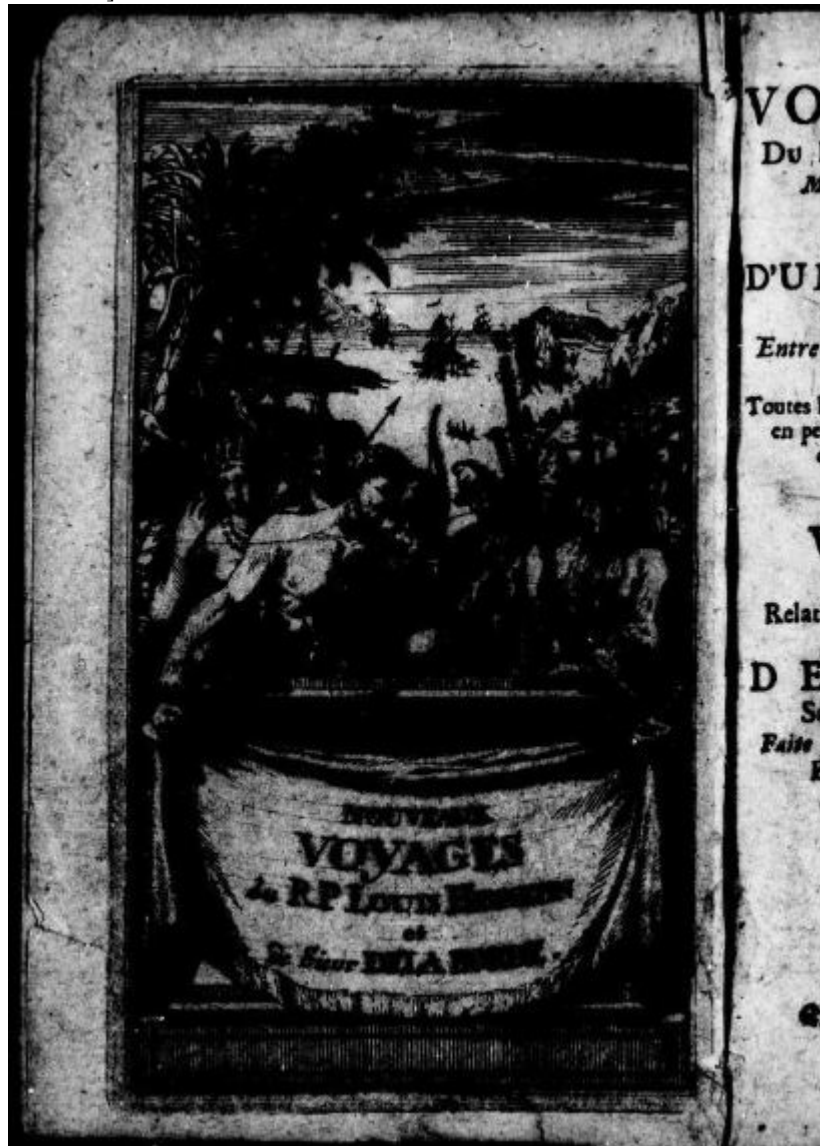
(1) Sieur de Moras, enseigne dans la compagnie de Loubias, régiment de Carignan.

(2) Sieur de la Borde.

that he had been baptized on October 9, 1676 and would die on March 27, 1699 (but this is guesswork based on family genealogies, and does not at all jibe with an original date of his publication of 1674 at Paris; none of this makes sense if his book was published before he was born, and everything of this makes somewhat more sense if his book actually was published in 1694, when he was perhaps 18 years of age and had perhaps already in his teens as a lay brother assisted Father Simon at his mission in St. Vincent Island, and simply went through the press with a numerical typo on its title page).

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Thoreau would extract something about heavy surf from this source, for use in Chapter 8 “The Highland Light” of [CAPE COD](#).]

[CURIEUX ET NOUVEAU](#)

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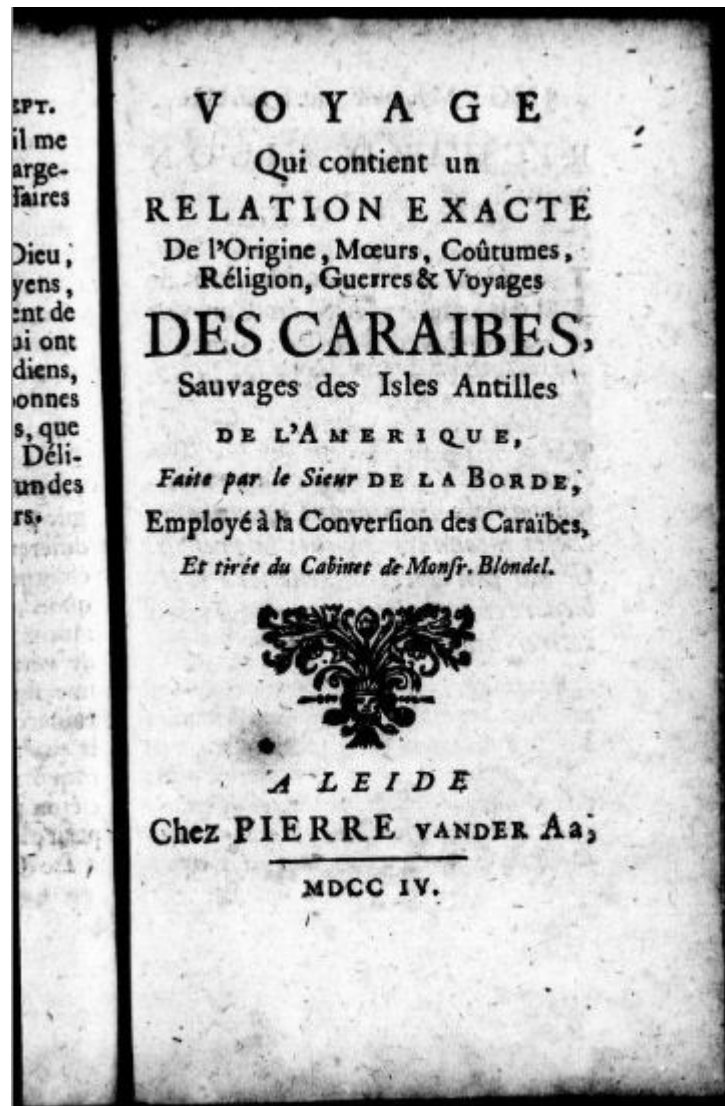
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CAPE COD: Our host said that you would be surprised if you were on the beach when the wind blew a hurricane directly on to it, to see that none of the drift-wood came ashore, but all was carried directly northward and parallel with the shore as fast as a man can walk, by the inshore current, which sets strongly in that direction at flood tide. The strongest swimmers also are carried along with it, and never gain an inch toward the beach. Even a large rock has been moved half a mile northward along the beach. He assured us that the sea was never still on the back side of the Cape, but ran commonly as high as your head, so that a great part of the time you could not launch a boat there, and even in the calmest weather the waves run six or eight feet up the beach, though then you could get off on a plank. Champlain and Poitrincourt could not land here in 1606, on account of the swell (*la houlle*), yet the savages came off to them in a canoe. In the *Sieur de la Borde's "Relation des Caraibes,"* my edition of which was published at Amsterdam in 1711, at page 530 he says:-

“*Couroumon* a Caraipe, also a star [*i.e.* a god], makes the great *lames à la mer*, and overturns canoes. *Lames à la mer* are the long *vagues* which are not broken (*entrecoupees*), and such as one sees come to land all in one piece, from one end of a beach to another, so that, however little wind there may be, a shallop or a canoe could hardly land (*aborder terre*) without turning over, or being filled with water.”

But on the Bay side the water even at its edge is often as smooth and still as in a pond. Commonly there are no boats used along this beach. There was a boat belonging to the Highland Light which the next keeper after he had been there a year had not launched, though he said that there was good fishing just off the shore. Generally the Life Boats cannot be used when needed. When the waves run very high it is impossible to get a boat off, however skilfully you steer it, for it will often be completely covered by the curving edge of the approaching breaker as by an arch, and so filled with water, or it will be lifted up by its bows, turned directly over backwards and all the contents spilled out. A spar thirty feet long is served in the same way.

I heard of a party who went off fishing back of Wellfleet some years ago, in two boats, in calm weather, who, when they had laden their boats with fish, and approached the land again, found such a swell breaking on it, though there was no wind, that they were afraid to enter it. At first they thought to pull for Provincetown, but night was coming on, and that was many miles distant. Their case seemed a desperate one. As often as they approached the shore and saw the terrible breakers that intervened, they were deterred. In short, they were thoroughly frightened. Finally, having thrown their fish overboard, those in one boat chose a favorable opportunity, and succeeded, by skill and good luck, in reaching the land, but they were unwilling to take the responsibility of telling the others when to come in, and as the other helmsman was inexperienced, their boat was swamped at once, yet all managed to save themselves.

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The full title of the book to which Thoreau refers in [CAPE COD](#), “the Sieur de la Borde’s ‘Relation des Caraibes,’ my edition of which was published at Amsterdam in 1711,” is *VOYAGES | CURIEUX ET NOUVEAUX DE MESSIEURS | HENNEPIN & DE LA BORDE, | OU L’ON VOIT UNE DESCRIPTION TRÈS PARTICULIERE, D’UN GRAND PAYS DANS L’AMERIQUE, ENTRE LE | NOUVEAU MEXIQUE, & LA MER GLACIALE, AVEC UNE RELATION CURIEUSE DES | CARAIBES SAUVAGES DES ISLES ANTILLES DE L’AMERIQUE, | LEURS MŒURS, COÛTUMES, RELIGION &C. | LE TOUTE ACCOMPAGNÉ DES CARTES & FIGURES NECESSAIRES. | [Emblem.] | A AMSTERDAM, AUX DEPENS DE LA COMPAGNIE. MDCXI* (this is an exceedingly rare volume, but was a mere reprint of the more available edition of 1704, with slight change in the title page). The original date of his publication *RELATION CURIEUSE DES CARAIBES SAUVAGES DES ISLES ANTILLES DE L’AMERIQUE* had been 1674, when it had appeared at Paris under the title *RELATION DE L’ORIGINE, MOEURS, COÛTUMES, RELIGION, GUERRES & VOYAGES DES CARAIBES, SAUVAGES DES ISLES ANTILLES DE L’AMERIQUE. FAITE PAR LE SIEUR DE LA BORDE EMPLOYE A LA CONVERSION DES CARAIBES, ESTANT AVEC LE R.P. SIMON JESUITE; ET TIREE DU CABINET DE MONSIEUR BLOUDEL ...* DIVIDED INTO 12 COMPARTMENTS, EXHIBING THE UTENSILS, DWELLINGS, AND MANUFACTURES OF THE CARIBS.

**PEOPLE OF
CAPE COD**

While he was in Cambridge, [Thoreau](#) also checked out [Père Claude Dablon](#)’s *RELATION OF THE VOYAGE OF FATHER JAMES MARQUETTE, 1673-75 (1677)*.

DE LA BORDE

“There is no Frigate like a Book
To take us Lands away”
— Emily Dickinson

After leaving the [Harvard Library](#) with his load of books of the history of French [Catholic](#)²¹ exploration to study, such as *JESUIT RELATIONS* for 1670-1672, from which he would copy into his Indian Notebook #11, [Thoreau](#) visited the [Boston Society of Natural History](#) to do some ornithology.

21. It never ceases to amaze me how Thoreau, with his Huguenot family history of persecution by French Catholics, and despite the rampant anti-Catholicism that marred the U.S. attitudes of those times, was able so benignly to consider the positive accomplishments of [French Catholics](#)! Clearly he carried with him no grudge at all in regard to what had been in its day the largest mass religious expulsion and genocide (prior, of course, to the Holocaust).



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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December 7. To Boston.

At Natural History Rooms.

The egg of *Turdus solitarius* is light-bluish with pale-brown spots. This is apparently mine which I call hermit thrush, though mine is [sic] redder and distincter brown spots.

The egg of *Turdus brunneus* (called hermit thrush) is a clear blue.

The rail's egg (of Concord, which I have seen) is not the Virginia rail's, which is smaller and nearly pure white, nor the clapper rail's, which is larger. Is it the sora rail's (of which there is no egg in this collection)?

My egg found in R.W.E.'s garden is not the white-throated sparrow's egg.

Dr. Bryant calls my seringo (i.e. the faint-noted bird) Savannah sparrow. He says Cooper's hawk is just like the sharp-shinned, only a little larger commonly. He could not tell them apart. Neither he nor Brewer²² can identify eggs always. Could match some gulls' eggs out of another basket full of a different species as well as out of the same basket.

On this day his letter arrived in [New Bedford](#), so in the evening [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) was waiting for the train from Boston at the Tarkiln Hill depot at the head of the river, and picked up Thoreau with his load of books, and Thomas Cholmondeley, and took them to his Shanty — where they talked of the English poets [Thomas Gray](#), Alfred, Lord Tennyson, [William Wordsworth](#), etc. until they retired at 10 PM.

On this day [Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Ticknor & Fields](#) in Boston.

Boston Decr 7/58

Henry D. Thoreau Esq

Concord Mass.

Dear Sir

Referring to our file of letters for 1857 we find a note from you of which the enclosed is a copy. As our letter —to which it is a reply— was missent, we doubt not but our answer to yours of a few months since has been subjected to the same, or a similar irregularity.

Respectfully

Yours &c.

Ticknor & Fields

pr Clark

December 8, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#), Thomas Cholmondeley, and [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) spent the forenoon in the Shanty on the Ricketson estate in [New Bedford MA](#), according to Friend Daniel's journal, "talking about mankind and his relationships here and hereafter." After dinner Friend Daniel and [Ellery Channing](#) smoked while Henry and [Walton Ricketson](#) examined the daughter [Anna Ricketson](#)'s collection of plants, and then Henry and Cholmondeley went for a walk. They spent the evening in the sitting-room, according to Friend Daniel's journal, "talking of old writers, Chaucer, &c."

[Erie Canal](#) mule and horse driver Tom Kilroy was born in West Troy, New York.

22. [Thomas Mayo Brewer](#) had written in the Proceedings of the [Boston Society of Natural History](#) for the years 1851-1854, on page 324 of volume 4, that Thoreau copied into his Commonplace Book #2. [Spencer Fullerton Baird](#), [Thomas Mayo Brewer](#), and Robert Ridgway would create the 3-volume A HISTORY OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS. LAND BIRDS (Boston: Little, Brown, 1874-1884). Brewer's specialty in bird study was nesting and eggs.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

December 9, Thursday: In the forenoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and Thomas Cholmondeley walked to [New Bedford](#), and were back at [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s in time for dinner.



December 9. At New Bedford.

See a song sparrow and a pigeon woodpecker. Dr. Bryant tells of the latter picking holes in blinds, and also in his barn roof and sides in order to get into it; holes in the window sashes or casings as if a nail had been driven into them.

Asked a sailor at the wharf how he distinguished a whaler. He said by the "davits," large upright timbers with sheaves curving over the sides, thus: to hold up the boats (a merchantman has only a few and small at the stern); ~ also by the place for the man to stand at masthead (crosstrees, I should say they were) and look out for whales, which you do not see on a merchant-ship; i. e., the crosstrees of the latter are very slight, of the whaler somewhat like this:



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

December 10, Friday: At the funeral of Barzillai Frost, the [Reverend Convers Francis](#) “offered a very fervent prayer.”



At 7:30 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) and Thomas Cholmondeley left [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)’s for the Tarkiln Hill train station. Thoreau went to the [Boston Society of Natural History](#)²³ and charged out [Edward Jesse](#)’s GLEANINGS IN NATURAL HISTORY, SECOND SERIES (he would make entries in his 2d Commonplace Book)²⁴

JESSE’S GLEANINGS

and Zadock Thompson’s HISTORY OF VERMONT (1842),²⁵

THOMPSON’S HISTORY I

THOMPSON’S HISTORY II

THOMPSON’S HISTORY III

and evidently Cholmondeley stayed in Boston or departed for the Southern states on his way ostensibly to the West Indies (at any rate, Cholmondeley was gone before the end of the year at the outside).

Thoreau made no entry in his journal for this day.

23. These would be the proceedings, for this year, of the Society:

PROCEEDINGS, FOR 1858

24. [Edward Jesse](#). GLEANINGS IN NATURAL HISTORY, WITH LOCAL RECOLLECTIONS... TO WHICH ARE ADDED MAXIMS AND HINTS FOR AN ANGLER. London, 1832.

[Edward Jesse](#). GLEANINGS IN NATURAL HISTORY, SECOND SERIES. TO WHICH ARE ADDED SOME EXTRACTS FROM THE UNPUBLISHED MSS. OF... MR. WHITE OF SELBORNE. London, 1834.

[Edward Jesse](#). GLEANINGS IN NATURAL HISTORY, THIRD AND LAST SERIES. TO WHICH ARE ADDED NOTICES OF SOME OF THE ROYAL PARKS AND RESIDENCES. London, 1835.

25. For the associated 1842 map of Vermont, see:

THOMPSON’S 1842 MAP



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1859

February 9, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

The Shanty, 9 Feb. 1859.

My dear Friend,—

I received last evening a Boston newspaper with your superscription, containing the record of the decease of your father. It had previously been published in the New Bedford Mercury, perhaps by Channing.

You must all feel his loss very much, particularly your mother. I have rarely, if ever, met a man who inspired me with more respect. He appeared to me to be a real embodiment of honest virtue, as well as a true gentleman of the old school. I also recognized in him a fund of good fellowship, or what would perhaps better and more respectfully express it, kindly friendship. I remember with pleasure, a ramble I took with him about Concord some two or three years ago, at a time when you were away from home, on which occasion I was much impressed with his good sense, his fine social nature, and genuine hospitality

He reminded me much of my own father, in fact, I never saw a man more like him even in his personal appearance and manners both bore upon their countenances the impress of care and sorrow, a revelation of the experience of life, written in the most legible characters, and one which always awakens my deepest sympathy and reverence.

I doubt not but that he was a good man, and however we may be unable to peer beyond this sphere of experience, may we not trust that some good angel, perhaps that of his mother (was her name Jeanie Burns?), has already welcomed him to the spirit land? At any rate, if there be any award for virtue and well doing I think it is for such as he. Veiled as the future is in mystery profound, I think we may fully rely upon Divine Wisdom who has seen it proper not only to conceal from us knowledge beyond this life, but has also wrapped us in so much obscurity even here. But let us go on trustfully in Him — the sun yet shines, the birds sing, the flowers bloom, and Nature is still as exhaustless as ever in her charms and riches for those who love her.

I trust that your mother and sister will find that consolation which they so much need. They as well as you have my warmest sympathy, and it is a pleasurable sorrow for me to bear my poor tribute to the memory and worth of him from whom you have so lately parted.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Please write me.

It seems to me that Nature — and by this I always mean the out-o'-door life in woods and fields, by streams and lakes, etc. — affords the best balm for our wounded spirits. One of the best things written by Francis Jeffrey, and which I have tacked upon my Shanty wall, is, "If it were not for my love of beautiful nature and poetry, my heart would have died within me long ago." Would not a little run from home soon, if you can be spared, be well for you? Can you not catch the early spring a little in advance? We are probably a week or two before you in her maiden steps. Soon shall we see the catkins upon the willows, and hear the bluebird and songsparrow again — how full of hope and cheer! Even this morning (a soft, drizzling one) I have heard the sweet, mellow, long-drawn pipe of the meadow lark. I have also seen robins occasionally during the winter, and a flock of quails several times, besides numerous partridges and rabbits. I see nothing of Channing of late.

*With my best regards to your mother and sister, believe me
Very truly your friend,
D. Ricketson*

P.S.

*Your letter indicates health of mind and good pluck. In fact, Dr. Pluck is a capital physician. Glory in whortle and blackberries; eat them like an Indian, abundantly and from the bushes and vines. When you can, smell of sweet fern, bayberry, sassafras, yellow birch, and rejoice in the songs of crickets and harvest flies.
lo Paean*

The notarized will of Elizabeth Blackwell as it has been recorded in the will book for Fauquier County, Virginia (Volume 28, page 133):

In the name of God, Amen.

I Elizabeth P. Blackwell of the County of Fauquier being of sound and disposing mind and memory do make this my last will and testament.

It is my will and desire that all my just debts be paid.

Item.

It is my will and desire that after my death all my slaves of every description and the future increase of the females be emancipated and set free forever and that all my other estate real and personal be sold by my executors and the proceeds thereof together with all the monies due to me and on hand at my death be applied in such part and proportion as my executors may think fit to the purchase of land in the State of Ohio or some other free state to be distributed with the money not so invested amongst all my slaves in such parts and proportions as my executors in their discretion may deem just, having respect to families.

*Lastly, I hereby appoint Charles P. Chilton and John P. Phillips executors of this my last will.
In testimony whereof I have herewith set my hand and seal*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

this 9th day of February 1859.

Name	Age	Description	Valuation
1. Violet	65	mulatto	\$00. ⁰⁰
2. Celia	70	black	00. ⁰⁰
3. Maria	55	black	00. ⁰⁰
4. Joseph	11	black	750. ⁰⁰
5. Edward	9	black	600. ⁰⁰
6. Aaron	7	black	400. ⁰⁰
7. Herron	5	black	400. ⁰⁰
8. Angelina	4	black	300. ⁰⁰
9. Greenly Johnson	10	black	750. ⁰⁰
10. Sandy	20	copper col.	1200. ⁰⁰
11. Emelina Parker	35	copper col.	300. ⁰⁰
12. Armstead Parker	12	mulatto	1000. ⁰⁰
13. Maria Parker	10	copper col.	700. ⁰⁰
14. Tamer Parker	6	copper col.	500. ⁰⁰
15. Julius Parker	4	copper col.	450. ⁰⁰
16. Isaiah Parker	2	copper col.	200. ⁰⁰
17. Amanda Ensor	39	mulatto	300. ⁰⁰
18. Edney Ensor	17	mulatto	1000. ⁰⁰
19. Anna Ensor	14	mulatto	1000. ⁰⁰
20. Amanda Ensor, Jr.	12	mulatto	900. ⁰⁰
21. Laura Ensor	10	mulatto	800. ⁰⁰
22. Eliza Ensor	8	mulatto	500. ⁰⁰
23. Louisa Johnson	24	black	1000. ⁰⁰
24. David Johnson	10	black	700. ⁰⁰
25. Delia Johnson	8	black	500. ⁰⁰
26. Fanny Johnson	5	mulatto	300. ⁰⁰
27. Edwin Johnson	3	mulatto	200. ⁰⁰



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Name	Age	Description	Valuation
28. Bettie Johnson	1	mulatto	100. ⁰⁰
29. Milly Washington	40	mulatto	1000. ⁰⁰
30. Cornelia Washington	15	mulatto	1200. ⁰⁰
31. Clara Washington	4	mulatto	450. ⁰⁰
32. Eli Washington	1	mulatto	100. ⁰⁰
33. Tamer Butler	56	copper col.	00. ⁰⁰
34. Arthur Smith	39	mulatto	1000. ⁰⁰
35. Frederick Thomson	36	copper col.	1000. ⁰⁰
36. Wellford Butler	17	black	900. ⁰⁰
37. Vernon Butler	14	black	1000. ⁰⁰
38. Hendley Chapman	12	black	1000. ⁰⁰
39. Jane Chapman	10	black	750. ⁰⁰
40. John William Burrus	9	black	900. ⁰⁰
41. Charles Stuart	7	copper col.	700. ⁰⁰
42. Jenny Stuart	5	mulatto	500. ⁰⁰
43. Violet Stuart	2	copper col.	200. ⁰⁰
44. Ellen Blackwell	48	mulatto	400. ⁰⁰
45. Albert Chapman	46	black	1500. ⁰⁰
46. Mary Jackson	35	black	1000. ⁰⁰
47. Belle Lightfoot	18	copper col.	1200. ⁰⁰
48. Taylor Jackson	10	copper col.	750. ⁰⁰
49. Celia Ann Jackson	12	copper col.	750. ⁰⁰
50. Allen Taylor	10	copper col.	900. ⁰⁰
51. Emily Taylor	8	copper col.	550. ⁰⁰
52. Bert Lightfoot	8	copper col.	550. ⁰⁰
53. Milton Taylor	5	mulatto	450. ⁰⁰
54. Albert Jackson	3	black	250. ⁰⁰
55. John Mauzey	25	mulatto	1000. ⁰⁰



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Name	Age	Description	Valuation
56. George Washington	50	mulatto	1000. ⁰⁰
57. Eli Washington	48	mulatto	1200. ⁰⁰
58. Obed Duncan	67	black	00. ⁰⁰
59. Festus Grant	44	copper col.	1000. ⁰⁰
60. James Hopkins	44	black	1000. ⁰⁰
61. Aaron Washington	45	black	1000. ⁰⁰
62. Felix Taylor	40	copper col.	800. ⁰⁰
63. Milton Taylor	30	copper col.	1200. ⁰⁰
64. Henry Corum	24	copper col.	1200. ⁰⁰
65. Thornton Taylor	30	copper col.	1200. ⁰⁰
66. Charles Butler	22	mulatto	800. ⁰⁰
67. Florinza Sowers	47	mulatto	400. ⁰⁰
68. Lucy Graves	20	black	1000. ⁰⁰
69. Graves (child of Lucy)	3		200. ⁰⁰
70. Graves (child of Lucy)	1		50. ⁰⁰
71. Ann Lightfoot	40	black	800. ⁰⁰
72. Martha Burruss	35	mulatto	1000. ⁰⁰
73. Wm. Henry Burruss	5	mulatto	400. ⁰⁰
74. Sarah Ann Lightfoot	22	copper col.	1200. ⁰⁰
75. Ida Belle Lightfoot	4	copper col.	200. ⁰⁰
76. Benjamin Corum	22	copper col.	1200. ⁰⁰
77. Mary Fletcher	18	mulatto	1000. ⁰⁰
78. Susan Jackson	20	black	1200. ⁰⁰
79. Jackson (child of Susan)	1	black	50. ⁰⁰
80. Julia Ann Burrus	14	mulatto	900. ⁰⁰
81. Lizzie Taylor	35	copper col.	1200. ⁰⁰
82. James Henry Taylor	1	copper col.	50. ⁰⁰
83. Willie Ann Corum	36	copper col.	1000. ⁰⁰



FRIEND RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Name	Age	Description	Valuation
84. Anderson Corum	4	copper col.	300. ⁰⁰
85. Lucy Corum	6	copper col.	400. ⁰⁰
86. Waverly Corum	1	copper col.	50. ⁰⁰
87. Charles Fox	65	black	000. ⁰⁰
		Total:	\$67,797. ⁰⁰

February 12, Saturday: In New-York, R.H. Macy's department store at the corner of 14th Street and 6th Avenue was advertising its wares:



[Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) departed for a vacation in Cuba. He would be away until March 17th.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

Concord Feb 12th 1859

Friend Ricketson,

I thank you for your kind letter. I sent you the notice of my Father's death as much because you knew him, as because you know me. I can hardly realize that he is dead. He had been sick about two years, and at last declined rather rapidly though steadily. Till within a week or ten days before he died, he was hoping to see another spring; but he then discovered that this was a vain expectation, and thinking that he was dying he took his leave of us several times within a week before his departure. Once or twice he expressed a slight impatience at the delay. He was quite conscious to the last, and his death was so easy, that though we had all been sitting around the bed for an hour or more, expecting that event, as we had sat before, he was gone at last almost before we were aware of it.

I am glad to read what you say about his social nature. I think I may



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

say that he was wholly unpretending; and there was this peculiarity in his aim, that, though he had pecuniary difficulties to contend with the greater part of his life, he always studied merely how to make a good article, pencil or other, (for he practised various arts) and was never satisfied with what he had produced,— nor was he ever in the least disposed to put off a poor one for the sake of pecuniary gain;— as if he labor ed for a higher end.

Though he was not very old, and was not a native of Concord, I think that he was, on the whole, more identified with Concord street than any man now alive, having come here when he was about twelve years old, and set up for himself as a merchant here at the age of 21, fifty years ago.

As I sat in a circle the other evening with my mother and Sister, my Mother's two sisters & my Father's two sisters, it occurred to me that my Father, though 71 belonged to the youngest four of the eight who recently composed our family.

How swiftly, at last, but unnoticed, a generation passes away! Three years ago I was called with my Father to be a witness to the signing of our neighbor Mr Frost's will. Mr Samuel Hoar, who was there writing it, also signed it. I was lately required to go to Cambridge to testify to the genuineness of the will, being the only one of the four who could be there; and now I am the only one alive.

My Mother & Sister thank you heartily for your sympathy. The latter in particular agrees with you in thinking, that it is communion with still living & healthy nature alone which can restore to sane and cheerful views.

I thank you for your invitation to New Bedford— but I feel somewhat confined here for the present. I did not know but we should see you the day after Alger was here. It is not too late for a winter walk in Concord

It does me good to hear of spring birds, and singing ones too, for spring seems far away from Concord yet.

I am going to Worcester to read a parlor lecture on the 22nd, and shall see Blake & Brown. What if you were to meet me there! or go with me from here! You would see them to good advantage.

Cholmondeley has been here again, after going as far south as Virginia, and left for Canada about three weeks ago. He is a good soul, and I am afraid that I did not sufficiently recognize him.

Please remember me to Mrs Ricketson, and to the rest of your family.

Yrs

Henry D. Thoreau

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**FRIEND RICKETSON****DANIEL RICKETSON****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

February 12, Saturday: You may account for that ash by the Rock having such a balanced and regular outline by the fact that in an open place their branches are equally drawn toward the light on all sides, and not because of a mutual understanding through the trunk. For there is Cheney's abele, which stands just south of a large elm. It grows wholly southward, and in form is just half a tree.



So with the tupelos under the Hill shore, east of Fairhaven Pond. They terminate abruptly like a bull's horn, having no upward leading shoot, and bend off over the water,—are singularly one-sided.



In short, trees appear to grow regularly because the sky and diffusion of light are commonly regular. There is a peculiarly drooping elm at George Prescott's great gate just north of his house, very different from the common or upright stiff-branched ones near by it.

March 6, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford MA](#).

The Shanty, Sunday a.m

6 March 1859.

Respected Friend,

This fine spring

morning with its cheering influences

brings you to my mind, for I always

associate you with the most genial

aspects of our beloved nature, with

the woods, the fields, lakes, & rivers

with the birds and flowers. As I

write the meadow-lark is piping

sweetly in the meadows near by, and

lo! at this instant, the very first

I have heard this season a blue-bird

has ~~just~~ warbled on a tree near the

Shanty. What salutation could be

more welcome or more in unison

with my subject. Yesterday my son

Walton saw and heard the red-winged

blackbird and this morning robins

(F. melodia)

are flying about. The song-sparrow^

now singing



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*has also been in tune since the 23d ^ we of Feby. Truly may say
"Spring is come!"*

(Written at top vertically in left margin):
*Yours of 12th Feby.
came duly to hand.*

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*At my present writing the thermometer
at my north window indicates 44/0 and
is rising — yesterday p.m. 50/0 wind
W.S.W. It seems to me quite time
In my boyhood, and even until
after my marriage (1834) I do
not remember it ever occurred
to me, but that our climate
was a very good one. And had
I never heard it complained of
by others, should hardly have
ever suspected it otherwise. A
climate that has sustained such
men as R.W.E. — A.B.A. — H.D.T.
and other kindred natures, can't
be a very bad one, and may be the
very best.*

*"March is to me the month of hope.
I always look forward to its coming
with pleasure, and welcome its arrival.
Others may speak of it in terms of
reproach, but to me it has much to
recommend itself. The back-bone
of winter, according to the homely adage,*

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*is now broken. Every day brings us nearer
to the vernal influences, to the return of
the birds and the appearance of the wild
flowers. Mingled with storms are many
warm sunny days. I am no longer in
haste for finer weather — so near at hand,
each day has something to interest me,*



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*and even in a severe snow or rain
storm, accompanied with cold weather,
I know that the glorious sun, when once
he shines again, will dispel all gloom
and soften the temperature. Although
it is my custom to walk in the woods,
fields, and by-places at all seasons
of the year, and in all weathers, the
spring (and in this I include March
as fairly belonging) is my favorite
most*

*^ time. Nature ever attractive to me
is at this season, particularly inviting,
the kind solace and hope of my days.
Although I am but an indifferent ver-
sifier, yet I fancy but few poets
have experienced richer or happier
emotions than myself from her
benign spirit. How well has
Frances Jeffrey said, "If it were*

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*not for my love of beautiful nature
and poetry, my heart would have
died within me long ago."*
*I am most happy to record at this
time, that I have I trust recovered
my good spirits, such as blessed
me in my earlier years of man-
hood. I shall endeavour by a
life of purity and retirement to
keep them as the choicest of blessings.
My desires I believe are moderate,
and not beyond my reach. So far
as the false luxuries of life are concerned,
I have but little taste for them, and
I would willingly dispense with almost
every necessary article in the
ceremony of living, for the sake of
being the master of my own time,
and the leisure to pursue the simple
occupations and enjoyments of rural*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*life. I do not covet wealth, I certainly
do not wish it. With the intelligent
and worthy poor, I feel far greater
sympathy and affinity, than with
a large portion of the rich and falsely
great. I would give more for one*

Page 5

*day with the poet-peasant, Robt
Burns, or Shakespeare, than for
unnumbered years of entertainment
at the tables of proud and rich men.
"Behind the plough Burns sang his wood-notes wild,
And richest Shakespeare was a poor-man's child."
So sang [Ebenezer Elliott, the corn
law Rhymers](#), himself a true poet
and friend of the virtuous and
struggling poor."
I copy the foregoing, suggested by
the season from my Daily Journal
on the entrance of March. You
may therefore read it as a soliloquy
by which it may savour less of egotism
and bombast, to which objectivity it might
otherwise be open.
During my walk yesterday p.m.
in a sunny spot. I found the "pussy
willow" (S. Erioccephala) and enclose
one of the "catkins," or "woolly aments"
I also inclose a pansy from the south side of the Shanty.
in testimony thereof.
^ How should I rejoice to have you as the companion
of my walks! I suppose you have*

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*sometime since returned from your
literary exploit into Worcester and
trust that you had a good time with
your disciples, Blake, and Brown.
They must be Thoreauly brown by this
time, "Arcades ambo" under your*



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*this
^ pupilage — though I think classic
or W.E.C.
^ term applies better to you & R.W.E.
May I not also claim as a birth-
right, to rank in your fraternity,
as a disciple at least — please not
reject me — failing in you I shall be
bankrupt indeed. Shall echo respond
to my complaint, “Is there none
for me in the wide world? no kindred
spirit?” “None”!
Dont be alarmed “mihi amicus,”
you shall be as free as air for ought me.
During the past winter I have
reviewing somewhat my Law
studies, and what will not a little
received &
^ surprise you, have accepted a
Commission as Justice of the Peace.
I have collected the relic of*

Page 7
*my law library and ranged them
in formidable array upon a shelf
in the Shanty. I find myself
much better able to grasp
and cope with these legal
worthies than when a young
man.
I dont suppose I shall
do much in the way of my
profession, but may assist
occasionally the injured in
the recovery of their rights.
I have not done this hastily
as you may suppose. I intend
to be free from all trammels
and believing as I do, that law,
or rather government, was
made for the weal of all
concerned, & particularly for*



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*the protection of the weak
against the strong, and*

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*that according to Blackstone
~~that~~ "What is not reason is not
law." I shall act accordingly,
if I act at all. I may make
use of the elective franchise, but
of this am as yet undetermined.
It seems to me as though as crisis
was approaching in the affairs
of our government, when the use
of every means that "God and
Nature" affords will be required
to oppose the tyranny. I trust
that I shall have your sympathy
in this matter.
I shall seek no opportunity
for the exercise of my opposition
but "bide my time".
A visit from you would be very
welcome. With kind regards
to your household & my Concord
friends one and all, I remain,
Yours truly, D.R.*



March 6. Sunday. P.M. — To Yellow Birch Swamp.

We go through the swamp near Bee-Tree, or Oak, Ridge, listening for blackbirds or robins and, in the old orchards, for bluebirds. Found between two of the little birches in the path (where they grow densely), in Indigo-bird Sprout-land, a small nest suspended between one and two feet above the ground, between two of the little birches. This is where I have seen the indigo-bird in summer, and the nest apparently answers to Wilson's account of that bird's, being fastened with saliva to the birch on each side. Wilson says it is "built in a low bush... suspended between two twigs, one passing up each side." This is about the diameter of a hair-bird's nest within, composed chiefly of fine bark-shreds looking like grass and one or two strips of grape-vine bark, and very securely fastened to the birch on each side by a whitish silk or cobweb and saliva. It is thin, the lining being probably gone.

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There is a very picturesque large black oak on the Bee-Tree Ridge, of this form:—

**LOUDON**

The genista is not evergreen, having turned brown, though it is still quite leafy. I could not find a single green shoot. It is correctly represented in Loudon's "Arboretum," in '44, as "a deciduous under-shrub." Yet in his "Encyclopædia," in '55, it is represented as "an evergreen shrub."

Measured a thorn which, at six inches ground, or the smallest place below the branches, — for it branches soon, — was two feet three inches in circumference. Cut off a barberry on which I counted some twenty-six rings, the broadest diameter being about three and a half inches. Both these were on the west side the Yellow Birch Swamp.

The slender black birches, with their catkined twigs gracefully drooping on all sides, are very pretty. Like the alders, with their reddish catkins, they express more life than most trees. Most trees loot: completely at rest, if not dead, now, but these look as if the sap must be already flowing in them, — and in winter as well.

In woodland roads you see where the trees which were bent down by ice, and obstructed the way, were cut off the past winter; their tops lie on one side.

July 17, Sunday: By chance, while [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) was out for a ride, he encountered H.G.O. Blake and Theophilus Brown, who had hiked to the coast from Worcester and were on their way out to the tip of Cape Cod.

[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR 17 JULY]

November 7, Monday: Mary Jennie Tappan wrote to [Henry Thoreau](#) in [Concord](#) from Bradford, New Hampshire, introducing herself by noting that "to me you are not so much a stranger as I to you," in order to thank him for his "brave and true" remarks about John Brown. So who was Mary Jennie Tappan?

Bradford, N.H. Nov. 7. '59

I wish to thank you for the utterance of those brave, true words in [behalf] of the noble Saint and self-forgetting hero of Harpers Ferry; just the words I so longed to have some living voice speak, loud, so that the world might hear— In the quiet of my home among the hills I read them [tonight] and feel that my thought has found a glorified expression and I am satisfied, and through the distance I reach forth my hand to thank you —bless you— I hope you will not think this note, born of this moments impulse an unpardonable intrusion— I believe you will not—you are not so bound by conventionalisms—to me you are not so much a stranger as I to you.— God keep you!— Mary Jennie Tappan.

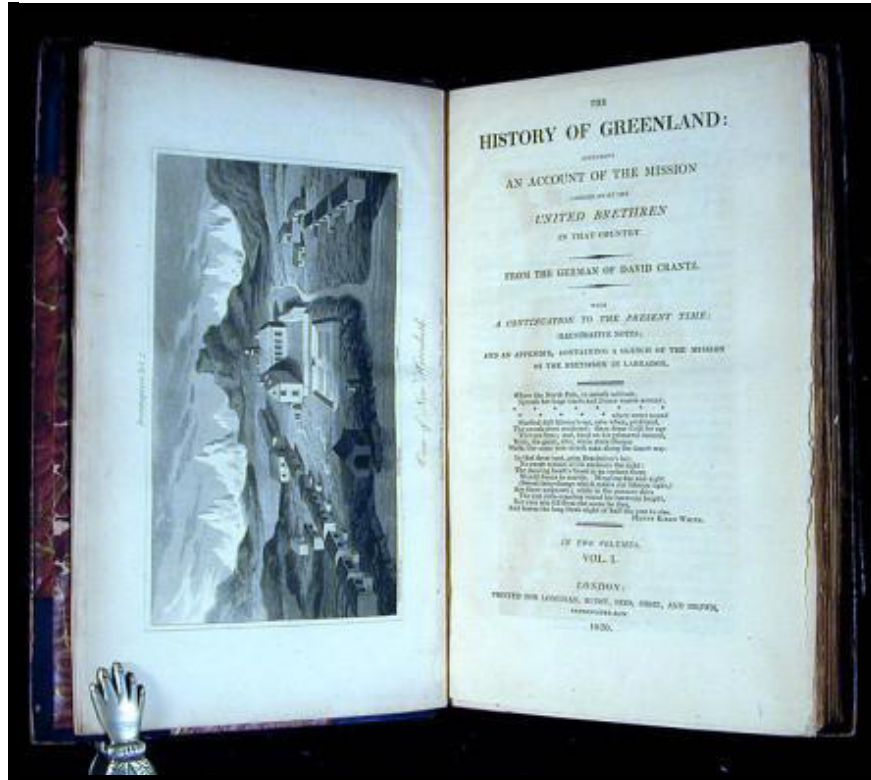


DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

[Thoreau](#) checked out, from [Harvard Library](#), the first two volumes of a translation from the High Dutch of Missionary Brother David Crantz's THE HISTORY OF GREENLAND; INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF THE MISSION CARRIED ON BY THE UNITED BRETHREN IN THAT COUNTRY (1820).



Was it on November 7, 1850 or November 7, 1860 that Thoreau checked out [Thomas Jefferson](#)'s NOTES ON THE STATE OF VIRGINIA. WITH AN APPENDIX (8th American edition; Boston: Printed by David Carlisle, for Thomas & Andrews, J. West, West & Greenleaf, J. White & Co., E. & S. Larkin, J. Nancrede, Manning & Loring, Boston, Thomas & Thomas, Walpole, N.H., and B.B. Macanulty, Salem. 1801)? — a volume in which, incidentally, the author had had a few things to say about the town and geography of Harpers Ferry, Virginia.

THOMAS JEFFERSON'S NOTES

Bronson Alcott wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).²⁶

Thoreau has just come back from reading to Parker's company a revolutionary Lecture on Osawatome [John] Brown, a hero and martyr after his own heart and style of manliness. It was received here by our Concord folks with great favor, and by the Worcester friends of his. I wish the towns might be his auditors throughout the length and breadth of states and country. He thinks of printing it in pamphlet and spreading it far and wide, North and South.

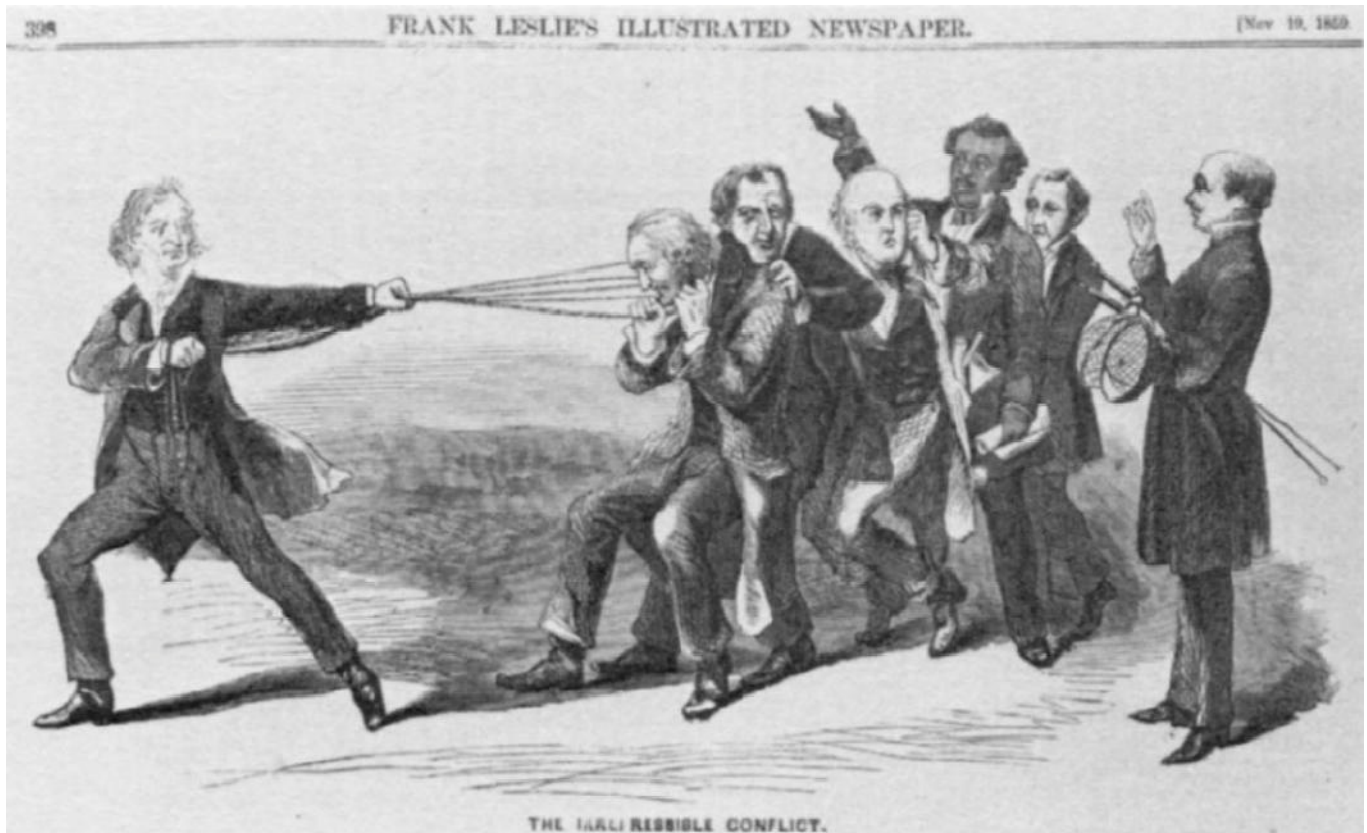
26. [Anna Ricketson](#) and [Walton Ricketson](#), editors, DANIEL RICKETSON: AUTOBIOGRAPHIC AND MISCELLANEOUS (New Bedford MA: Anthony, 1910, pages 130-1)

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Governor Henry A. Wise sent a telegram to Andrew Hunter, his special prosecutor of the case against Captain John Brown and his co-conspirators at Charlestown, urging he bring indictments also against former New York congressman Gerrit Smith and against famous black newspaperman Frederick Douglass. He assured Hunter confidentially that as governor he would “not reprieve or pardon one man” of those whom Hunter managed to convict.

[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR 7 NOVEMBER]

November 19, Saturday: Governor Henry A. Wise of Virginia had been attempting to capture Frederick Douglass, in order to try him for treason alongside John Brown:



[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by the Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) in Cincinnati, asking for contributions to the new Cincinnati incarnation of THE DIAL. (He would never receive any.)

Cin. Novr. 19, 1859.

My dear Mr. Thoreau,

I trust that you also, With Emerson, will be moved by old and high memories to help us in starting out here a new incarnation of the



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

old Dial. It certainly will prove worthy to be so called if we can obtain help from R.W.E. yourself and others. We will not be able at once to pay contributors, and the Editor expects to lose; but in due time we shall reap if we faint not. Will you not give the babe a birth-present? One of those fresh wood-zephyrs that fan our fevered hearts and bring health to blase cheeks! You are the man, the only man, who can make green grass and flowers grow upon the pages of our Dial.

What is my chief wish of you? It is to have you interested in us: willing to send us a love-gift of thought: noting, now and then on paper, the form and [?] of some pearls, which I know you are constantly finding in that Oriental Sea of yours upstairs. So now Mr. Pearl-Diver, I await your word of cheer! May I say that I shall be assisted by H. D. Thoreau of Concord? Pray let me hear at once.

Your friend,
M.D. Conway.

At the invitation of Bronson Alcott, [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) came to Concord to visit with him and with Thoreau:



ABBA ALCOTT

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

ABBY MAY ALCOTT

Left home for Concord at 10 ¹/₂ A.M., arrived at Concord at 5 ¹/₂ P.M., leaving the cars at Concord depot, walked down to the village bookstore (Mr. Stacey's) where I found Mr. Alcott, by whose invitation I was going to visit him; also saw Thoreau at the post-office. Received with much kindness by Mrs. Alcott and her two daughters, Louisa and Abby. Spent the evening with Mr. A. in his library, where he had a wood fire on the hearth. Their place is very retired, the house an old farmhouse which Mr. A. has fitted up at little expense in a very tasteful manner, and made it a suitable home for a philosopher and poet.

Bronson Alcott wrote in his journal that [Friend Daniel](#) and [Thoreau](#) had had supper and conversation at his house:

Ricketson from New Bedford arrives. He and Thoreau take supper with us. Thoreau talks truly and enthusiastically about Brown, denouncing the Union, President, the States, and Virginia particularly. Wishes to publish his last speech, and has been to Boston publishers, but fails to find any to print it for him.



FRIEND RICKETSON

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November 20, Sunday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson's](#) journal:



ELLERY CHANNING

EDMUND HOSMER

Clear and cold. Spent the forenoon in the library with Mr. Alcott, looking after and examining his old books. I walked this P.M. with Thoreau to Walden Pond and the woods around. Took tea with T. and called upon Channing and smoked a pipe with him; returned to Thoreau's, met Edmund Hosmer, an intelligent farmer, there. Talked on religious faith, &c., returned to Mr. Alcott's late in the evening.

November 21, Monday: The USS *Constellation* took up station on its anti-slavery patrol off the mouth of the Congo River.

[Friend Daniel Ricketson's](#) journal:



BRONSON ALCOTT

WALDO EMERSON

Clear and milder. Walked this forenoon with Mr. Alcott beyond the old parsonage of Dr. Ripley, looking at farms, Mr. Alcott being desirous for me to come to Concord with my family to live. Left Mr. A.'s hospitable roof after dinner to visit my friend Thoreau. Mr. A. and his family are vegetarians, and live very simply on homely but wholesome fare, and enjoy good health. My visit was a very pleasant one, giving me the feeling of much ease and comfort. Called on Mr. Emerson with Mr. A. this A.M.



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November 22, Tuesday: Anonymous to Governor Henry A. Wise:

Nov 22nd 1859

Gov. H A Wise

Sir

Your chivelry has received a pretty good concussion. The noble John Brown has given you a blow from his brave arm that you never can survive; he preceeded you in the taking of Harpers Ferry and the arcenal as you proposed and the little handfull gave your great dominion the delerim tremans and she will never get over it

He is a hero and will be regarded as such and a marter in future American history, and by your own State to

Chivelry indeed! You are but the miserable ofspring of ostentatious and piratical Sires; they have handed down their piratical gain to your barbarians of the present day and you are clinging to it and their habits with all the tenacity of death to his victom

But you cant hold on much longer, your grasp is growing weaker daily and ere long your hands will fall parolized at your sides

The noble John has done a great work he has struck the blow and America will honour and praise him for it; and now he and his little company are your prisoners you can hang them we expect you to do it but they will hardly have grown cold ere vengence will be visited upon your heads; when you put the rope around his neck you put a dager in your own heart and in those of your state. I tell you the truth, I am not deceaveing you. you will find it varified, its no play, your days are numbered, your slaves will cost you dear and your gratification of vengence dearer still, we are on your track, we will watch every movement and cirtain ones among you may count your selves as dead men we sware upon the head of John Brown and you will find it varified. Your barbarians are howling for their pray it will be a luxurious morsel and a pretious moment to them when like the Turkos of the French army they can put their mouths to the throats of their victoms and drink their blood but it will be a woful dear drink to them

In all this matter, you as the Executive have no wisdom, discession, policy or forbareance, you are like your people howling, reaking, yelling for vengence, but it will come upon your own heads and that right early

The saying is verified, one shall chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight, and again, the wicked flee when no man persues, A war Mr Wise has commenced that you cannot stop, a fire has broke out that you cannot quench You may prepare for death. I write for Legion, for we are many



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Unsettled. Called after breakfast on Channing, who left me below in his kitchen and went to his room in the attic. Proceeded to Mr. Alcott's, dined with Thoreau, spent part of the afternoon with him at Mr. Alcott's in the library, walked after with T. in the dark as far as the Hosmer farm, sat with Thoreau in his room talking till 11.



November 22. Ground white with snow a few hours. C. says that he saw to-day a procession of minnows (one to two inches long) some three or four feet wide, about forty abreast, passing slowly along northerly, close to the shore, at Wharf Rock, Flint's Pond. They were fifteen minutes passing!

November 23, Wednesday: In [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal:[EDMUND HOSMER](#)[BRONSON ALCOTT](#)[LOUISA MAY ALCOTT](#)[ABBY MAY ALCOTT](#)[ANNA BRONSON ALCOTT](#)

Walked after breakfast to Edmund Hosmer's farm, spent an hour with him and his youngest daughter, an intelligent and well educated young woman. Called at Mr. Alcott's and dined with him in his library on boiled rice, grated cheese, cider, and apples. Walked this P.M. with Thoreau to the Hallowell farm; returned to Thoreau's room; plain talk, perhaps too much so. Called at Mr. Alcott's this evening; he was at Mr. Emerson's. Sat till nearly 9 with the two young ladies; introduced to Mr. Pratt, engaged to Miss Anna Alcott, who was also in the room a short time. Spent the night at the Middlesex House, kept by a Mr. Newton, formerly a stage-driver between Taunton and Boston. Retired at 10. Talk in the barroom with several persons.

William H. Bonney (Billy the Kid) was born.

[Henry Thoreau](#) responded to the Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#)'s letter of November 19th, that he was already fully committed but did hope for the success of the new Cincinnati reincarnation of [THE DIAL](#).

[NO ENTRIES IN THOREAU'S JOURNAL FOR 23 NOVEMBER]November 24, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to Calvin H. Greene.*Concord Nov. 24. '59*



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Dear Sir,

The lectures which you refer to were reported in the newspaper, after a fashion, the last one in some half dozen of them, and if I possessed one, or all, of those reports I would send them to you, bad as they are. The best, or at least longest one of the Brown Lecture was in the Boston "Atlas & Bee" of Nov 2^d. May be half the whole— There were others in the Traveller— The Journal &c of the same date.

I am glad to know that you are interested to see my things, & I wish that I had them in a printed form to send to you. I exerted myself considerably to get the last discourse printed & sold for the benefit of Brown's family—but the publishers are afraid of pamphlets & it is now too late.

I return the stamp which I have not used.

I shall be glad to see you if I ever come your way

[One-third page missing]

*Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau*



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ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES BY MEANS OF NATURAL SELECTION, OR THE PRESERVATION OF FAVORED SPECIES IN THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE was published to acclaim and controversy by a gentleman naturalist with whose work Thoreau was already familiar. Have you ever wondered how [Charles Darwin](#) ever got his ORIGIN book, with its so utterly novel and abhorrent thesis, through the London presses? The standard accounts merely say that he sent off his MS and it was published.



ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES

But what actually happened was that Charles Lyell fronted for him with a publisher, John Murray, and based on this recommendation Murray, being himself an amateur geologist, accepted the MS sight unseen. Once he got his hands on the actual manuscript, he became quite disenchanted at what he had committed himself to. He commented, in fact, that this new theory of descent with modification was like “contemplating the fruitful union of a poker and a rabbit.” The new theory was “absurd.” Pointing out to Darwin that “everybody is interested in pigeons,” he urged that the MS be entirely rewritten to limit the author’s remarks to pigeons, with only a brief reference to general principles. His recommendation, he confessed, was based upon a standard publishers’ fantasy, that of placing a copy of his book on the tea-table of every pigeon-fancier in Britain. The publisher was willing to put out only an edition of 1,250 copies, which at fifteen shillings was quickly sold out.

The argument about this had driven Darwin to one of those English water-resorts for “the cure.” While at this resort he was reading a new novel, ADAM BEDE, and on the evening of this day on which ORIGIN came out, George Eliot ([Herbert Spencer](#)’s girlfriend, sort of, although we have room to hope that they were never



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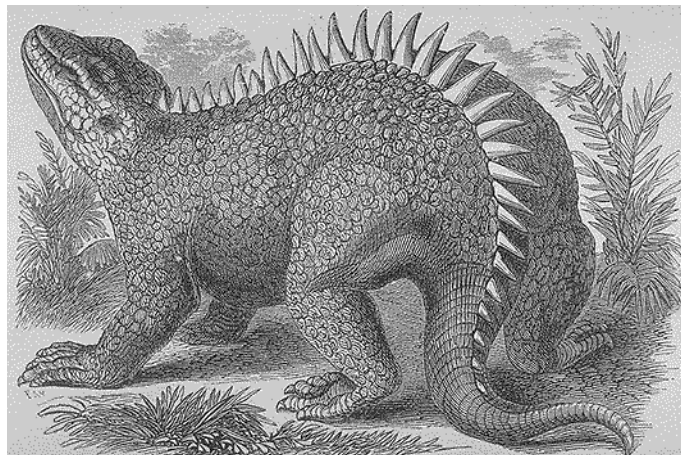
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intimate) read Darwin's book.



We don't know either what he thought of her fiction or what she thought of his nonfiction. We do know that the publisher's trepidations would prove to have been unwarranted, that two pirate editions would quickly roll off the American presses without the formality of permission or the forwarding of any royalties — and that at Cambridge College, William Whewell would not tolerate such a treatise as the ORIGIN to be placed in the library stacks.

The natural history encyclopedias of the 19th Century rarely included extinct animals. An exception was Samuel Goodrich's ILLUSTRATED NATURAL HISTORY published in this year, in which, upon a notice of the common chameleon, the audience suddenly found itself in the presence of "fossil lizards." Below is its woodcut of the Hylaeosaurus. Other illustrations show the Iguanodon, the Megalosaurus, and a collection of marine reptiles such as Ichthyosaurus. All these illustrations had been copied from the Crystal Palace concretions. Hylaeosaurus had been discovered by Gideon Mantell in 1832 and had been announced in his GEOLOGY OF THE SOUTHEAST OF ENGLAND in 1833. It was one of Richard Owen's original three dinosaurs and stood proud on the relocated Crystal Palace's grounds:



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[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal for this day reads:



Clear and fine for the season. Left Concord at 8¹/₂ A.M.

Frederick Douglass's ship was arriving on this day in Liverpool harbor.



In a private letter, the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#), who was entirely unfamiliar with evolutionary theory, confessed on this day to Francis Jackson (the namesake grandfather of the mentally imbalanced Francis Jackson Meriam of the Harpers Ferry raid whom Thoreau would help escape, supposedly toward Canada) that the reason he did not like slavery was, that if these inferior colored people were allowed to have any place at all in human society, they would merely take the opportunity to **fecundate**. To be kind to them was merely to create more of them that one would need to be kind to. The Reverend was an Aryan possessed of Aryan common sense, a veteran of preaching in downtown Boston to other Aryans possessed of Aryan common



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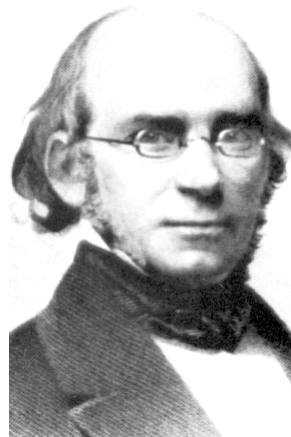
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sense, and so of course he belabored the obvious, that:

An Anglo-Saxon with common sense does not like this Africanization of America.



Brit horrified at slavery



USer horrified at slavery

Confusing Darwinism with Spencerism and triumphalism (that is, with “Social Darwinism,” as is so very usual), the Reverend [Parker](#) would eventually get around to congratulating himself that on account of his deeply ingrained racism he had been “Darwinian before Darwin” (actually, in this “Anglo-Saxon” Aryan race-soulism of his, what he was in fact was Hitlerian before Hitler).²⁷



November 24. The river has risen considerably, at last, owing to the rain of the 22d. Had been very low before.

See, on the railroad-slope by the pond, and also some days ago, a flock of goldfinches eating the seed of the
27. [Adolf Hitler](#), a Catholic, understood something about Christianity which few Christians are able to accept. “Christianity is a rebellion against natural law, a protest against nature” (HITLER’S TABLE TALK, Weidenfield and Nicolson, London 1963). Many German Christians supported Hitler because they had the spirit of Hitler within them while they supposed they had the spirit of Christ within them. Even today some Christians are unable to accept the truth of this remark, because they have the spirit of Hitler, or the Emperor Constantine, within them while they suppose they have the spirit of Christ within them. That sort of Christianity was in fact the only sort of Christianity which my mother in Indiana had ever known, which is why she could not consider me a Christian but needed to agonize over me as an “atheist” howevermuch I insisted that I was attempting to follow the way of Jesus as I construed it. If someone were to tell these “Constantinian” Christians that Hitler said that two plus two equals four, they would try to find some perversity in this remark by which to dismiss it (the guy lost a war, and that has forever discredited him as the leader of the state church), and if someone told them that the problem is not that Hitler did not know what true Christianity is, but that the actual problem is that they themselves do not know what true Christianity is, they My mother was in fact, like E.O. Wilson the Harvard sociobiologist, an admirer of Ronald Reagan. Wilson perceived President Reagan as the model of the “soft-core altruist,” which is the good because fake kind of altruist who does not qualify as a Christian “enemy of civilization” (Edward O. Wilson, ON HUMAN NATURE, Harvard UP, Cambridge MA 1978, page 157) because he does not operate out of a mere mindless death-wish. As Mary Midgley has pointed out, “Social Darwinism or Spencerism is the unofficial religion of the west. The official western religion, Christianity, is well known to be rather demanding and to have its eye on the next world rather than this one. In such situations, other doctrines step in to fill the gap. People want a religion for this world as well. They find it in the worship of individual success” (Mary Midgley, EVOLUTION AS A RELIGION: STRANGE HOPES AND STRANGER FEARS, Methuen, London 1985, page 140). The mock altruist is a person whose calculating “good behavior” is well rewarded. His “psychological vehicles are lying, pretense and deceit, including self-deceit, because the actor is most convincing who believes that his performance is real” (page 156). The real altruist, the hard-core one, “irrational,” would in fact be Social Darwinism’s enemy, sociobiology’s enemy, and the enemy of civilization. There were some German Christians, a few, to leaven Hitler’s loaf; they insisted on their right to die by way of the cross rather than the sword. There are some American Christians, a few, to leaven America’s loaf; they are of course condemned, but here they are.



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Roman wormwood. At Spanish Brook Path. the witch-hazel (one flower) lingers.

I observe that ferns grow especially where there is an abrupt or broken bank, as where, in the woods, sand has been anciently dug out of a hillside to make a dam with and the semicircular scar has been covered with a sod and shrubs again. The shelter and steepness are favorable when there is shade and moisture.

How pretty amid the downy and cottony fruits of November the heads of the white anemone, raised a couple of feet from the ground on slender stalks, two or three together,—small heads of yellowish-white down, compact and regular as a thimble beneath, but, at this time, diffusive and bursting forth above, somewhat like a little torch with its flame,—a very neat object!

December 2, Friday: The spirit of John Brown, allegedly, to Governor Henry A. Wise:

First Hevan Dec 2

Friend Wise

I got here this Morning at 11 1/2 o'clock Set Peter was at the Door. he said welcom John Brown you are the first man that come here from Virginia in 20 years and I am afraid you will Be the last excep Cook and his friends



Youres &ca

John Brown

P.S. Write soon and send your letter By Cook as that will Be the Last canse you ever will get


J.B

The Reverend Henry Highland Garnet announced at a service in New-York's Shiloh Church that henceforward "the Second day of December will be called **Martyr's Day.**"



"There can be no redemption of sin

without the shedding of blood."

We may now allow ourselves to notice what for a long time has not been awarded an adequate commentary, that for this commemorative service which coincided with the hanging of John Brown for treason, [Henry Thoreau](#), [Waldo Emerson](#), and the other "speakers" delivered nothing of their own thoughts. (A local lad named Frank Pierce would later have occasion to recall that he had helped his dad move some sort of heavy musical instrument, a piano or organ, into the hall for this occasion: ) The speakers merely took the podium in their turn to read entirely innocuous stuff out of Andrew Marvell, and out of Sir Walter Raleigh, and out of Tacitus. Why were they doing this upon such an occasion? It must have been like drinking Polynesian Double Mai-Tais at a wake. Well, one reason might have been that enflamed Concord townspeople were



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nearby, counting down the minutes as the traitor rode atop his own coffin out to the hanging ground,



until the traitor would swing at the stroke of noon — and as he swung, igniting a hanging effigy of the traitor. These local patriots did not want their world turned upside down, but instead, they wanted that all respect and consideration continue to be accorded to worthy people. They were not ready to begin to accord respect and consideration also to unworthy people, such as coloreds, and criminals. Such patriots constituted an obvious and unpredictable, although local and temporary, hazard. We have the testimony of one participant in this classics-reading, however, that something else, a more permanent and extensive threat, was on the minds of the participants and their audience. What if, as a result of this meeting, they were arrested by officials of the federal government and charged with high treason? In a trial, they would need to be able to defend themselves in some manner, and this would enable to defend themselves on the grounds that actually this meeting had been for the simple and straightforward and entirely innocuous purpose of reading of the classic authors. Not a word had they spoken about this traitor Brown who, coincidentally, was being hanged in another state at that hour. Well, does this make you think less of Henry David Thoreau, that such considerations would have been borne in mind under the uncertainties of the moment? How would you yourself have conducted yourself in the face of such uncertainties? You will please to note that there was all the difference in the world between defending Brown in public while he was merely an accused citizen before a court-martial panel of military officers,



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before he had been found to have committed the capital crime of treason, of having attempted by force and violence to overthrow the government of the United States of America, and defending him in public after that finding of guilt. It may well be that, in critical times, with martial law a very real possibility, one who attempts to give aid and comfort to treason is himself a traitor, and may well anticipate being treated as one. While people have begun hanging people, who can be sure where this spate of hanging is going to stop?

Friday, December 2, 1859, broke clear and summerlike over a nation solemn and awed by the grim business taking place in Virginia. Southerners put up a facade of business-as-usual, but in the free states church bells tolled morning, noon, and night from Cape Cod to Kansas. In Concord, Thoreau argued with the narrow-minded selectmen who refused to endorse the ringing and threatened to fire off the town's minute guns as a countermeasure, but in Albany the council authorized a one-hundred-gun salute in tribute to Brown and in Syracuse the great fire bell in City Hall rang mournfully all through the day.

The above, from page 500 of Mayer's ALL ON FIRE makes it sound as if Thoreau was threatening to fire off Concord's minute-guns because narrow-minded selectmen were refusing permission to knell the 1st Parish bell. No. What Thoreau recorded was that local **opponents** to the commemoration service threatened that if mourners knelled the 1st Parish bell in honor of John Brown's passing, **they** would fire off the town's minute-guns in **celebration** of the traitor's execution.



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Upon expecting that the federal captive John Brown had probably been put to death in Charlestown, Virginia, [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) mused on how his sympathy for Brown's determined endeavor related to the qualms he had as to episodically violent manner in which Brown had conducted himself in response to the constant violence that was the institution of slavery:



To-day at 12 M. John Brown was probably executed at Charlestown, Va., for a noble but apparently ineffectual attempt to emancipate slaves. My sympathy for the brave and self-sacrificing old man has been deeply aroused. His sufferings are now probably all over, and his body rests in peace, the bloody requisitions of the law having been satisfied.... Feeling sad at the mournful close of poor John Brown's life, now I trust with his Father and his God beyond the reach of the tyrant slaveholder. Cloudy this afternoon, and all nature affected with a general gloom, as it were at the loss of the brave old philanthropic hero now lying dead and cold in the hands of his enemies and the enemies of humanity.

John Brown cannot die; his body may perish, but that which was the most himself, his noble, self-sacrificing spirit, will survive, and that object to which he so heartily devoted himself and for which he has died, will be hastened to its accomplishment by his cruel and untimely death, untimely so far as the means used to effect it on the part of his tyrannical captors.



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The Reverend Samuel Joseph May organized a crowd to gather at the Syracuse NY city hall to do honor to



him who had honored in “spirit and letter the great holy doctrine of the [Declaration of Independence](#).”



The reverend termed the action “ill-advised,” condemned its violence, and then repeated the sentiment of John Brown’s closing speech at his trial — that had he acted on behalf of the rich and well-born, the government would be glorifying him rather than killing him, and that therefore the true reason why the courts martial panel was condemning him to death had nothing to do with the nature of his actions in and of themselves, and had everything to do with the fact that he had performed these actions on behalf of the humble people of this world.²⁸ When the appointed time arrived for the federal government to kill its captive, the minister intoned “The day has come, it is slavery or liberty, compromises are at an end,” and the sexton tolled the bell of the city hall 63 times.

Upon the request of [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), [Thoreau](#) borrowed [Emerson](#)’s covered wagon and mare and delivered a distressed young man at sunrise past the railroad depot in Concord to the railroad depot next down the line, in South Acton. No questions asked or answered, Thoreau simply did as his friends needed. The young man sat in the back seat and talked continuously, insisted that his driver was Mr. Emerson, and at one point attempted to dismount and walk back to Concord. The “Mr. Lockwood” whom Thoreau escorted was Francis

28. Which, of course, was an excellent point, and one which needed to be made.



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Jackson Meriam, a young manic-depressive with but one good eye, one of the culprits of the Harpers Ferry fiasco, the last-recruited agent of the Secret “Six”, and it is an open question what would have happened to Thoreau, had anyone seen through “Mr. Lockwood’s” assumed identity and had Henry been captured while assisting such an escaping “traitor.”



(Meriam had been in Boston coming from Canada, and finally had been induced by friends to head back toward area of St. Catharines, Canada; he eventually would settle in Illinois and marry with Minerva Caldwell of Galena, Illinois and obtain a position as a captain in the 3rd South Carolina Colored Infantry. Erratic and unbalanced, he would often urge wild schemes upon his superiors, and sometimes attempt them. In an engagement under General Grant he would be severely wounded in the leg. In 1865 he would die suddenly in New-York.)



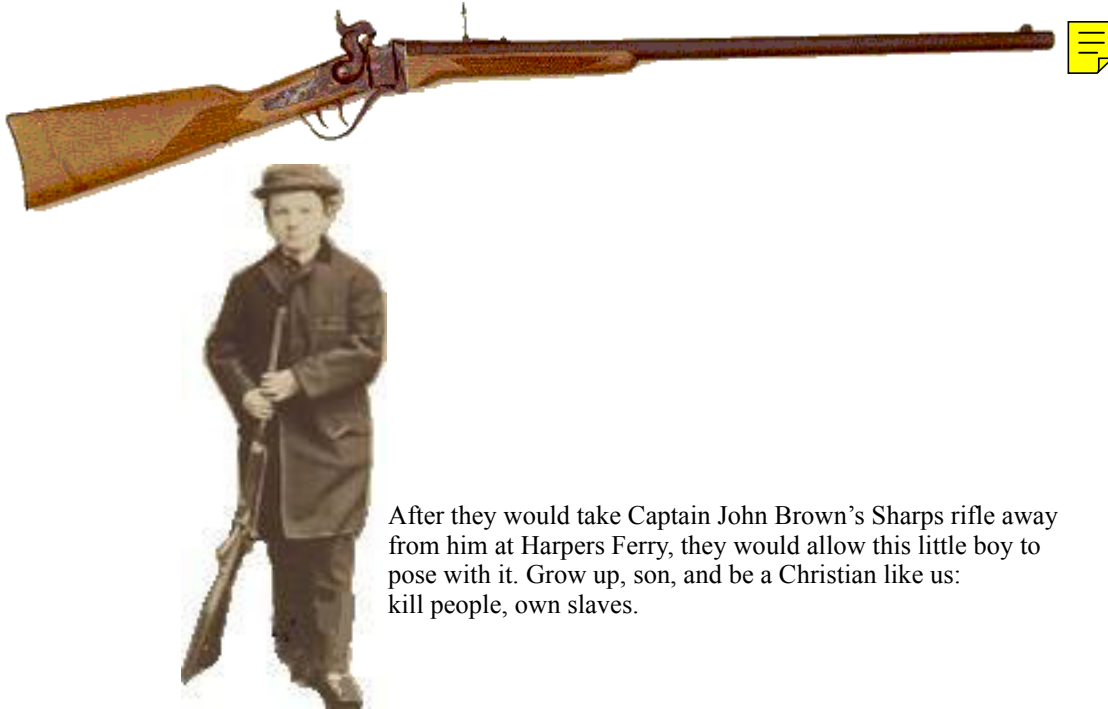
Then Thoreau drove back to Concord from South Acton, returned the wagon, and delivered “The Martyrdom of John Brown” at Concord Town Hall. This was the noon of Brown’s hanging and other residents of Concord, down the street, were hanging Brown in effigy.



While the condemned man was being [hanged](#), the Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) stayed at home and wrote an editorial asking “Are Non-Resistants for Murder?” He had not been much impressed with Brown’s reliance upon pikes,

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or reliance on the readings of the “Beecher’s Bible” (Sharps rifle, ten “verses” per minute).



After they would take Captain John Brown’s Sharps rifle away from him at Harpers Ferry, they would allow this little boy to pose with it. Grow up, son, and be a Christian like us: kill people, own slaves.

Down South, just before noon, as Brown was being taken from his cell to sit on his own coffin in a wagon and ride away in the midst of the troops, a guard handed him a slip of paper and a quarter, requesting an autograph. Brown wrote hurriedly on the slip of paper:²⁹

Charlestown, Va. 2^d December, 1859.
I John Brown am now quite certain that
the crimes of this guilty, land; will never be
purged away; but with Blood. I had as I now
think; vainly flattered myself that without very
much bloodshed; it might be done

We may notice in passing that what John Brown was repeating here was the idea of the Reverend Henry Highland Garnet, that Brown had himself caused to be published and distributed. In a speech to a national

29. He handed the man back his quarter.



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black convention in 1843, the Reverend Garnet had declared that



“There can be no redemption of sin

without the shedding of blood.”

We understand how such a speech, determinedly ignoring (*à la* Robert D. Richardson, Jr.) the vast difference between shedding one’s own blood in the furtherance of one’s agenda and shedding the blood of another, could fit right into a desperate man’s desperate agenda — for Brown had printed and distributed this speech.

**Be sure you grok the logic here:
The logic is not “A black minister said it
and therefore we should pay attention.”
The logic is: “They should die for their sins and set us free;
therefore by becoming murderers we will set ourselves free.”**

Also, on December 2nd, several hundred medical students from Virginia marched through the streets of Philadelphia, with red ribbons on their coats, shouting out how many niggers they owned.



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As John Brown was being led down the corridor in the prison, he kissed the warder John Avis's young son.³⁰



Currier & Ives would record this as the kissing of a black baby:



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30. The warder's family, a white family named Avis, lived at the front of the prison. This, plus the fact that Brown had spoken of how desirable it would be to have black people in attendance during his hanging, evidently led to the disgusting and inflammatory and utterly unfounded and unwarranted report in the popular newspapers, that the child he had kissed was **black**.

John Brown of Ossawatimie spake on his dying day:
'I will not have to shrive my soul a priest in Slavery's pay;
But let some poor slave-mother whom I have striven to free,
With her children, from the gallows-stair put up a prayer for me!'
John Brown of Ossawatimie, they led him out to die;
And lo! a poor slave-mother with her little child pressed nigh:
Then the bold, blue eye grew tender, and the old harsh face grew mild,
As he stooped between the jeering ranks and kissed the negro's child!
The shadows of his stormy life that moment fell apart,
And they who blamed the bloody hand forgave the loving heart;
That kiss from all its guilty means redeemed the good intent,
And round the grisly fighter's hair the martyr's aureole bent!
Perish with him the folly that seeks through evil good!
Long live the generous purpose unstained with human blood!
Not the raid of midnight terror, but the thought which underlies;
Not the borderer's pride of daring, but the Christian's sacrifice.
Nevermore may yon Blue Ridges the Northern rifle hear,
Nor see the light of blazing homes flash on the negro's spear;
But let the free-winged angel Truth their guarded passes scale,
To teach that right is more than might, and justice more than mail!
So vainly shall Virginia set her battle in array;
In vain her trampling squadrons knead the winter snow with clay!
She may strike the pouncing eagle, but she dares not harm the dove;
And every gate she bars to Hate shall open wide to Love!

— Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#)

HDT

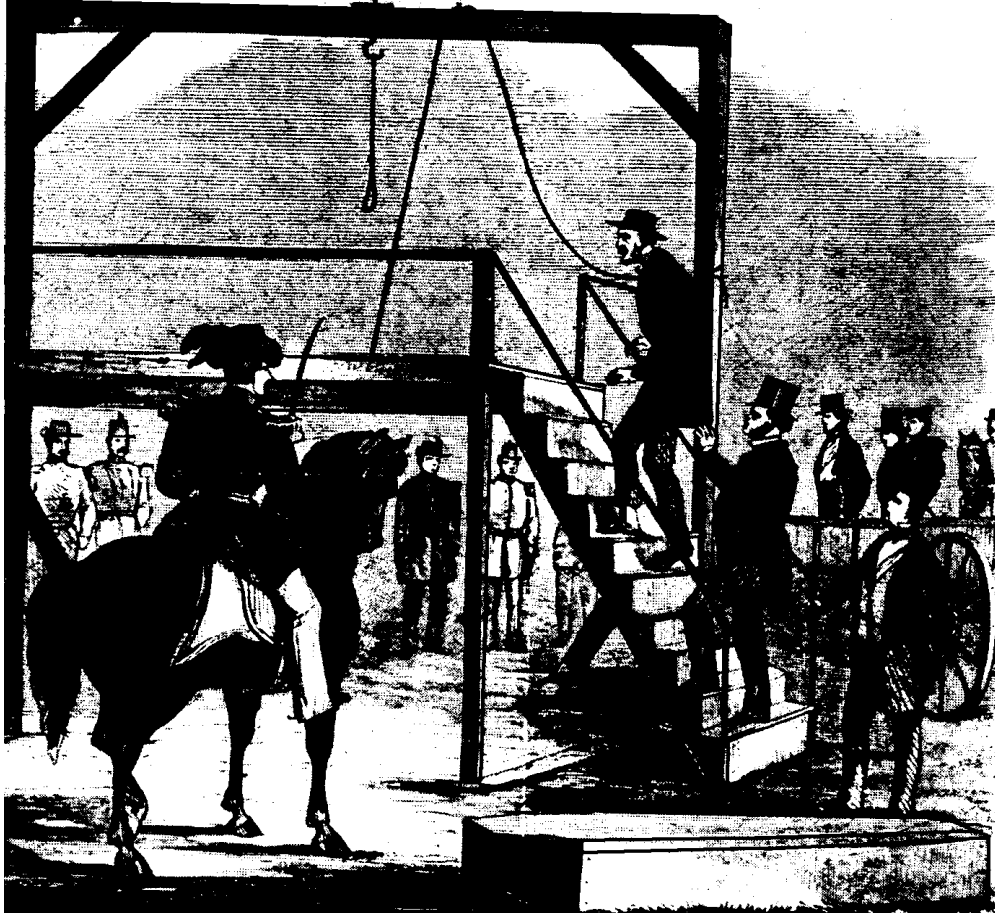
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It was high noon on 2 Dec 1859 and time for the military ceremony.

If anyone did, John Brown had a perfect right to dance:

After giving the lives of a number of *other* people for what *he* believed,
he had somewhat belatedly gotten the idea of sacrifice
that Angelina Grimké had tried to explain in 1835:

*It is my deep, solemn, deliberate conviction that this
is a cause worth dying for.... YES! LET IT COME — let
us suffer, rather than insurrections should arise.*

—and offered his *own* life rather than *somebody else's* life for what *he* believed.
Then the death roll of the drums of Robert E. Lee's marching band, snares
loosened, purposefully drowned out John Brown's last words from the

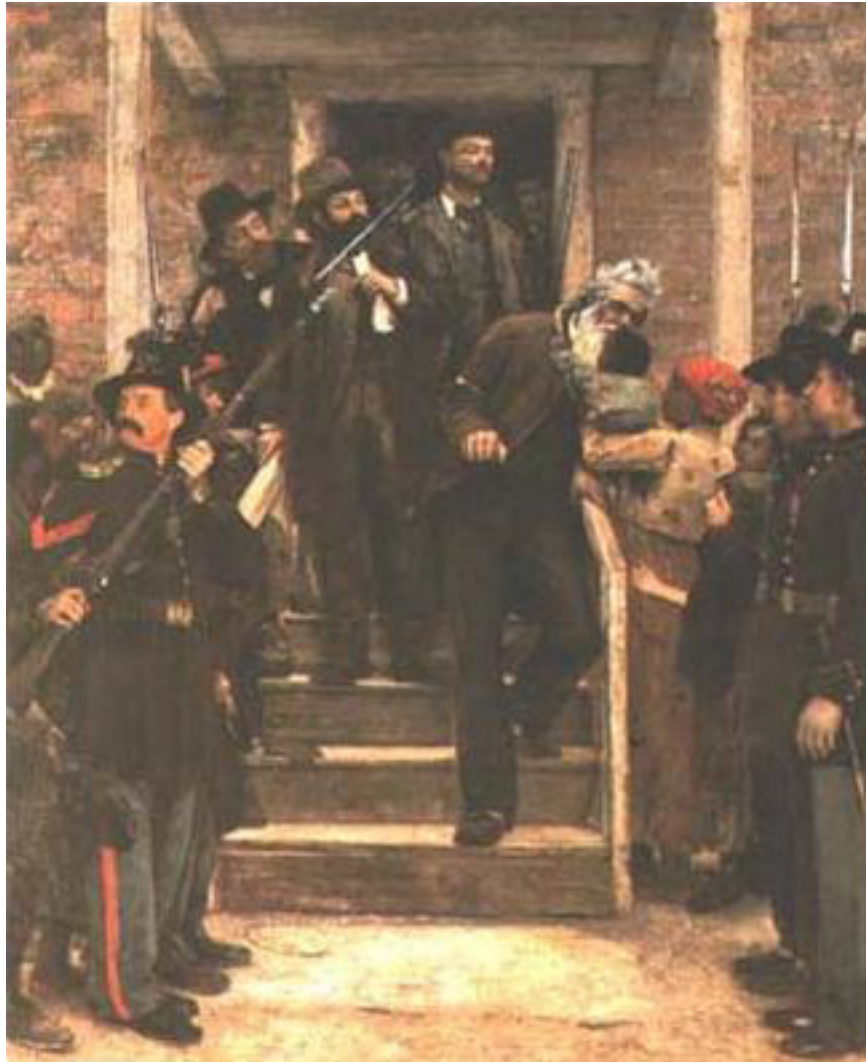


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In 1884, Thomas Hovenden would prepare a painting depicting the famous falsehood, what supposedly had



taken place at the door of the Charlestown jail while John Brown was being led to his execution, and would do at least as good a job of it as Currier & Ives had done at the time.

At least this Thomas Hovenden, by following the imagination of the Currier & Ives Sketcher, would get the backdrop for his sentimental picture reasonably accurate, for this would be the Charlestown jail as it would

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appear in the year 1900:



Assorted companies of horse soldiers went into formation about the wagon as three infantry companies were ordered to hold their regular files. A total of 1,500 troops had been amassed to take up formation in the stubble field around the scaffold. "I had no idea Governor Wise considered my execution so important," John Brown commented as he was seating himself atop his coffin in the wagon drawn by a team of white horses, in loose-fitting clothes, carpet slippers, and a hat. One of the Governor's sons was there to be a voyeur, as was a



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militiaman from Company F of Richmond, John Wilkes Booth.³¹ Virginia Military Institute cadets were in



formation behind the scaffold with the commander they called Stonewall Jackson. It was noon and time for the execution when Brown commented “This is a beautiful country — I never before had the pleasure of seeing

31. John Wilkes Booth would lie to his sister, and then to the general public, alleging that he had rushed to Harpers Ferry to aid in suppressing the raiders. The truth was that he had merely ventured from the Richmond, Virginia stage to Charlestown, as a voyeur.

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it.”



He dropped his hat to the ground as the hood and then the noose were lowered over his head. “I can’t see, gentlemen,” he commented, “you must lead me.” When the sheriff asked him if he would like to have some kind of private signal just before the drop, he responded “It does not matter to me — I only want that everyone should not keep me waiting so long.” Then a hatchet was used to chop through the rope that was holding the



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trap door of the platform shut.

A READY RECKONER FOR HANGMEN.

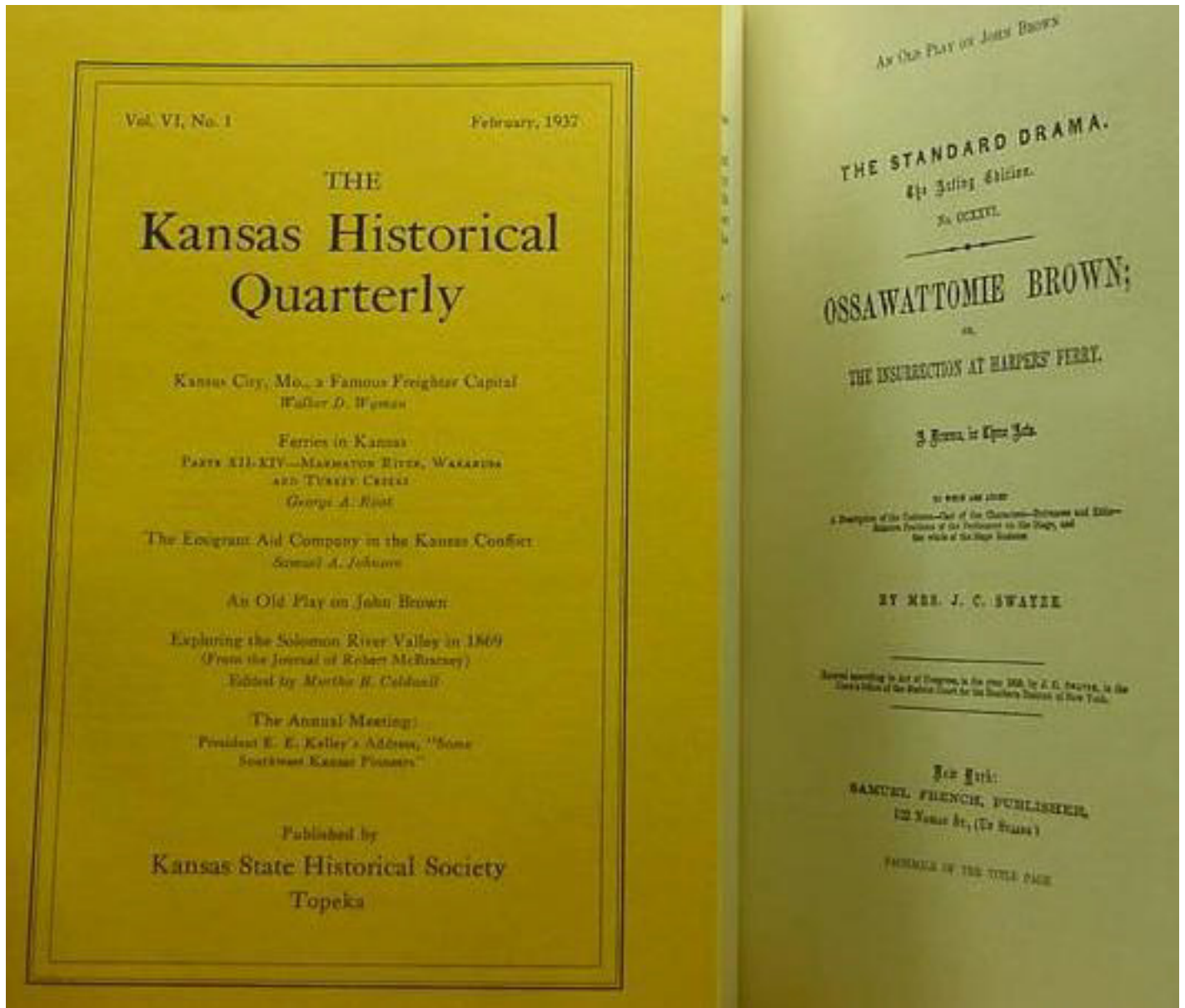
RULE.—Take the weight of the Client in Stones and look down the column of weights until you reach the figures nearest to 24 cwt., and the figure in the left-hand column will be the Drop. See page 167 of this Handbook.

Distance falling in feet. Zero.	8 Stone	9 Stone	10 Stone	11 Stone	12 Stone	13 Stone	14 Stone	15 Stone	16 Stone	17 Stone	18 Stone	19 Stone
	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.	cwt. qr. lb.
1 ft.	8 0 0	9 0 0	10 0 0	11 0 0	12 0 0	13 0 0	14 0 0	15 0 0	16 0 0	17 0 0	18 0 0	19 0 0
2 ft.	15 2 15	16 2 15	17 2 15	18 2 15	19 2 15	20 2 15	21 2 15	22 2 15	23 2 15	24 2 15	25 2 15	26 2 15
3 ft.	13 3 16	15 2 15	17 1 14	19 0 12	20 3 11	22 2 9	24 1 8	26 0 7	27 3 5	29 2 4	31 1 2	33 0 1
4 ft.	16 0 0	18 0 0	20 0 0	22 0 0	24 0 0	26 0 0	28 0 0	30 0 0	32 0 0	34 0 0	36 0 0	38 0 0
5 ft.	17 2 11	19 3 5	22 0 0	24 0 22	26 1 16	28 2 11	30 3 5	33 0 0	35 0 22	37 0 16	39 2 11	41 3 5
6 ft.	19 2 11	22 0 5	24 2 0	26 3 22	29 0 16	31 3 11	34 1 5	36 3 0	39 0 22	41 2 16	44 0 11	46 2 5
7 ft.	21 0 22	23 3 11	26 2 0	29 0 16	31 3 5	34 1 22	37 0 11	39 3 0	42 1 16	45 0 5	47 2 22	50 1 11
8 ft.	22 2 22	25 2 4	28 1 14	31 0 23	34 0 5	36 3 15	39 2 25	42 2 7	45 1 16	48 0 26	51 0 8	53 3 18
9 ft.	24 0 11	27 0 12	30 0 14	33 0 23	36 0 16	39 0 18	42 0 19	45 0 21	48 0 22	51 0 23	54 0 25	57 0 26
10 ft.	25 1 5	28 1 23	31 2 14	34 3 4	37 3 22	41 0 12	44 1 2	47 1 21	50 2 11	53 3 1	56 3 19	60 0 9

"Dislocation of the neck is the ideal aimed at ..."
— British Medical Journal, 1817

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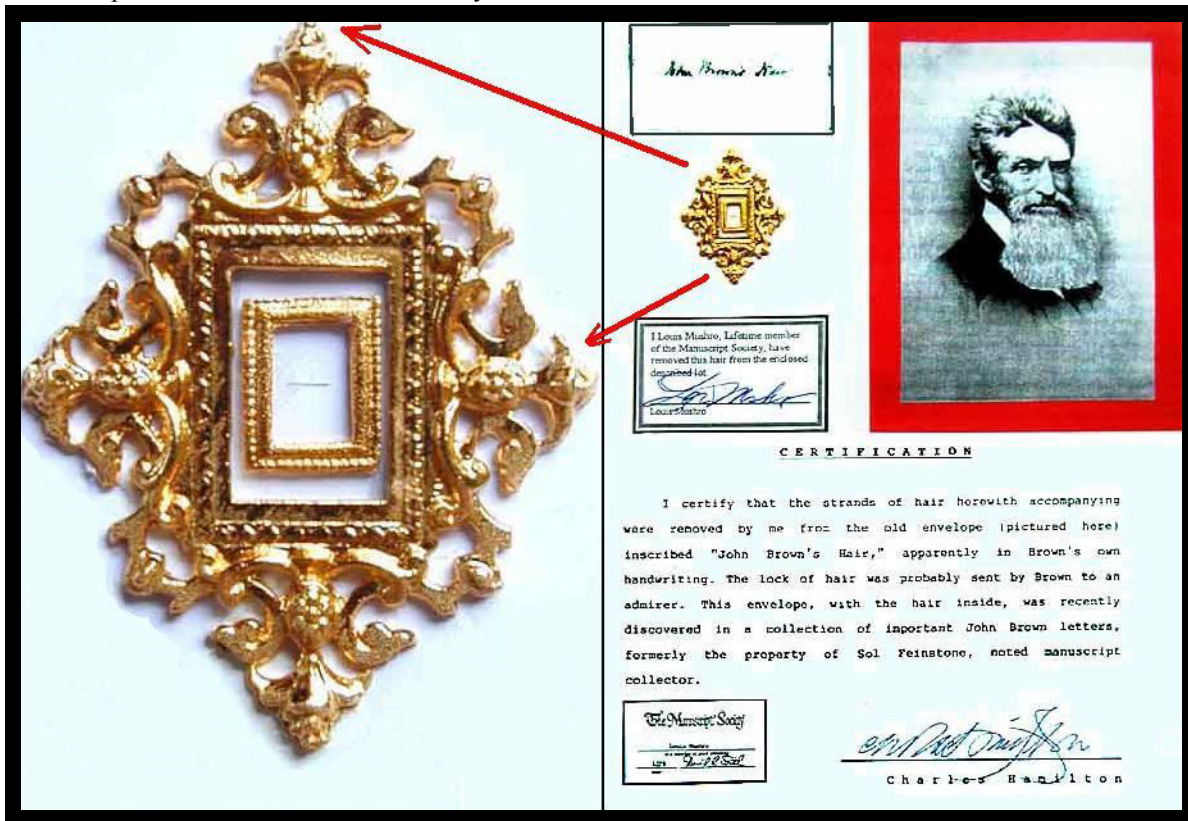
This sad material would even, within this same year, become subject matter for a play by Kate Lucy Edwards, "Ossawattomie Brown, or, The Insurrection at Harpers' Ferry," at the Bowery Theater in New-York:³² Eventually, certified hairs from Brown's head, or, who knows, from his beard, would be being chopped

[OSAWATOMIE](#)

32. This 3-act play would be published in the Kansas Historical Quarterly in February 1937, complete not only with the original script, but also with the cast of characters with their entrances and exits, and descriptions of their costumes.

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into pieces and offered for sale on Ebay:



There would also be an anonymous journalistic publication, reprinted here in full, bearing the title THE LIFE, TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN KNOWN AS "OLD BROWN OF OSSAWATOMIE," WITH A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE ATTEMPTED INSURRECTION AT HARPER'S FERRY. COMPILED FROM OFFICIAL AND AUTHENTIC SOURCES. INCLUDING COOKE'S CONFESSION, AND ALL THE INCIDENTS OF THE EXECUTION, printed in New-York by the Robert M. De Witt firm of 161 & 162 Nassau Street:



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**THE
LIFE, TRIAL AND EXECUTION
OF
CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN
KNOWN AS
“OLD BROWN OF OSSAWATOMIE,”
WITH A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE ATTEMPTED
INSURRECTION AT HARPER’S FERRY.

COMPILED FROM OFFICIAL AND AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

INCLUDING COOKE’S CONFESSION, AND ALL THE INCIDENTS OF
THE EXECUTION.

NEW YORK.
ROBERT M. DE WITT, PUBLISHER.

161 & 162 NASSAU STREET.**



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Famous Last Words:



"What school is more profitably instructive than the death-bed of the righteous, impressing the understanding with a convincing evidence, that they have not followed cunningly devised fables, but solid substantial truth."

— A COLLECTION OF MEMORIALS CONCERNING DIVERS DECEASED MINISTERS, Philadelphia, 1787



"The death bed scenes & observations even of the best & wisest afford but a sorry picture of our humanity. Some men endeavor to live a constrained life — to subject their whole lives to their will as he who said he might give a sign if he were conscious after his head was cut off — but he gave no sign Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows."

—Thoreau's JOURNAL, March 12, 1853

1851	John James Audubon	shooting at sitting ducks on his estate, at age 66 despite stroke and senility	"You go down that side of Long Pond and I'll go down this side and we'll get the ducks!"
1852	Daniel Webster	his attendant was tardy in administering some brandy	"I still live!"
1857	Auguste Comte	he had been making himself the pope of a religion of science, "Positivism"	"What an irreparable loss!"
1859	John Brown	request	"I am ready at any time — do not keep me waiting."
1862	Henry David Thoreau	he was editing manuscript	"moose ... Indian"
1864	General John Sedgwick	Battle of Spotsylvania	"They couldn't hit an elephant at this distance."
1865	Abraham Lincoln	on stage, an actor ad-libbed a reference to the presence of the President	The President laughed
... other famous last words ...			





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December 3, Saturday: Harpers Ferry residents George Mauzy and Mary Mauzy wrote again to their daughter Eugenia Mauzy Burton and son-in-law James H. Burton, who were then living in England (Burton had been a machinist, foreman, and Acting Master Armorer at the Harpers Ferry Armory between 1844-1854):

To Mr. & Mrs. James H. Burton

December 3, 1859

My dear Children:

Well the great agony is over. "Old Osawatomie Brown" was executed yesterday at noon - his wife came here the day before, & paid him a short visit, after which she returned here under an escort, where she and her company remained until the body came down from Charlestown, in the evening, after which she took charge of it and went home.

This has been one of the most remarkable circumstances that ever occurred in this country, this old fanatic made no confession whatever, nor concession that he was wrong, but contended that he was right in everything he done, that he done great service to God, would not let a minister of any denomination come near or say anything to him, but what else could be expected from him, or anyone else who are imbued with "Freeloveism, Socialism, Spiritualism," and all the other isms that were ever devised by man or devil.

There is an immense concourse of military at Charlestown, not less than 2000 men are quartered there, the Courthouse, all the churches & all the Lawyers offices are occupied. We have upwards of 300 regulars & 75 or 80 Montgomery Guards. These men were all sent here by the Sec. of War & Gov. Wise to prevent a rescue of Brown & his party by northern infidels and fanatics: of which they boasted loudly, but their courage must have oozed out of their finger ends, as none made their appearance. We are keeping nightly watch, all are vigilant, partys of 10 men out every night, quite a number of incendiary fires have taken place in this vicinity & County, such as grain stacks, barns & other out-buildings. -George Mauzy

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Upon learning that John Brown had indeed been executed, [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) continued his musing in



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his journal:



Learned that John Brown was hanged in Charlestown, Virginia, yesterday, between 11 and 12 A.M., – a martyr to the cause of the oppressed slave, – meeting death with the dignity and composure of a Christian martyr, as he undoubtedly was, although I do not think he took the wisest or best way to effect his noble object, – that of liberating the slaves of this professed republic. Peace to his memory. Good men will bless his name, and his memory will be venerated by the wise and good.

His death must prove the destruction of the blood-cemented union of this nation.

Mark this record, whosoever may at some future day read this page. I would make this record with due humility, and with a tender solicitude for the best interests of my countrymen. I wish not the blood of the tyrant, but that he may become abashed and conscience-stricken before God. My soul truly yearneth for peace and prosperity to all mankind, but cruelty and slavery must cease.



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HANGING





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Mary Ann Day Brown would be granted the corpse of her [hanged](#) husband, but not those of her two sons.



The widow Brown would continue to bear the year of *Jubilee* as best she could.

The Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) would visit her and then write A VISIT TO JOHN BROWN'S HOUSEHOLD IN 1859, and Edmund Wilson has commented, in regard to this (page 247), that Higginson interviewed the "widow in her bleak little Adirondack farm with a piety that could not have been more reverent if Mrs. Brown had been the widow of Emerson."

Francis Jackson Meriam had come out from Boston to Concord on the train, and [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) and others had insisted that he must escape to Canada. [Waldo Emerson](#) hired a horse and covered wagon and [Henry Thoreau](#) took the distraught man to the train station in South Acton and put him on the train. He would



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not, however, wind up in Canada. Thoreau referred to Meriam in his journal as “X”:



December 3: Suddenly quite cold, and freezes in the house.

Rode with a man this forenoon who said that if he did not clean his teeth when he got up, it made him sick all the rest of the day, but he had found by late experience that when he had not cleaned his teeth for several days they cleaned themselves. I assured him that such was the general rule,—that when from any cause we were prevented from doing what we had commonly thought indispensable for us to do, things cleaned or took care of themselves.

X was betrayed by his eyes, which had a glaring film over them and no serene depth into which you could look. Inquired particularly the way to Emerson’s and the distance, and when I told him, said he knew it as well as if he saw it. Wished to turn and proceed to his house. Told me one or two things which he asked me not to tell S. [SANBORN]. Said, “I know I am insane,”—and I knew it too. Also called it “nervous excitement.” At length, when I made a certain remark, he said, “I don’t know but you are Emerson; are you? You look somewhat like him.” He said as much two or three times, and added once, “But then Emerson wouldn’t lie.” Finally put his questions to me, of Fate, etc., etc., as if I were Emerson. Getting to the woods, I remarked upon them, and he mentioned my name, but never to the end suspected who his companion was. Then “proceeded to business,”—“since the time was short,”—and put to me the questions he was going to put to Emerson. His insanity exhibited itself chiefly by his incessant excited talk, scarcely allowing me to interrupt him, but once or twice apologizing for his behavior. What he said was for the most part connected and sensible enough.

When I hear of John Brown and his wife weeping at length, it is as if the rocks sweated.

According to the Elwood [Free Press](#) for this date, this had been candidate Abraham Lincoln’s speech at Elwood in “Bleeding Kansas”, a speech that must have been delivered on or about November 30th:



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Mr. Lincoln was received with great enthusiasm. He stated the reasons why he was unable to make a speech this evening. He could only say a few words to us who had come out to meet him the first time he had placed his foot upon the soil of Kansas. Mr. Lincoln said that it was possible that we had local questions in regard to Railroads, Land Grants and internal improvements which were matters of deeper interest to us than the questions arising out of national politics, but of these local interests he knew nothing and should say nothing. We had, however, just adopted a State Constitution, and it was probable, that, under that Constitution, we should soon cease our Territorial existence, and come forward to take our place in the brotherhood of States, and act our parts as a member of the confederation. Kansas would be Free, but the same questions we had had here in regard to Freedom or Slavery would arise in regard to other Territories and we should have to take our part in deciding them. People often ask, "why make such a fuss about a few niggers?" I answer the question by asking what will you do to dispose of this question? The Slaves constitute one seventh of our entire population. Wherever there is an element of this magnitude in a government it will be talked about. The general feeling in regard to Slavery had changed entirely since the early days of the Republic. You may examine the debates under the Confederation, in the Convention that framed the Constitution and in the first session of Congress and you will not find a single man saying that Slavery is a good thing. They all believed it was an evil. They made the Northwest Territory –the only Territory then belonging to the government– forever free. They prohibited the African Slave trade. Having thus prevented its extension and cut off the supply, the Fathers of the Republic believed Slavery must soon disappear. There are only three clauses in the Constitution which refer to Slavery, and in neither of them is the word Slave or Slavery mentioned. The word is not used in the clause prohibiting the African Slave trade; it is not used in the clause which makes Slaves a basis of representation; it is not used in the clause requiring the return of fugitive Slaves. And yet in all the debates in the Convention the question was discussed and Slaves and Slavery talked about. Now why was this word kept out of that instrument and so carefully kept out that a European, be he ever so intelligent, if not familiar with our institutions, might read the Constitution over and over again and never learn that Slavery existed in the United States. The reason is this. The Framers of the Organic Law believed that the Constitution would outlast Slavery and they did not want a word there to tell future generations that Slavery had ever been legalized in America. Your Territory has had a marked history – no other Territory has ever had such a history. There had been strife and bloodshed here, both parties had been guilty of outrages; he had his opinions as to the relative guilt of the parties, but he would not say who had been most to blame. One fact was certain – there



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had been loss of life, destruction of property; our material interests had been retarded. Was this desirable? There is a peaceful way of settling these questions – the way adopted by government until a recent period. The bloody code has grown out of the new policy in regard to the government of Territories. Mr. Lincoln in conclusion adverted briefly to the Harpers Ferry Affair.³³ He believed the attack of Brown wrong for two reasons. It was a violation of law and it was, as all such attacks must be, futile as far as any effect it might have on the extinction of a great evil.

We have a means provided for the expression of our belief in regard to Slavery – it is through the ballot box – the peaceful method provided by the Constitution. John Brown has shown great courage, rare unselfishness, as even Gov. [Henry A. Wise of Virginia] testifies. But no man, North or South, can approve of violence or crime. Mr. Lincoln closed his brief speech by wishing all to go out to the election on Tuesday and to vote as became the Freemen of Kansas.

On this evening candidate Abraham Lincoln was speaking in Stockton Hall at Leavenworth, Kansas. This is how his speech would be reported in the newspaper:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: You are, as yet, the people of a Territory; but you probably soon will be the people of a State of the Union. Then you will be in possession of new privileges, and new duties will be upon you. You will have to bear a part in all that pertains to the administration of the National Government. That government, from the beginning, has had, has now, and must continue to have a policy in relation to domestic slavery. It cannot, if it would, be without a policy upon that subject. And that policy must, of necessity, take one of two directions. It must deal with the institution as being wrong or as not being wrong.

Mr. Lincoln then stated, somewhat in detail, the early action of the General Government upon the question – in relation to the foreign slave trade, the basis of Federal representation, and the prohibition of slavery in the Federal territories; the Fugitive Slave clause in the Constitution, and insisted that, plainly that early policy, was based on the idea of slavery being wrong; and tolerating it so far, and only so far, as the necessity of its actual presence required.

He then took up the policy of the Kansas-Nebraska act, which he argued was based on opposite ideas – that is, the idea that slavery is not wrong. He said:

You, the people of Kansas, furnish the example of the first application of this new policy. At the end of about five years, after having almost continual struggles, fire and bloodshed, over this very question,

33. October 16-18, 1859. This is apparently Abraham Lincoln's first reference to John Brown, whose execution scheduled for December 2, 1859, undoubtedly placed him in the forefront of conversational topics among his former friends and enemies in Kansas.



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and after having framed several State Constitutions, you have, at last, secured a Free State Constitution, under which you will probably be admitted into the Union. You have, at last, at the end of all this difficulty, attained what we, in the old North-western Territory, attained without any difficulty at all. Compare, or rather contrast, the actual working of this new policy with that of the old, and say whether, after all, the old way – the way adopted by Washington and his compeers – was not the better way.

Mr. Lincoln argued that the new policy had proven false to all its promises – that its promise to the Nation was to speedily end the slavery agitation, which it had not done, but directly the contrary – that its promises to the people of the Territories was to give them greater control of their own affairs than the people of former Territories had had; while, by the actual experiment, they had had less control of their own affairs, and had been more bedeviled by outside interference than the people of any other Territory ever had. He insisted that it was deceitful in its expressed wish to confer additional privileges upon the people; else it would have conferred upon them the privilege of choosing their own officers. That if there be any just reason why all the privileges of a State should not be conferred on the people of a Territory at once, it only could be the smallness of numbers; and that if while their number was small, they were fit to do some things, and unfit to do others, it could only be because those they were unfit to do, were the larger and more important things – that, in this case, the allowing the people of Kansas to plant their soil with slavery, and not allowing them to choose their own Governor, could only be justified on the idea that the planting a new State with slavery was a very small matter, and the election of Governor a very much greater matter. "Now," said he, "compare these two matters and decide which is really the greater. You have already had, I think, five Governors, and yet, although their doings, in their respective days, were of some little interest to you, it is doubtful whether you now, even remember the names of half of them. They are gone (all but the last) without leaving a trace upon your soil, or having done a single act which can, in the least degree, help or hurt you, in all the indefinite future before you. This is the size of the Governor question. Now, how is it with the slavery question? If your first settlers had so far decided in favor of slavery, as to have got five thousand slaves planted on your soil, you could, by no moral possibility, have adopted a Free State Constitution. Their owners would be influential voters among you as good men as the rest of you, and, by their greater wealth, and consequent, greater capacity, to assist the more needy, perhaps the most influential among you. You could not wish to destroy, or injuriously interfere with their property. You would not know what to do with the slaves after you had made them free. You



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would not wish to keep them as underlings; nor yet to elevate them to social and political equality. You could not send them away. The slave States would not let you send them there; and the free States would not let you send them there. All the rest of your property would not pay for sending them to Liberia. In one word, you could not have made a free State, if the first half of your own numbers had got five thousand slaves fixed upon the soil. You could have disposed of, not merely five, but five hundred Governors easier. There they would have stuck, in spite of you, to plague you and your children, and your children's children, indefinitely. Which is the greater, this, or the Governor question? Which could the more safely be intrusted to the first few people who settle a Territory? Is it that which, at most, can be but temporary and brief in its effects? or that which being done by the first few, can scarcely ever be undone by the succeeding many?"

He insisted that, little as was Popular Sovereignty at first, the Dred Scott decision, which is indorsed by the author of Popular Sovereignty, has reduced it to still smaller proportions, if it has not entirely crushed it out. That, in fact, all it lacks of being crushed out entirely by that decision, is the lawyer's technical distinction between decision and dictum. That the Court has already said a Territorial government cannot exclude slavery; but because they did not say it in a case where a Territorial government had tried to exclude slavery, the lawyers hold that saying of the Court to be dictum and not decision. "But," said Mr. Lincoln, "is it not certain that the Court will make a decision of it, the first time a Territorial government tries to exclude slavery?"

Mr. Lincoln argued that the doctrine of Popular Sovereignty, carried out, renews the African Slave Trade. Said he: "Who can show that one people have a better right to carry slaves to where they have never been, than another people have to buy slaves wherever they please, even in Africa?"

He also argued that the advocates of Popular Sovereignty, by their efforts to brutalize the negro in the public mind – denying him any share in the [Declaration of Independence](#), and comparing him to the crocodile – were beyond what avowed pro-slavery men ever do, and really did as much, or more than they, toward making the institution national and perpetual.

He said many of the Popular Sovereignty advocates were "as much opposed to slavery as any one;" but that they could never find any proper time or place to oppose it. In their view, it must not be opposed in politics, because that is agitation; nor in the pulpit, because it is not religion; nor in the Free States, because it is not there; nor in the Slave States, because it is there. These gentlemen, however, are never offended by hearing Slavery supported in any of these places. Still, they are "as much opposed to Slavery as anybody." One would suppose that it would exactly suit them if the people of the Slave States would themselves adopt emancipation; but when Frank Blair tried this



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

last year, in Missouri, and was beaten, every one of them threw up his hat and shouted "Hurrah for the Democracy!"

Mr. Lincoln argued that those who thought Slavery right ought to unite on a policy which should deal with it as being right; that they should go for a revival of the Slave Trade; for carrying the institution everywhere, into Free States as well as Territories; and for a surrender of fugitive slaves in Canada, or war with Great Britain. Said he, "all shades of Democracy, popular sovereign as well as the rest, are fully agreed that slaves are property, and only property. If Canada now had as many horses as she has slaves belonging to Americans, I should think it just cause of war if she did not surrender them on demand.

"On the other hand, all those who believe slavery is wrong should unite on a policy, dealing with it as a wrong. They should be deluded into no deceitful contrivances, pretending indifference, but really working for that to which they are opposed." He urged this at considerable length.

He then took up some of the objections to Republicans. They were accused of being sectional. He denied it. What was the proof? "Why, that they have no existence, get no votes in the South. But that depends on the South, and not on us. It is their volition, not ours; and if there be fault in it, it is primarily theirs, and remains so, unless they show that we repeal them by some wrong principle. If they attempt this, they will find us holding no principle, other than those held and acted upon by the men who gave us the government under which we live. They will find that the charge of sectionalism will not stop at us, but will extend to the very men who gave us the liberty we enjoy. But if the mere fact that we get no votes in the slave states makes us sectional, whenever we shall get votes in those states, we shall cease to be sectional; and we are sure to get votes, and a good many of them too, in these states next year.

You claim that you are conservative; and we are not. We deny it. What is conservatism? Preserving the old against the new. And yet you are conservative in struggling for the new, and we are destructive in trying to maintain the old. Possibly you mean you are conservative in trying to maintain the existing institution of slavery. Very well; we are not trying to destroy it. The peace of society, and the structure of our government both require that we should let it alone, and we insist on letting it alone. If I might advise my Republican friends here, I would say to them, leave your Missouri neighbors alone. Have nothing whatever to do with their slaves. Have nothing whatever to do with the white people, save in a friendly way. Drop past differences, and so conduct yourselves that if you cannot be at peace with them, the fault shall be wholly theirs.

You say we have made the question more prominent than



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heretofore. We deny it. It is more prominent; but we did not make it so. Despite of us, you would have a change of policy; we resist the change, and in the struggle, the greater prominence is given to the question. Who is responsible for that, you or we? If you would have the question reduced to its old proportions go back to the old policy. That will effect it.

But you are for the Union; and you greatly fear the success of the Republicans would destroy the Union. Why? Do the Republicans declare against the Union? Nothing like it. Your own statement of it is, that if the Black Republicans elect a President, you won't stand it. You will break up the Union. That will be your act, not ours. To justify it, you must show that our policy gives you just cause for such desperate action. Can you do that? When you attempt it, you will find that our policy is exactly the policy of the men who made the Union. Nothing more and nothing less. Do you really think you are justified to break up the government rather than have it administered by Washington, and other good and great men who made it, and first administered it? If you do you are very unreasonable; and more reasonable men cannot and will not submit to you. While you elect [the] President, we submit, neither breaking nor attempting to break up the Union. If we shall constitutionally elect a President, it will be our duty to see that you submit. Old John Brown has just been executed for treason against a state. We cannot object, even though he agreed with us in thinking slavery wrong. That cannot excuse violence, bloodshed, and treason. It could avail him nothing that he might think himself right. So, if constitutionally we elect a President, and therefore you undertake to destroy the Union, it will be our duty to deal with you as old John Brown has been dealt with. We shall try to do our duty. We hope and believe that in no section will a majority so act as to render such extreme measures necessary.

Mr. Lincoln closed by an appeal to all -opponents as well as friends- to think soberly and maturely, and never fail to cast their vote, insisting that it was not a privilege only, but a duty to do so.



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1860

January 15, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in New Bedford, telling about [skating](#) by both sexes.

*The Shanty 15 Jan. 1860.
Friend Thoreau,
We've been having a
good deal of wintery weather for our
section of late, and skating by both sexes
is in great fashion. On the 26th of last
month, Arthur, Walton, and I, skated about
fifteen miles. We rode out to the south
end of Long Pond (Aponoquet) and
leaving our house at a farmer's barn, put
on our skates, and went nearly in a
straight line to the north end of said pond
up to the old Herring weir of King Phillip,
where we were obliged to take off our skates
as the passage to Asawamset was not frozen.
We stopped about an hour at the old tavern
and had good solid anti-slavery, & John
^ Brown talk with some travellers — One, a
square set red bearded farmer said among
other rough things, that he would like
to eat southerners hearts! & drink their
blood! for a fortnight, & would be willing
to die if he could not live on this fare!
This was said in reply to a spruce young
fellow who had been in New Orleans,
and knew all about slavery — damned*

*Page 2
the abolitionists most lustily, and John
Brown & his associates in particular.
Oaths flew like shot from one side
to the other, but the renegade northerner
honest was no match for the farmer, who
^ met him at every point with facts,
oaths statistics, and argument, and finally
^ swore his antagonist down flat. — He
“burst the bully” in good earnest.*



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*Occasionally I had interfused a few words & others present, but our farmer was the Champion of the field and a more complete annihilation of a dough face I never witnessed.— My boys seemed to enjoy it well. After this scene we again resumed our skates from the Asawamset shore near by, & skated down to the end the extreme southern end of the ponds of east Quitticas pond thence crossing
^ to West Quitticas. We skated around it, which with the return from the south end of the former pond to our crossing place, we estimated at something over 15 miles. Taking off our skates we took a path through & walking about a mile the woods & came out in some old
^ fields near our starting point. We put on our skates at 10 1/2 oclock a.m*

*Page 3
and at 3 p.m. were eating our dinner at the old farm house of Wm A Merton near the south shores of Long Pond. I, as well as my boys enjoyed the excursion very much. We saw our favorite ponds under entirely new aspects, and visited many nooks that we had never before seen — sometimes under the boughs of the old cedars draped in long clusters of moss, like bearded veterans, and anon farther out on the bosom of the lake with broad and refreshing views of wild nature, taking the imagination back to the times of the Indians and early settlers of these parts — shooting by little islands and rocky islets, among them the one called “Lewis Island,” which you thought would do for a residence. I got a fresh hold of life that day, and hope to repeat the*



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*pleasure before winter closes his
reign. I found myself not only,
not exhausted as I had expected, but
unusually fresh and cheerful on my
arrival home about 5 p. m. The boys
stood it equally well. So my friend*

Page 4

*we shall not allow you all the glory of
the skating field, but must place our
Aponoquet, Assawamset and Quitticaset,
in the skating account with your own
beloved Musketaquet exploits.
Well, since I saw you, dear old
John Brown has met, & O! how nobly,
his death, at the hands of southern
tyrants. I honor him & his brave associates
in my "heart of hearts"; but my voice
is for peaceable measures henceforth,
doubtful alas! as their success appears.
I expect to be in Boston at the annual
meeting of the Mass. A. S. Society near at
hand, & hope to see you there, and if
agreeable should like to have you return
home with me, when, d.v. we may
try our skates on the Middleborough ponds.
We all spoke of you & wished you were
with us on our late excursion there.
With kind regards to your family & my
other Concord friends, I remain,*

*H. D. Thoreau
Concord*

*Yours faithfully,
D. Ricketson*

[Thoreau made no entry in his journal for January 15.]



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January 26, Thursday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) offered the following three non-resistant resolutions at an anti-slavery



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meeting in Boston:



Resolved, *That dreadful as slavery is, its abolition, in order to secure the highest good of humanity, must be accomplished without bloodshed.*

Resolved, *That to be a true abolitionist we must be true to humanity, and therefore any measures which violate the great cause of human rights, though intended for the good of the slave, must result in evil.*

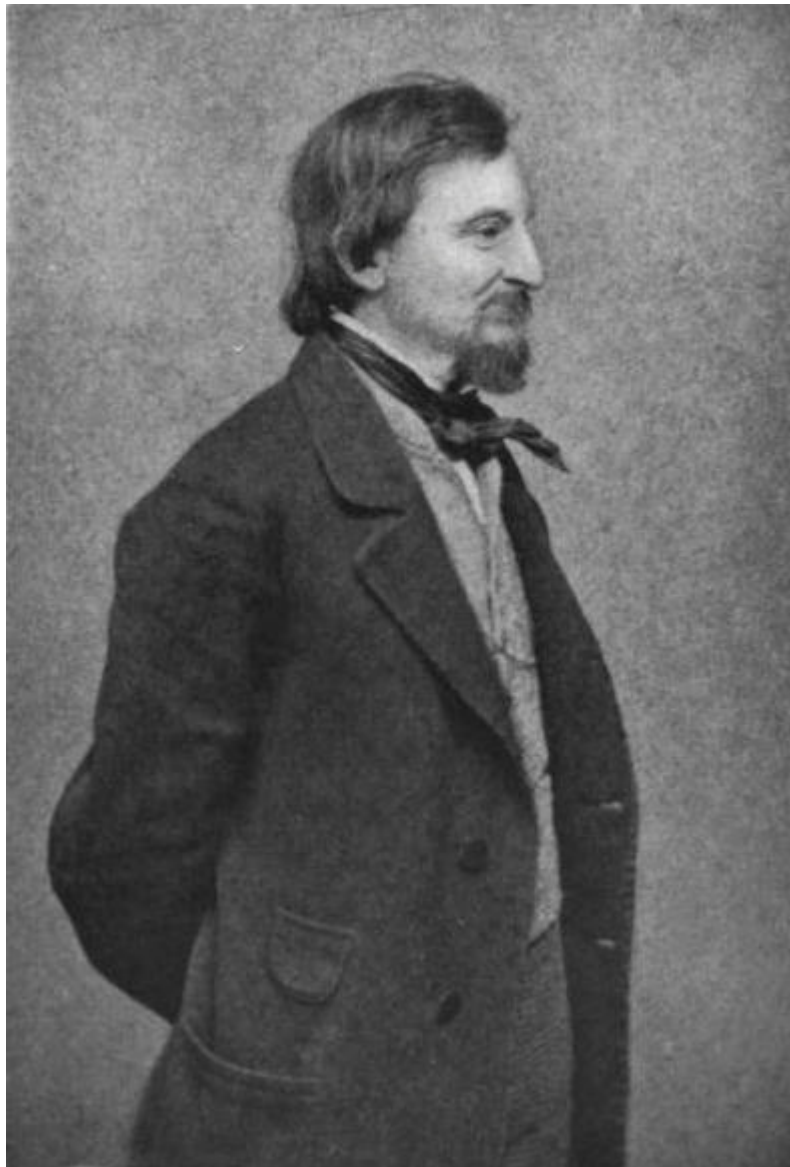
Resolved, *That if the Anti-slavery movement be conducted on the true principles of peace and good-will we can reasonably absolve ourselves from any violent measures adopted by others for the liberation of the oppressed.*



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October 14, Sunday: From [New Bedford](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) wrote to [Henry Thoreau](#), apologizing for bad conduct and blaming it on indulgence in [tobacco](#), which he has discontinued:

I am by nature very easily disturbed mentally & physi[cally] and this tendency, or infi[rmi]ty, has been increas[ed] by smoking. I have at last abandoned the use of the weed. It is now about four months since I have made any use whatever of ~~it~~ tobacco & nearly a year since I began to battle seriously with this enemy of my soul's & body's peace. When I was last at Concord, owing to bad sleep and the consequent nervous irritability aggravat[ed] by smoking, I was particularly out of orde[r] and like an intoxicated or crazed man, hardly responsible for my conduct[.] Wherefore if I betrayed any want of kindly or gentlemanly feeling, which I fear may have been the case, I trust you will pardon the same & attribute it to a source not normal with me.

November 4, Monday: When [Henry Thoreau](#) was reproached by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) for not being a faithful correspondent, that is, not communicating often enough, Thoreau responded that he had made no commitment to correspond at all, and remarked:

Why will you waste so many regards on me, and not know what to think of my silence? Infer from it what you might from the silence of a dense pine wood. It is its natural condition, except when the winds blow, and the jays scream, & the chickaree winds up his clock. My silence is just as inhuman as that, and no more.

“We had gotten along pretty well together in several directions, though we are such strangers in others.” [Henry](#) finally had to respond to the stream of invitations and reproaches and hurt feelings which had been flowing to him for the past year and a half from Daniel Ricketson of New Bedford. “Why will you waste so many regards on me, and not know what to think of my silence? Infer from it what you might from the silence of a dense pine wood.... My silence is just as inhuman as that, and no more. You know that I never promised to correspond with you, and so, when I do, I do more than I promised.” They have had some good visits but: “Life is short, and there are other things to be done. I admit that you are more social than I am, and far more attentive to ‘the common courtesies of life’ but this is partly for the reason that you have fewer or less exacting private pursuits.” What could Thoreau say? “I do not feel addressed by this letter of yours. It suggests only misunderstanding. Intercourse may be good, but of what use are complaints and apologies? Any complaint I have to make is too serious to be uttered, for the evil cannot be mended.” At the bottom of this sheet of letter paper Thoreau comments “Turn over a new leaf.” But on the other side of this sheet is no further advice, but mere commonplaces leading to the end of the letter.

Concord Nov. 4th 1860

Friend Ricketson,

I thank you for the verses. They are quite too good to apply to me.

However, I know what a poets' license is, and will not get in the way.

But what do you mean by that prose? Why will you waste so many



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regards on me, and not know what to think of my silence? Infer from it what you might from the silence of a dense pine wood. It is its natural condition, except when the winds blow, and the jays scream, & the chickaree winds up his clock. My silence is just as inhuman as that, and no more.

You know that I never promised to correspond with you, & so, when I do, I do more than I promised.

Such are my pursuits and habits that I rarely go abroad, and it is quite a habit with me to decline invitations to do so. Not that I could not enjoy such visits, if I were not otherwise occupied. I have enjoyed very much my visits to you and my rides in your neighborhood, and am sorry that I cannot enjoy such things oftener; but life is short, and there are other things also to be done. I admit that you are more social than I am, and far more attentive to “the common courtesies of life” but this is partly for the reason that you have fewer or less exacting private pursuits.

Not to have written a note for a year is with me a very venial offence. I think that I do not correspond with any one so often as once in six-months.

I have a faint recollection of your invitation referred to, but I suppose that I had no new nor particular reason for declining & so made no new statement. I have felt that you would be glad to see me almost whenever I got ready to come, but I only offer myself as a rare visitor, & a still rarer correspondent.

I am very busy, after my fashion, little as there is to show for it, and feel as if I could not spend many days nor dollars in travelling, for the shortest visit must have a fair margin to it, and the days thus affect the weeks, you know. Never the less, we cannot forego these luxuries altogether.

You must not regard me as a regular diet, but at most only as acorns, which too are not to be despised, which, at least, we love to think are edible in a bracing walk. We have got along pretty well together in several directions, though we are such strangers in others.

I hardly know what to say in answer to your letter.

Some are accustomed to write many letters, others very few. I am one of the last. At any rate, we are pretty sure, if we write at all, to send those thoughts which we cherish, to that one, who, we believe, will most religiously attend to them.

This life is not for complaint, but for satisfaction. I do not feel addressed by this letter of yours. It suggests only misunderstanding. Intercourse may be good, but of what use are complaints & apologies? Any complaint I have to make is too serious to be uttered, for the evil cannot be mended.



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Turn over a new leaf

My out-door harvest this fall has been, one Canada Lynx, a fierce looking fellow, which, it seems, we have hereabouts; eleven barrels of apples from trees of my own planting; and a large crop of White oak acorns which I did not raise.

Please remember me to your family. I have a very pleasant recollection of your fireside, and I trust that I shall revisit it — also of your shanty & the surrounding regions.

Yrs truly

Henry D. Thoreau



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1861

March 22, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by L. Johnson & Company in Philadelphia:

Established, 1796.

*L. Johnson & Co.'s Type Foundry,
No. 606 Sansom Street.
Thos. MacKellar,
John F. Smith,
Richard Smith,
Peter A. Jordan.*

*Philadelphia, March 22^d 1861
Mr. Henry D. Thoreau
Concord, Mass.*

*Dear Sir— Enclosed find
\$2— Note on Bank of Kenduskeag
to replace the one returned. Of course
we were not aware that there was any
thing wrong with the one you returned.*

*Truly Yours
L. Johnson & C*

[Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#):

*Concord Mar 22^d 1861
Friend Ricketson,*

*The bluebirds were here the 26th of Feb. at least, which is one day
earlier than your date; but I have not heard of larks nor pigeon
woodpeckers.*

*To tell the truth, I am not on the alert for the signs of Spring, not hav-
ing had any winter yet. I took a severe cold about the 3^d of Dec.
which at length resulted in a kind of bronchitis, so that I have been
confined to the house ever since, excepting a very few experimental
trips as far as the P.O. in some particularly mild noons. My health
otherwise has not been affected in the least, nor my spirits. I have
simply been imprisoned for so long; & it has not prevented my doing
a good deal of reading & the like.*



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Channing has looked after me very faithfully—says he has made a study of my case, & knows me better than I know myself &c &c. Of course, if I knew how it began, I should know better how it would end. I trust that when warm weather comes I shall begin to pick up my crumbs. I thank you for your invitation to come to New Bedford, and will bear it in mind, but at present my health will not permit my leaving home.

The day I received your letter Blake & Brown arrived here, having walked from Worcester in two days, though Alcott who happened in soon after could not understand what pleasure they found in walking across the country at this season when the ways were so unsettled. I had a solid talk with them for a day & a half—though my pipes were not in good order & they went their way again.

You may be interested to hear that Alcott is at present perhaps the most successful man in the town. He had his 2^d annual exhibition of all the Schools in the town at the Town Hall last Saturday—at which all the masters & misses did themselves great credit, as I hear, & of course reflected some on their teachers & parents. They were making their little speeches from 1 till 6 o'clock P^m, to a large audience which patiently listened to the end. In the meanwhile the children made Mr A. an unexpected present of a fine edition of Pilgrim's Progress & Herbert's Poems—which, of course, overcame all parties. I inclose our order of exercises.

We had, last night, an old fashioned N.E. snow storm, far worse than any in the winter, & the drifts are now very high above the fences. The inhabitants are pretty much confined to their houses, as I was already. All houses are one color white with the snow plastered over them, & you cannot tell whether they have blinds or not. Our pump has another pump, its ghost, as thick as itself, sticking to one side of it. The town has sent out teams of 8 oxen each to break out the roads & the train due from Boston at 8 1/2 has not arrived yet (4 P^m — All the passing has been a train from above at 12 m— which also was due at 8 1/2 am. Where are the bluebirds now think you? I suppose that you have not so much snow at New Bedford, if any.

Yrs Henry D. Thoreau



March 22. A driving northeast snow-storm yesterday and last night, and to-day the drifts are high over the fences and the trains stopped. The Boston train due at 8.30 A. M. did not reach here till five this afternoon. One side of all the houses this morning was one color,—i. e. white with the moist snow plastered over them,—so that you could not tell whether they had blinds or not.

When we consider how soon some plants which spread rapidly, by seeds or roots, would cover an area equal to the surface of the globe, how soon some species of trees, as the white willow, for instance, would equal in mass the earth itself, if all their seeds became full-grown trees, how soon some fishes would fill the ocean if all their



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ova became full-grown fishes, we are tempted to say that every organism, whether animal or vegetable, is contending for the possession of the planet, and, if any one were sufficiently favored, supposing it still possible to grow, as at first, it would at length convert the entire mass of the globe into its own substance. [Vide [Pliny](#) on man's mission to keep down weeds.] Nature opposes to this many obstacles, as climate, myriads of brute and also human foes, and of competitors which may preoccupy the ground. Each suggests an immense and wonderful greediness and tenacity of life (I speak of the species, not individual), as if bent on taking entire possession of the globe wherever the climate and soil will permit. And each prevails as much as it does, because of the ample preparations it has made for the contest,—it has secured a myriad chances,—because it never depends on spontaneous generation to save it.

PLINY

A writer in the Tribune speaks of cherries as one of the trees which come up numerous when the forest is cut or burned, though not known there before. This may be true because there was no one knowing in these matters in that neighborhood. But I assert that it was there before, nevertheless; just as the little oaks are in the pine woods, but never grow up to trees till the pines are cleared off. Scarcely any plant is more sure to come up in a sprout-land here than the wild black cherry, and yet, though only a few inches high at the end of the first year after the cutting, it is commonly several years old, having maintained a feeble growth there so long. There is where the birds have dropped the stones, and it is doubtful if those dropped in pastures and open land are as likely to germinate. Yet the former rarely if ever get to be trees.

Rice told me a month ago that when the earth became bare the jays, though they still came round the house, no longer picked up the corn he had scattered for them. I suggested that it was because they were now able to vary their diet.

Of course natural successions are taking place where a swamp is gradually filling up with sphagnum and bushes and at length trees, i. e., where the soil is changing.

Botanists talk about the possibility and impossibility of plants being naturalized here or there. But what plants have not been naturalized? Of course only those which grow to-day exactly where the original plant of the species was created. It is true we do not know whether one or many plants of a given kind were originally created, but I think it is the most reasonable and simple to suppose that only one was,—to suppose as little departure as possible from the existing order of things. They commenced to spread themselves at once and by whatever means they possessed as far as they could, and they are still doing so. Many were common to Europe and America at the period of the discovery of the latter country, and I have no doubt that they had naturalized themselves in one or the other country. This is more philosophical than to suppose that they were independently created in each.

I suppose that most have seen—at any rate I can show them—English cherry trees, so called, coming up not uncommonly in our woods and under favorable circumstances becoming full-grown trees. Now I think that they will not pretend that they came up there in the same manner before this country was discovered by the whites. But, if cherry trees come up by spontaneous generation, why should they not have sprung up there in that way a thousand years ago as well as now?

If the pine seed is spontaneously generated, why is it not so produced in the Old World as well as in America? I have no doubt that it can be raised from the seed in corresponding situations there, and that it will seem to spring up just as mysteriously there as it does here. Yet, if it will grow so after the seed has been carried thither, why should it not before, if the seed is unnecessary to its production?

The above-mentioned cherry trees come up, though they are comparatively few, just like the red cherry, and, no doubt, the same persons would consider them as spontaneously generated. But why did Nature defer raising that species here by spontaneous generation, until we had raised it from the stones?

It is evident that Nature's designs would not be accomplished if seeds, having been matured, were simply dropped and so planted directly beneath their parent stems, as many will always be in any case. The next consideration with her, then, after determining to create a seed, must have been how to get it transported, though to never so little distance,—the width of the plant, or less, will often be sufficient,—even as the eagle drives her young at last from the neighborhood of her eyrie,—for their own good, since there is not food enough there for all,—without depending on botanists, patent offices, and seedsmen. It is not enough to have matured a seed which will reproduce its kind under favorable conditions, but she must also secure it those favorable conditions. Nature has left nothing to the mercy of man. She has taken care that a sufficient number of every kind of seeds, from a cocoanut to those which are invisible, shall be transported and planted in a suitable place.

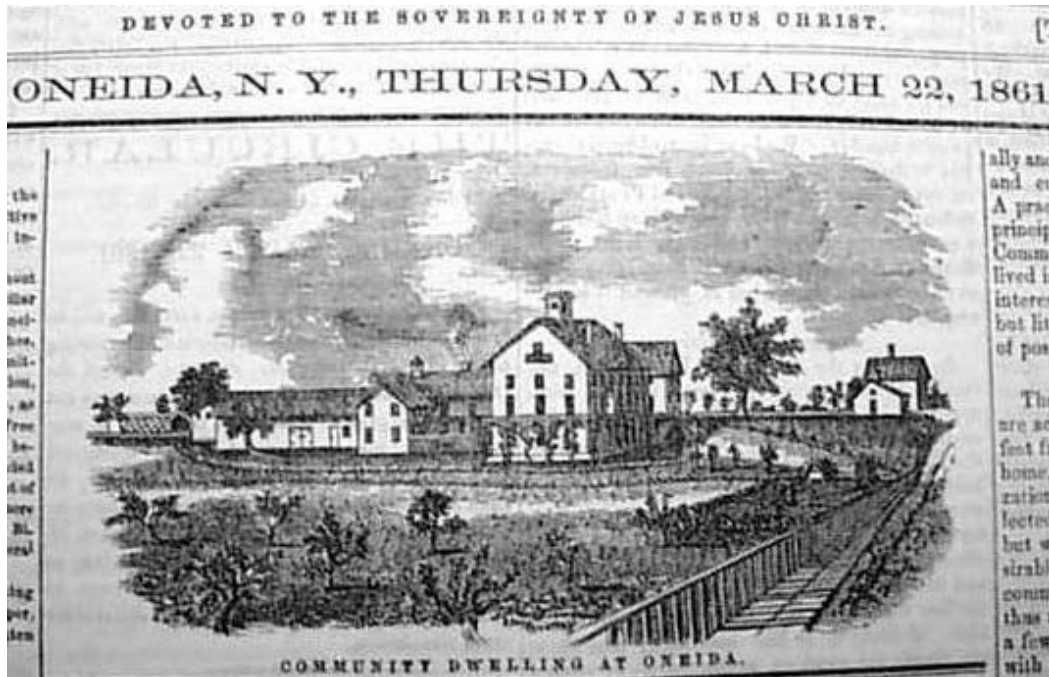
A seed, which is a plant or tree in embryo, which has the principle of growth, of life, in it, is more important in my eyes, and in the economy of Nature, than the diamond of Kohinoor.

When we hear of an excellent fruit or a beautiful flower, the first question is if any man has got the seeds in his pocket; but men's pockets are only one of the means of conveyances which Nature has provided.

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**DANIEL RICKETSON****FRIEND RICKETSON****GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM**

News from the Oneida community of perfectionists:



[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**FRIEND RICKETSON****DANIEL RICKETSON**[GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM](#)

June 30, Sunday evening: An unanticipated [comet](#) of enormous size suddenly appeared on the horizon, over the United States and Europe. Calculations indicate that on this night the earth probably was passing directly through the gas and dust of this comet's tail. On this night, actually, the celestial observer E.J. Lowe jotted into his meteor log that the sky had been of a yellowish tinge before sunset, with the sun seeming somehow dimmed and the general levels of illumination less than usual. Also, John Russell Hind reported a certain peculiar phosphorescence in the appearance of the sky, something which may or may not have been entirely attributable to the aurora of the Northern Lights. From the observatory of Athens we have this report from the astronomer Schmidt:

[SKY EVENT](#)

The twilight behind Mt. Parnassus had not yet faded away when I was informed, and I can truthfully say no other surprise could have made so deep an impression. The night before had been absolutely clear and I had not seen a trace of a comet. Now the sky was filled by this majestic figure, spreading the tail from horizon to beyond Polaris, and even across Lyra. It was, to use the language of the past, a comet of truly fearful appearance. At 9 o'clock the head of the comet, looking as large as the moon, was next to Mt. Parnassus. The head and the very wide lower part of the tail appeared like a distant fire, and the tail seemed like windblown smoke illuminated by the fire. After the head had disappeared below the horizon and it had grown dark, one could see that the tail extended to the Milky Way in the constellation



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Aquila. At 11PM I went to the observatory to watch [for] the reappearance of the head in the northeast.... At midnight and for some time after the tail stood nearly vertically above the northern horizon, its most brilliant portion and the nucleus hidden, the tail reached 30 degrees of arc beyond the zenith [indicating that the total length of this comet's tail above and below the zenith would measure more than 120 degrees]. At 4:27AM the head of the comet became visible again, following reappearance of the brightest parts of the tail which produced weak but noticeable shadows. Neither the Great Comet of March 1843 nor Donati's comet of October 1858 had been so bright.... I watched the rising of the comet's head with the naked eye; it was an incredible phenomenon that cannot be compared to anything else. The great mass of light hung like a dull smoky fire over the dark outline of the mountains. As it grew lighter the tail disappeared, I could only see about 4 degrees of arc of the tail at 5:30AM. But at 6:08AM when Capella was the only still visible star the nucleus was still clearly luminous.

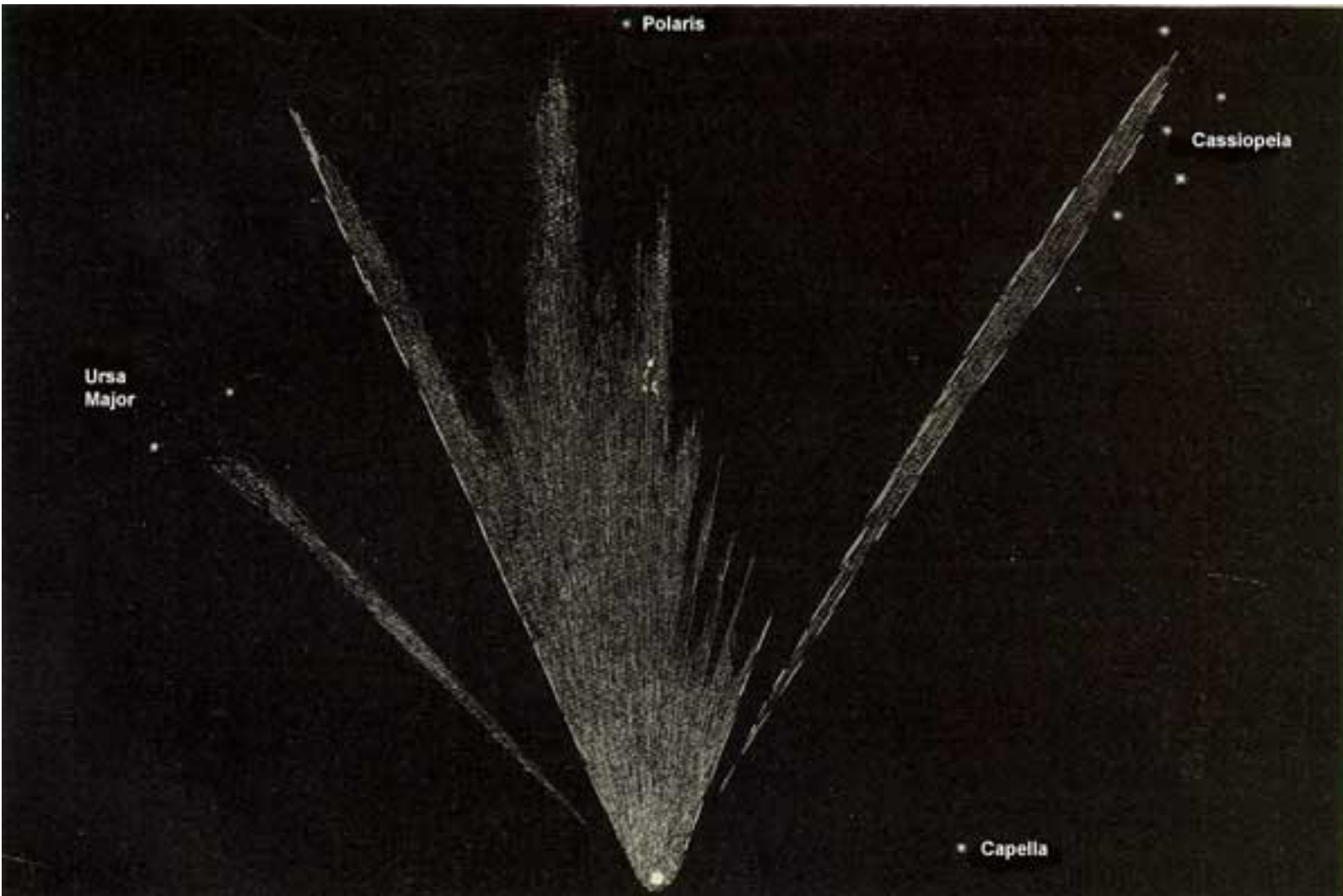


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The 4th great new [comet](#) of the 19th Century, I Thatcher, had been first detected from Australia. Of course, since the only way to notify Europe of the detection of this comet was by ship and so, by the time this news arrived in the Northern hemisphere, it had already come been sighted also by Europeans and Americans. This comet appeared inordinately large because it was passing close by our planet and as of this date was brushing across us its complicated tail of changing construction.³⁴ This comet, together with the double comet I Liais of 1860, would contribute to our [Andromedid meteor showers](#).³⁵



As of this date or slightly later, from New Bedford, [Henry Thoreau](#)'s "Friend Ricketson," [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), was writing to inform him that he had been "converted" to a strong belief in the truth of Christianity.

34. Venus, at its closest point to the Earth, is about 23,000,000 miles away and this comet was passing within 11,000,000 miles. By way of strong comparison, the comet Lexell had in July 1770  passed within 1,401,200 miles. Of course, nothing happened of any great moment in either case, as the tail of a comet is quite insubstantial even by way of contrast with a meteor shower, but this would give rise to stories (sponsored it would appear by adherents of the "God's This Weird Dude" school of theology) connecting the event to the bloodshed of our Civil War.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

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The Shanty, 30th June 1861

Friend Thoreau,

I have been desirous of hearing from you for a long time, and particularly in regard to your health, which from your letter of 22^d March I was sorry to hear was not as good as usual; but as you speak of your complaint as that of "a severe cold," I hope by this time you have bid farewell to it and are once more tramping about the woods and fields of old Concord and boating on your favorite stream. We had our full share of the snowstorm of which you gave so glowing an account inclusive of your domestic water sentinel (a short way of saying pump!) with its "ghost" of snow. I have kept my usual record of the return of the birds, and am happy to inform you that the Quail has several times of late saluted me with his sweet whistle or call for "Bob White" as the country boys hereabouts translate him. We have had a peculiar singing pewee with an additional stave to his little song very peculiar & rather comical in its way.

I am glad to hear of the success of Friend Alcott, as Superintendent of your village schools— Concord may well be proud to have such a Captain— Please remember me affectionately to him & his family & thank him for me for a copy of his School Report which I duly rec^d and read with attention, noting Miss A's happy travesty of the old Scotch border song. I was sorry to find you "abera" and hope that some less cause than illness prevented you. Concord cant spare any of her ballast.

My dear friend, Since I saw you, & considerably since I wrote you last have I met with some fresh and very unexpected experiences, which have resulted in a change of my religious views. Long, long have I striven to become a good man, rather, to obtain that peace of mind which I conclude to be the evidence of a soul in a state of acceptance with its Creator, but in vain have been my efforts and my researches in the wisdom of the schools of ancient and modern philosophy, the (I fear) delusive and bewitching scepticism of so many noble minds. I am now quite inclined to believe in what are termed the dogmas of Christianity— at least in a part of them & have ceased to rebel against the rest. From my repeated failures in the path of

35. "COMET TEBBUTT, (C/1861 N1=1861 II). A naked-eye object from discovery until mid-Aug., T=1861 June 12. Extraordinary display created by comet's close encounter with Earth. Spotted in the Southern Hemisphere on May 13th at 4th magnitude. Moved north very slowly across Eridanus. On June 8th, of 2nd magnitude. At mid month, 1st magnitude. Tail already 40 degrees long. Thereafter, motion increased dramatically. On June 24th, when near Rigel, zero magnitude. In conjunction with the Sun on June 29th. Earth passed through the comet's tail! In the Northern Hemisphere, appeared suddenly in Auriga at dawn - immense, brilliant object. Descriptions suggest the head was at least -1 or -2 magnitude. Tail seen to stretch from Auriga to Ophiuchus - 120 degrees! Comet became circumpolar on July 1st. The next night the head was zero magnitude, tail 97 degrees long. On July 8th, when near the Big Dipper, 1st magnitude with a tail up to 60 degrees long. Thereafter rapidly declined. Of 2nd to 3rd magnitude at mid month, 4th at the end. Lost to the unaided eye in mid August."



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virtue & godliness I am at last convinced of the necessity of regeneration i.e. a new heart – and what may surprise you still more, I am led to believe in the existence of an Evil Spirit, the great adversary of the Soul, whose malign influence has so often destroyed my fondest hopes of peace. I seize upon the truth of the Gospel as recorded in the Old and New Testaments as a shipwrecked sailor to the hand stretched forth to rescue him from the whelming waves. The spiritual wants of man herein recorded and corroborated by his inward light seem to be so aptly fitted that nothing less than a Divine master could have given them to us. What is human life without the faith and hope thus inspired within the soul! – the faith of so many of the great and good, the saints and Martyrs of the Church of Christ. Oh! dear T. we need it all. “I am not mad most noble Festus” but am willing to be accounted a fool for the sake of the great Head of the Church. I know that you are too good and too pure a man to smile at my new born Zeal or rather newly awakened for I once before long ago was similarly led. Do nt think that I am about to forsake my kind Concord friends, the purest, wisest and best of philosophers, dear noble souls – no – My heart yearns for your spiritual recognition of the revealed word, wherein ye may see that “ye must be born again”. What ever takes from our faith and hopes in the future life, robs us of the only possessions that render our earthly existence endurable.

Let us devoutly pray to God for light, for light & strength. We must feel contrite – be ready to smite our breast and cry “God be merciful to me a sinner”. O! there must be a listening ear to the fervent petition of the troubled soul– Our Heavenly Father will hear us — He will answer too our prayers. I humbly trust that He has mine.

As I said before I have no rebellion in my heart now– I gladly accept whatever provision God has made for our future happiness, & endeavor to repose with faith upon the arm of Divine Wisdom– Welcome Christ the Saviour of our souls if God so wills, Mystery though it be – purest of the pure, simplest & wisest of all teachers, who died for his faithfulness – the great exemplar & guide of man through the thorny road of earthly life, whose life blood sealed the great testimony of truth he wrought out for us – typical of regeneration He died for us all– How grateful we should feel towards him, the great Head of the Church.

Monday Mrng. July 1. Thus far I wrote last evening & now take my pen to draw my letter to a close. We are just commencing mowing & the scythes are already busy in the hands of my hired men – the most graceful of the farmer’s graceful labor – all of which is the living poetry of rural life.

Do let me hear from you soon? And remember me kindly to Chan-



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*ning for whom I shall ever feel an affectionate interest, and to dear father Alcott, and to that complex gentleman, scholar, philosopher & Christian, Radulphus Primus! My wife has had a long illness, but is now recovering. My valued Uncle, James Thornton died 27 April last in his 64th year, of which please inform Channing, who knew him. With kind regards to your mother & sister, I remain truly & affectionately
Your friend,
Dan^l Ricketson
"Te teneam monius deficiente manu."*

What he meant by that he would feel sufficiently confident to confide to his journal in his extreme old age, in May 1885 just after he had read of and had evidently been perplexed by the supernaturalist beliefs that had passed for religion in the mind of Victor Hugo:



I believe in the gentle doctrines of the early Friends – particularly that of "the indwelling light," as the first great teacher and guide, it being ... the true interpreter of the Sacred Volume whose pages bear record of this divine manifestation to mankind from the earliest ages.... At the hour of death I hope for grace from on high, to resign myself with childlike confidence into the hands of our Heavenly Father, the great and good Creator, whose protecting care over me in my past youth, manhood, and old age, I have so often witnessed.... As a birthright member of the Society of Friends, I would express my continued faith in its Christian doctrines, so simple and true, so human and charitable when rightly observed, feeling that in the future they will be seen to be the truest interpretation of the Christian truth. So, asking God's blessing upon those who may be called upon to suffer for its principles I would close.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Thoreau jotted down that he and Horace Mann, Jr. had reached the "Mackinaw House" on [Mackinac Island](#). By 1838 this island, which had started out as the Michilimackinac "Green Turtle" burying ground, had already become firmly established as a summer health resort, catering in particular to those suffering from seasonal allergies such as hay fever. In fact some sufferers had to be turned away in earlier years for lack of accommodations. By 1861 there had been a building boom –although the Grand Hotel and the Michigan State Park were still a number of years in the future– and Thoreau and Mann were able to choose among several hotels and boarding houses. It was unseasonably cold and Thoreau was so ill at this point that he spent most

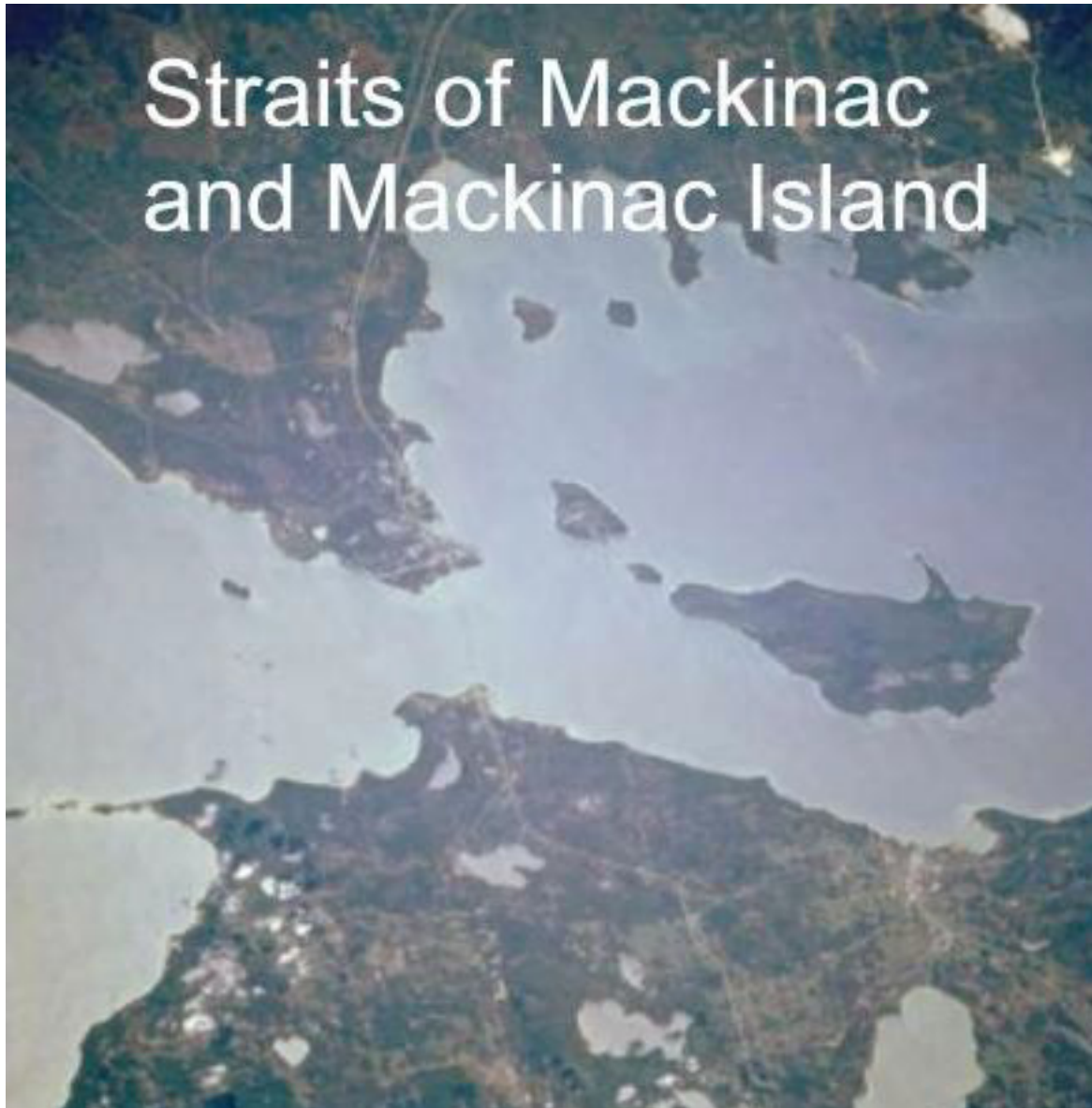


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of his time sitting by the fire with Mann bringing [botanical](#) collections in to him. Be it noted that [Margaret Fuller](#) and [William Cullen Bryant](#) had been on Mackinac Island and young Mann had himself been there before as a boy of 13 with his father.



We may recollect a letter written by Horace Mann, Sr. on Mackinac Island in 1857: “I never breathed such air before, and this must be some that was clear out of Eden, and did not get cursed. I slept every night under sheet, blanket, and coverlet, and no day is too warm for smart walking and vigorous bowling. The children are crazy



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with animal spirits.”³⁶



Therefore, it is clear, Thoreau did not return to [Concord](#) via the Great Lakes by accident, nor stop off at Mackinac Island by happenstance.

ASTRONOMY

36. See pages 157-163 of J.A. Van Fleet, OLD AND NEW MACKINAC (Ann Arbor, 1870).

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Michilimackinac “Green Turtle” Island on Lake Michigan





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August: [Queen Victoria](#) and her consort [Albert](#) visited their son [Albert “Bertie” Edward](#) at Curragh Camp in Ireland, where the [Prince of Wales](#) would be obtaining some military experience (etc.) on maneuvers with the Grenadier Guards.

[Henry Thoreau](#) visited “Brooklawn,” the home of [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#):



[D]uring the summer of 1861, the last one he saw, he made me a visit at New Bedford, and though suffering by night and by day with his troublesome cough, was able to ride about the country and by the seashore, as well as to take short rambles for his favorite plants, or in search of those not found in his own vicinity of Concord.

The following is a list of the plants he found at this time, August, 1861, which before he had not seen: –

Malva Sylvestris, Spartina Juncea, Teucrium Canadense, Chenopodia Maritima, Obione Arenaria, Proserpinaca Pectinacea, Linum Virginianum, Aster Spectabilis, and an undescribed species of Lactuca.



Ricketson, who had not seen Thoreau for almost a year, attempted without success to persuade him to visit a particular New Bedford physician, Dr. Denniston, who was an advocate of the water practice. “My impression



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is that his case is a very critical one as to recovery; he has a bad cough and expectorates a great deal, is emaciated considerably; his spirits, however, appear as good as usual, his appetite good. Unless some favorable symptom shows itself soon, I fear that he will gradually decline.” After having failed to persuade Thoreau to visit this practitioner, he would impose upon the physician to go to Concord: “Dr. Denniston, to whom I recommended you to go, has kindly consented on his way from New Bedford to Northampton, to go to Concord to see you. He has had much experience and success in the treatment of bronchitis, and I hope his visit to you will result in placing yourself under his care, which I much desire.” He would accompany this physician to Concord, but the two of them would be “unable to awaken in Thoreau an interest in his mode of treating disease by the water practice.” (After that visit, Ricketson would not again see Thoreau alive.)

August 15, Thursday: The Emperor [Napoléon III](#) created Jacques Offenbach a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

Concord Aug. 15th '61

Friend Ricketson,

When your last letter was written I was away in the far North-West, in search of health. My cold turned to bronchitis which made me a close prisoner almost up to the moment of my starting on that journey, early in May. As I had an incessant cough, my doctor told me that I must “clear out”—to the West Indies or elsewhere, so I selected Minnesota. I returned a few weeks ago, after a good deal of steady travelling, considerably, yet not essentially better, my cough still continuing. If I do not mend very quickly I shall be obliged to go to another climate again very soon—

My ordinary pursuits, both indoor and out, have been for the most part omitted, or seriously interrupted — walking, boating, scribbling, &c — Indeed I have been sick so long that I have almost forgotten what it is to be well, & yet I feel that it all respects only my envelope.

Channing & Emerson are as well as usual, but Alcott, I am sorry to say, has for some time been more or less confined by a lameness, perhaps of a neuralgic character, occasioned by carrying too great a weight on his back while gardening.

On returning home, I found various letters awaiting me, among others one from Cholmondeley & one from yourself.

Of course, I am sufficiently surprised to hear of your conversion, yet I scarcely know what to say about it, unless that judging by your account, it appears to me a change which concerns yourself peculiarly, and will not make you more valuable to mankind. However, perhaps, I must see you before I can judge.

Remembering your numerous invitations, I write this short note now chiefly to say that, if you are to be at home, and it will be quite agreeable to you, I will pay you a visit next week, & take such rides or



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*sauntering walks with you as an invalid may.
Yrs Henry D. Thoreau*

August 16, Friday [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#):

Brooklawn, Friday noon

16th August 1861.

Dear Thoreau,

I have just received and read yours of yesterday, and in reply would say, that myself & family will be very glad to have a visit from you as you propose, next week — as you have fixed upon no particular time, I will be at the Head of the River depot for you by the Monday afternoon train from Boston which arrives about 6 o'clock— The p.m. train from Boston for N. Bedford leaves at 4 1/2 p. m.

I am glad to inform you that my health & spirits are better than they have been for some years & I can I trust infuse a little new physical life into you at which I am pretty good. I have just raised my wife from a prostrating illness, by an intelligent faith. What you want is to live easy, just like an intelligent Indian who is a little poorly—giving nature a fair chance—your body is well enough (normally) but the brain works too hard, the engine above is a little too heavy for the craft below — so slack up & let off the steam & float awhile along shore just using the helm occasionally as occasion requires. I am sorry to hear of Mr Alcott's lameness & hope he will soon recover.

My son Arthur is a surgeon in the U.S. Navy on board ship Nightingale, & expects to sail from Brooklyn Navy Yard to-morrow. My wife who is you know constitutionally delicate had the bronchitis a few years ago & is now entirely well of it — her lungs which were weak & attended with cough much improved — her trouble now indigestion & palpitation of heart but getting better slowly of these. I am her doctor.

I feel that your treatment should be directed to the brain principally & the remedy rest or agreeable occupation without excitement.

I was hardly wise I fear in writing about my late experiences which I find were considerably aroused by domestic affliction yet not without some good results I hope

yours truly — D. Ricketson

Remember me kindly to Channing & other friends. Be of good cheer. Keep cheerful company.



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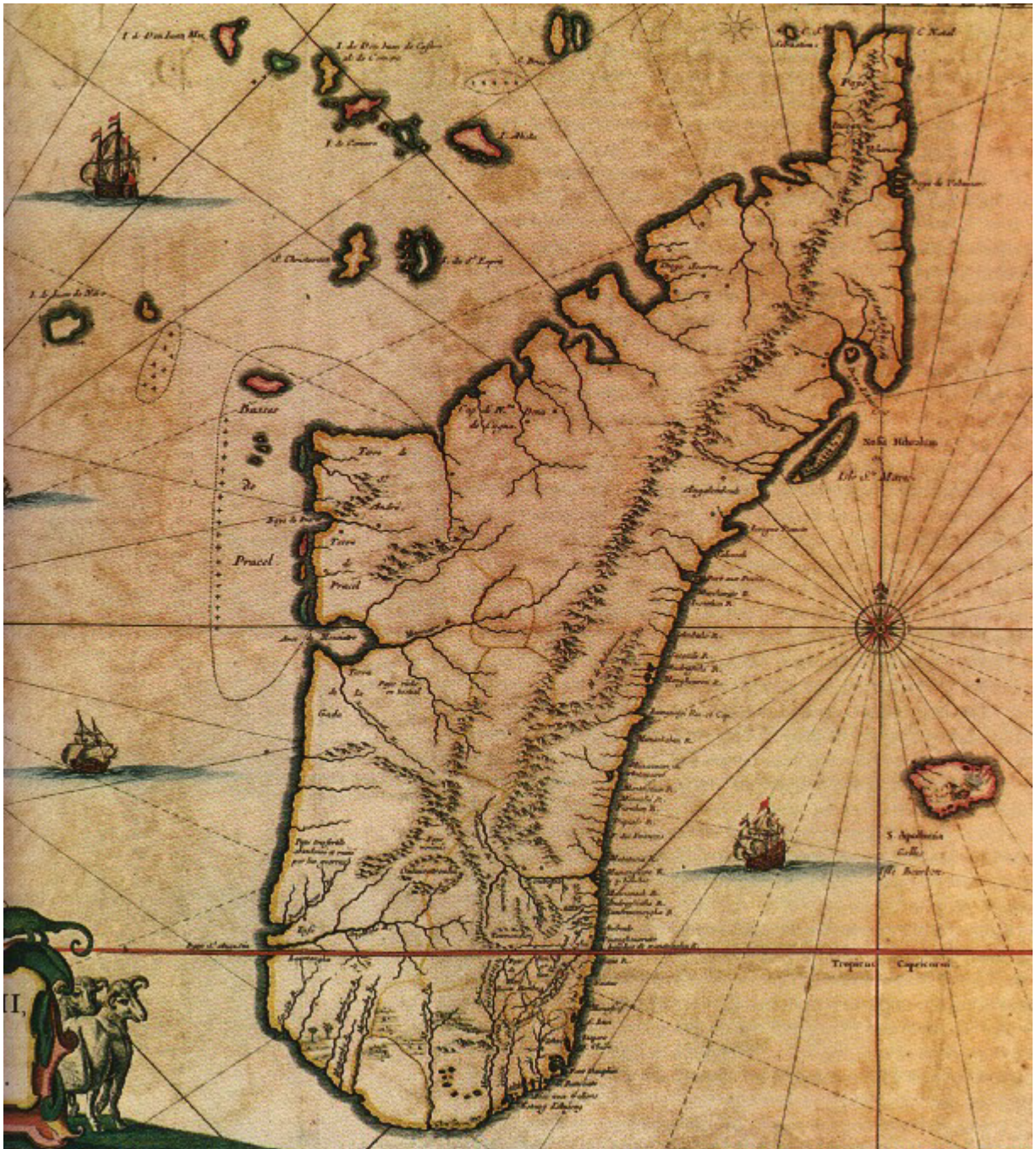
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Queen Ranavalona I of Madagascar died peacefully in her sleep and was succeeded on the throne by King Radama II (1829-1863). Over the course of her 33-year reign, amazingly, she had inventively murdered in various manners a very large fraction of the population of this large island. During the 2d year of his very brief reign before being strangled with a silken cloth, this new king would reopen the country to Christian missionaries. On his 4th try, the Reverend [William Ellis](#) would therefore be permitted to remain on the island.

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He would be able to remain until 1865.





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August 19, Monday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal:



Rode up to the depot for my friend Thoreau, who came by the P.M. train from Boston. Spent evening conversing, Thoreau giving an interesting and graphic account of his late visit to the Mississippi, St. Anthony Falls, &c., - gone two months.

August 20, Tuesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) noted in his journal in regard to his friend [Henry Thoreau](#) that:



Clear and fine, wind E. At home this A.M. talking a good deal with Thoreau in the Shanty. Rode with Thoreau this P.M., visited the old house at Thomas Wood's farm. In relation to my friend Thoreau's health my impression is that his case is a very critical one as to recovery; he has a bad cough and expectorates a good deal, is emaciated considerably, his spirits, however, appear as good as usual, his appetite good. Unless some favorable symptom shows itself soon I fear that he will gradually decline. He is thinking of going to a warm climate for the winter, but I think a judicious hydropathic treatment at home would be much better for him.

August 21, Wednesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal:



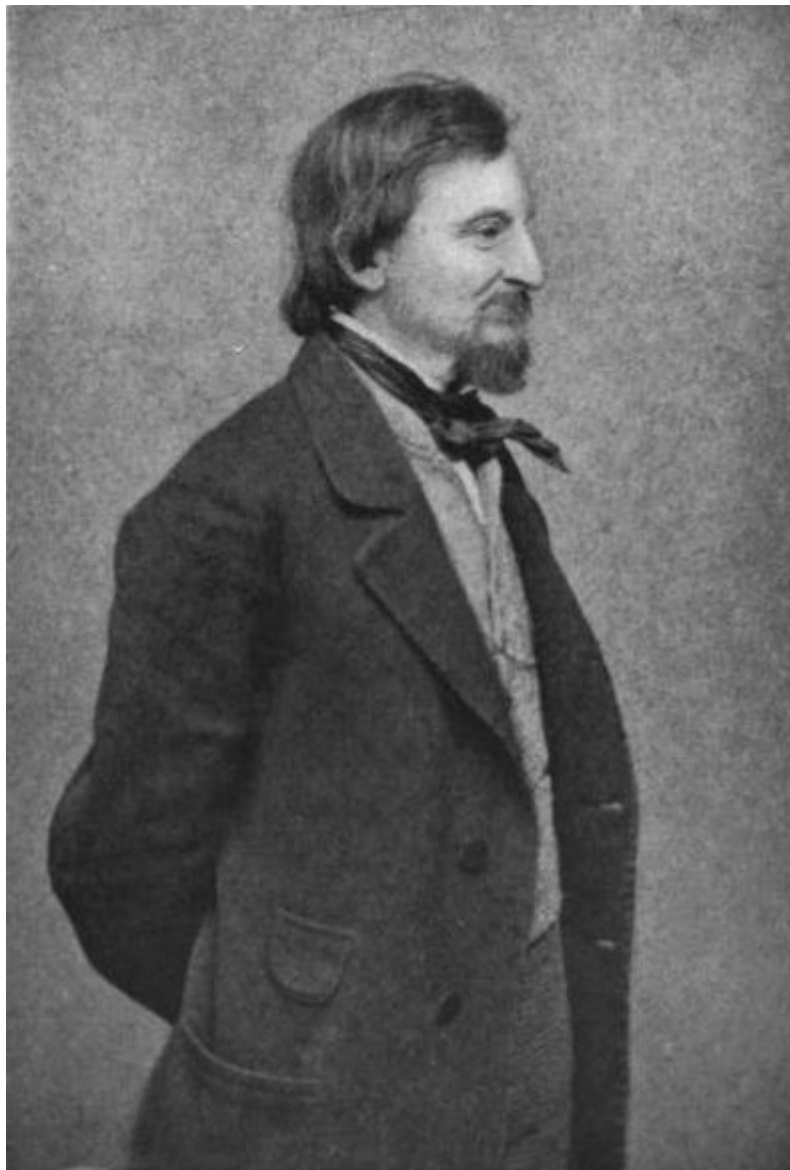
Clear and fine, perfect weather. Rode to town with Thoreau this A.M. Got an ambrotype of him at Dunshee's which we all think an excellent likeness. Thence we drove to Clark's Cove and so by Resolved Howland's corner and new road to town. Got September number Atlantic Magazine. Called at post-office and home by 1 P.M.



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The ambrotype taken by E.S. Dunshee was said to show “a sick man's face.”

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August 22, Thursday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal:



Long talk with my friend Thoreau on various matters this A.M. Rode this P.M. round by White's factory with T. Walked over the ridge road called the "back-bone of Acushnet" with T.

August 23, Friday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal:



Rode this P.M. to Sassaquin Pond with Thoreau, walked round from the north end, where we left our horse and wagon (Billy and old buggy wagon). T. found one or more plants new to him, at least rare. I bathed in a little cove on the west shore, a mild, pleasant afternoon. Home by 6 ¹/₂.

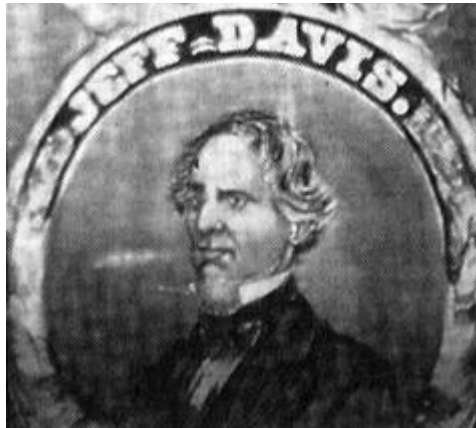


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August 24, Saturday: Confederate President Jefferson Davis wrote to Queen Victoria that he was appointing James Mason as “special commissioner of the Confederate States to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,” to be “envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the Confederate States, to reside near the court of your Majesty” at a salary of \$12,000 per year. (I don’t know whether this would have included expenses or whether Mason would have had an expense account to draw on over and above this enormous sum.)³⁷



In [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)’s journal for this date, we find:



Clear and fine. Our friend H.D. Thoreau who came on Monday P.M. left us by 7.10 A.M. train. Rode with him to Head River depot. The visit I trust has been agreeable to him as well as myself. His health is very poor, being afflicted with bronchitis, and the recovery of his health is I fear quite uncertain; still he has a good deal of toughness and great will, which are in his favor. It is my earnest desire that he may recover.

September 1, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

NEW BEDFORD, Sept. 1, 1861.

DEAR THOREAU,— Dr. Denniston, to whom I recommended you to go, has kindly consented on his way from New Bedford to Northhampton, to go to Concord to see you. He has had much experience and success in the treatment of bronchitis, and I hope his visit to you will result in your placing yourself under his care, which I much desire.

37. To get a sense of what that amounted to in today’s money, consult <http://www.measuringworth.com/exchange/>



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Should the Doctor have the time, and you feel
able, please show him a little of the Concord worthies
and much oblige,

Yours truly,
D. RICKETSON.

September 2, Monday: There was fighting at Dry Wood Creek / Battle of the Mules.

Friend Daniel Ricketson's journal:



Left home by A.M. train for Boston with Dr. Denniston to see my friend H.D. Thoreau, the Doctor professionally. After talk and examination by the Doctor walked with him and T. to the battle-ground; on return met Mr. Alcott, who joined us. Dr. D. left for Boston at 6 ¹/₂ P.M. I walked home with Mr. Alcott. Returned to Mr. Thoreau's by 9.



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September 3, Tuesday: The 23rd anniversary of Frederick Douglass's freedom, which we may well elect to celebrate in lieu of an unknown slave birthday.

Here is a Daguerreotype, by an unidentified photographer in the 1850-1855 timeframe.



"It has been a source of great annoyance to me, never to have a birthday."

Per [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal:³⁸ By this point Abby May, the youngest of the Alcott daughters, would

BRONSON ALCOTT

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

SOPHIA E. THOREAU

Weather warm and cloudy. Spent forenoon with Mr. Alcott in his study, Thoreau there part of the time. On our way visited an antiquarian collection of a Mr. Davis in company with Miss Sophia Thoreau and Mr. Thoreau. Dined with Mr. Alcott, his wife, and daughters Louisa and Abby.

Returned to Thoreau's to tea, walked this evening in the dark, got lost for a time, but by retracing my steps found my way again. Dark cloudy evening, warm. Talked with T. till ten.

38. Would this Mr. Davis be the wealthy philanthropist who in 1843 was leading the "Providence Movement" of mystic anarchists in Providence RI? Or the owner of "Eleazer Davis's Hill" near Carlisle Bridge? Would he be a descendant of the Davis who stood and delivered among the Concord minutemen on the Lexington battleground?



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have reached her full adult stature of five feet ten inches, so she must have made quite a contrast with the five foot three inch Ricketson! “How’s the weather down there?”

THE ALCOTT FAMILY

Table of Altitudes



Yoda	2 ' 0 "
Lavinia Warren	2 ' 8 "
Tom Thumb, Jr.	3 ' 4 "
Lucy (Australopithecus Afarensis)	3 ' 8 "
Hervé Villechaize (“Fantasy Island”)	3 ' 11"
Charles Proteus Steinmetz	4 ' 0 "
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (1)	4 ' 3 "
Alexander Pope	4 ' 6 "
Benjamin Lay	4 ' 7 "
Dr. Ruth Westheimer	4 ' 7 "
Gary Coleman (“Arnold Jackson”)	4 ' 8 "
Edith Piaf	4 ' 8 "
Queen Victoria with osteoporosis	4 ' 8 "
Linda Hunt	4 ' 9 "
Queen Victoria as adult	4 ' 10 "
Mother Teresa	4 ' 10 "
Margaret Mitchell	4 ' 10 "
length of newer military musket	4 ' 10"
Charlotte Brontë	4 ' 10-11"
Tammy Faye Bakker	4 ' 11"
Soviet gymnast Olga Korbut	4 ' 11"
jockey Willie Shoemaker	4 ' 11"
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec	4 ' 11"
Joan of Arc	4 ' 11"
Bonnie Parker of “Bonnie & Clyde”	4 ' 11"
Harriet Beecher Stowe	4 ' 11"
Laura Ingalls Wilder	4 ' 11"
a rather tall adult Pygmy male	4 ' 11"
Gloria Swanson	4 ' 11"1/2
Clara Barton	5 ' 0 "
Isambard Kingdom Brunel	5 ' 0 "
Andrew Carnegie	5 ' 0 "
Thomas de Quincey	5 ' 0 "



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Stephen A. Douglas	5 ' 0 "
Danny DeVito	5 ' 0 "
Immanuel Kant	5 ' 0 "
William Wilberforce	5 ' 0 "
Dollie Parton	5 ' 0 "
Mae West	5 ' 0 "
Pia Zadora	5 ' 0 "
Deng Xiaoping	5 ' 0 "
Dred Scott	5 ' 0 " (±)
Captain William Bligh of HMS <i>Bounty</i>	5 ' 0 " (±)
Harriet Tubman	5 ' 0 " (±)
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (2)	5 ' 0 " (±)
John Brown of Providence, Rhode Island	5 ' 0 " (+)
John Keats	5 ' 3/4 "
Debbie Reynolds (Carrie Fisher's mother)	5 ' 1 "
Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher)	5 ' 1 "
Bette Midler	5 ' 1 "
Dudley Moore	5 ' 2 "
Paul Simon (of Simon & Garfunkel)	5 ' 2 "
Honore de Balzac	5 ' 2 "
Sally Field	5 ' 2 "
Jemmy Button	5 ' 2 "
Margaret Mead	5 ' 2 "
R. Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller	5 ' 2 "
Yuri Gagarin the astronaut	5 ' 2 "
William Walker	5 ' 2 "
Horatio Alger, Jr.	5 ' 2 "
length of older military musket	5 ' 2 "
the artist formerly known as Prince	5 ' 2 1/2 "
typical female of Thoreau's period	5 ' 2 1/2 "
Francis of Assisi	5 ' 3 "
Voltaire	5 ' 3 "
Mohandas Gandhi	5 ' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5 ' 3 "
Kahlil Gibran	5 ' 3 "
Friend Daniel Ricketson	5 ' 3 "
The Reverend Gilbert White	5 ' 3 "
Nikita Khrushchev	5 ' 3 "





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	Sammy Davis, Jr.	5 ' 3 "
	Truman Capote	5 ' 3 "
	Kim Jong Il (North Korea)	5 ' 3 "
	Stephen A. "Little Giant" Douglas	5 ' 4 "
	Francisco Franco	5 ' 4 "
	President James Madison	5 ' 4 "
	Iosef Vissarionovich Dzugashvili "Stalin"	5 ' 4 "
	Alan Ladd	5 ' 4 "
	Pablo Picasso	5 ' 4 "
	Truman Capote	5 ' 4 "
	Queen Elizabeth	5 ' 4 "
	Ludwig van Beethoven	5 ' 4 "
	Typical Homo Erectus	5 ' 4 "
	typical Neanderthal adult male	5 ' 4 1/2 "
	Alan Ladd	5 ' 4 1/2 "
	comte de Buffon	5 ' 5 " (-)
	Captain Nathaniel Gordon	5 ' 5 "
	Charles Manson	5 ' 5 "
	Audie Murphy	5 ' 5 "
	Harry Houdini	5 ' 5 "
	Hung Hsiu-ch'üan 洪秀全	5 ' 5 "
	Marilyn Monroe	5 ' 5 1/2 "
	T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia"	5 ' 5 1/2 "
	average runaway male American slave	5 ' 5-6 "
	Charles Dickens	5 ' 6? "
	President Benjamin Harrison	5 ' 6 "
	President Martin Van Buren	5 ' 6 "
	James Smithson	5 ' 6 "
	Louisa May Alcott	5 ' 6 "
	Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	5 ' 6 1/2 "
	Napoleon Bonaparte	5 ' 6 1/2 "
	Emily Brontë	5 ' 6-7 "
	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	5 ' ? "
	average height, seaman of 1812	5 ' 6.85 "
	Oliver Reed Smoot, Jr.	5 ' 7 "
	minimum height, British soldier	5 ' 7 "
	President John Adams	5 ' 7 "



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President John Quincy Adams	5 ' 7 "
President William McKinley	5 ' 7 "
"Charley" Parkhurst (a female)	5 ' 7 "
Ulysses S. Grant	5 ' 7 "
Henry Thoreau	5 ' 7 "
the average male of Thoreau's period	5 ' 7 ¹ / ₂ "
Edgar Allan Poe	5 ' 8 "
President Ulysses S. Grant	5 ' 8 "
President William H. Harrison	5 ' 8 "
President James Polk	5 ' 8 "
President Zachary Taylor	5 ' 8 "
average height, soldier of 1812	5 ' 8.35 "
President Rutherford B. Hayes	5 ' 8 ¹ / ₂ "
President Millard Fillmore	5 ' 9 "
President Harry S. Truman	5 ' 9 "
President Jimmy Carter	5 ' 9 ¹ / ₂ "
Herman Melville	5 ' 9 ³ / ₄ "
Calvin Coolidge	5 ' 10"
Andrew Johnson	5 ' 10"
Theodore Roosevelt	5 ' 10"
Thomas Paine	5 ' 10"
Franklin Pierce	5 ' 10"
Abby May Alcott	5 ' 10"
Reverend Henry C. Wright	5 ' 10"
Nathaniel Hawthorne	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Louis "Deerfoot" Bennett	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Friend John Greenleaf Whittier	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
President Dwight D. Eisenhower	5 ' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots	5 ' 11"
Sojourner Truth	5 ' 11"
President Grover Cleveland	5 ' 11"
President Herbert Hoover	5 ' 11"
President Woodrow Wilson	5 ' 11"
President Jefferson Davis	5 ' 11"
President Richard Milhous Nixon	5 ' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
Robert Voorhis the hermit of Rhode Island	< 6 '
Frederick Douglass	6 ' (-)



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Anthony Burns	6 ' 0 "
Waldo Emerson	6 ' 0 "
Joseph Smith, Jr.	6 ' 0 "
David Walker	6 ' 0 "
Sarah F. Wakefield	6 ' 0 "
Thomas Wentworth Higginson	6 ' 0 "
President James Buchanan	6 ' 0 "
President Gerald R. Ford	6 ' 0 "
President James Garfield	6 ' 0 "
President Warren Harding	6 ' 0 "
President John F. Kennedy	6 ' 0 "
President James Monroe	6 ' 0 "
President William H. Taft	6 ' 0 "
President John Tyler	6 ' 0 "
John Brown	6 ' 0 (+)"
President Andrew Jackson	6 ' 1"
Alfred Russel Wallace	6 ' 1"
President Ronald Reagan	6 ' 1"
Venture Smith	6 ' 1 1/2"
John Camel Heenan	6 ' 2 "
Crispus Attucks	6 ' 2 "
President Chester A. Arthur	6 ' 2 "
President George Bush, Senior	6 ' 2 "
President Franklin D. Roosevelt	6 ' 2 "
President George Washington	6 ' 2 "



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Gabriel Prosser	6' 2"
Dangerfield Newby	6' 2"
Charles Augustus Lindbergh	6' 2"
President Bill Clinton	6' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
President Thomas Jefferson	6' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
President Lyndon B. Johnson	6' 3"
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.	6' 3"
Richard "King Dick" Seaver	6' 3 ¹ / ₄ "
President Abraham Lincoln	6' 4"
Marion Morrison (AKA John Wayne)	6' 4"
Elisha Reynolds Potter, Senior	6' 4"
Thomas Cholmondeley	6' 4" (?)
Franklin Benjamin Sanborn	6' 5"
Peter the Great of Russia	6' 7"
Giovanni Battista Belzoni	6' 7"
Thomas Jefferson (the statue)	7' 6"
Jefferson Davis (the statue)	7' 7"
Martin Van Buren Bates	7' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
M. Bihin, a Belgian exhibited in Boston in 1840	8'
Anna Haining Swan	8' 1"





DANIEL RICKETSON

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September 4, Wednesday: The infant Annie Langdon Alger died. [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s journal:



WALDO EMERSON

EDMUND HOSMER

ELLERY CHANNING

Clear and fine, walked to Walden Pond with mr. Thoreau, bathed; on our way called on Mr. Emerson; walked this P.M. with T. to Mr. Edmund Hosmer's farm, Mr. H. with us from the post-office. Saw Channing in the street, but no word between us, I not knowing how he would meet me if I addressed him. Took tea at Mrs. Brooke's, returned to Mr. T.'s at 7 ¹/₂, walked alone on the hill beyond the bridge by the Wheeler farm, talked with T. till 9 ¹/₂. Clear, fine evening.

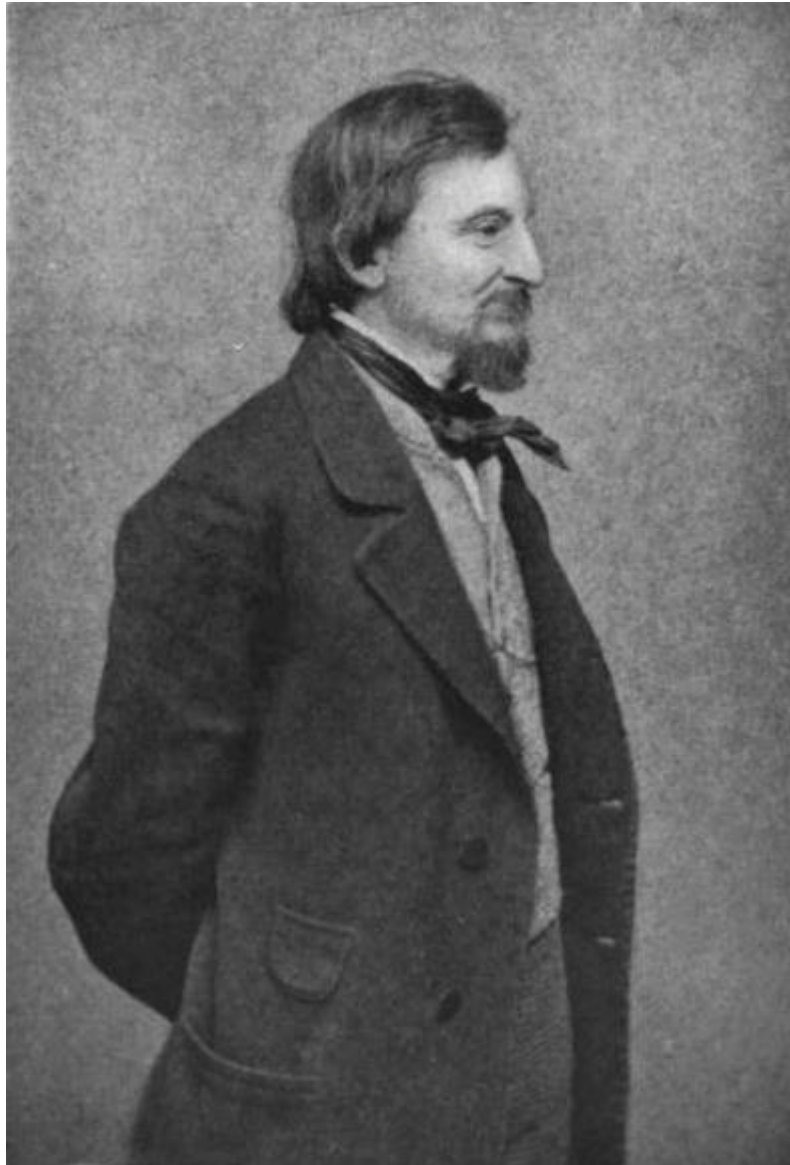


FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

HENRY THOREAU





DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

September 5, Thursday: Friend [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) noted in his journal:



Clear and fine. Left Concord at 8¹/₂ A.M., my friend t. accompanying me to the depot; introduced to young Horace Mann, Mr. T.'s late companion to Minnesota; arrived home to dinner.

I think T. seemed improving when I left him at Concord. Dr. D., though he faithfully examined his case, was unable to awaken in T. an interest in his mode of treating disease by the water practice. The Doctor kindly invited T. to come to Northampton and stop a fortnight as a guest with him; discouraged his going to the West Indies. I hope T. may be improving and need no doctor or absence from home.

NORTHAMPTON

HENRY THOREAU

HORACE MANN, JR.

October 14, Monday: W.S. Studley wrote, perhaps from New Bedford MA, to Charles Wesley Slack, to indicate that he was "Agreeable."³⁹

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) that he had been riding "every other day" in Edward Hoar's wagon.

Concord Oct 14th '61

Friend Ricketson

I think that, on the whole, my health is better than when you were here; & my faith in the doctors has not increased.

I thank you all for your invitation to come to New Bedford, but I suspect that it must still be warmer here than there, that, indeed, New Bedford is warmer than Concord only in the winter, & so I abide by Concord.

September was pleasanter & much better for me than August, and October thus far has been quite tolerable. Instead of riding on horse back, I take a ride in a wagon about every other day. My neighbor, Mr Hoar, has two horses, & he being away for the most part this fall has generously offered me the use of one of them, and, as I notice, the dog throws himself in, and does scouting duty.

I am glad to hear that you no longer chew, but eschew, sugar plums. One of the worst effects of sickness even is that it may get one into the habit of taking a little something, his bitters or sweets, as if for his bodily good, from time to time, when he does not need it. However, there is no danger of this if you do not dose even when you are

39. Stimpert, James. A GUIDE TO THE CORRESPONDENCE IN THE CHARLES WESLEY SLACK MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION: 1848-1885. Kent State University, Library, Special Collections



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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sick.

I met with a Mr Rodman, a young man of your town, here the other day — or week, looking at farms for sale, and rumor says that he is inclined to buy a particular one.

C. says that he received his book, but has not got any of yours.

It is easy to talk, but hard to write.

From the worst of all correspondents

Henry D. Thoreau



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1862

Early in the year: A later letter from Theophilus Brown to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), on January 19, 1868, described a conversation that had taken place early in this year: H.G.O. Blake had asked [Henry Thoreau](#) how the future seemed, and

"Just as uninteresting as ever, was his characteristic answer.... He said it was just as good to be sick as to be well, - just as good to have a poor time as a good time."

According to a letter from [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) to [Friend Ricketson](#) on May 20, 1862, shortly before dying [Henry](#) indicated by a shattering remark

Death is as near to you as it is to me.

that he had not deviated in the slightest from his belief in the incommensurability of durations, and his disbelief in any real dimensionality of time. Let us replay this snip of conversation in full: A visitor had ventured the banal remark

We must all go.

And Thoreau responded, faintly, between coughs

When I was a very little boy, I learned that I must die, and I set that down, so of course I am not disappointed now. Death is as near to you as it is to me.

Something about the manner in which Thoreau died indicates to me that his attitude toward eternity was what he was keeping before him at the end. It is, Thoreau noted in *WEEK*, through silence that all revelations have been made. And, in a letter, he suggested that to stop up our ears against the "immediate" voice of God is "the only sin" (CORRESPONDENCE 52). Since the Indian, for Thoreau, is the type case of the human being who



FRIEND RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

understands how to live spontaneously, without mediation, in the presented eternal moment (“He does not carry things in his head, but relies on himself at the moment” in III 205), and since the Indian, like the moose and other animals, relies upon all his senses and “does not give a distinct, conscious attention to any one” and since the Indian finds his way in the wilderness “very much as an animal does,” when those attending Thoreau at the end detected him breathing the identifiable words “moose” and “Indian,” it has done us no harm to speculate that Thoreau was attempting to continue the job of editing his manuscripts so as to be able to leave an estate for his survivors, but it would also do us no harm to hypothecate that Thoreau was emphasizing to himself this similarity which he had so often urged us all to emulate, and which he had so often urged upon himself. This is an appropriate thing of which to remind oneself, as one is enduring the difficulties of lying somewhere dying.

March 23, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

Spring Notes.

New Bedford, 23^d March '62

My dear friend,

As it is some time since I wrote you, I have thought that as a faithful cronicler of the season in this section, I would announce to you the present stage of our progress. I will not begin with the origin of creation as many worthy historians are wont, but would say, that we have had a pretty steady cold winter through the months of Jan^y and February, but since the coming in of March the weather has been mild though for the past week cloudy & some rain. To day the wind is southerly & the thermom. 3 p. m. 46/0 north side our house. A flock of wild geese flew over about an hour ago, which I viewed with my spy glass — their course about due east. Few things give me a stronger sense of the sublime than the periodical flight of these noble birds. Blue birds arrived here about a fortnight ago, but a farmer who lives about 1 1/2 mile from here, north, say he heard them on the 7th Febr^y. I hear the call of the Golden winged woodpecker, and the sweet notes of the Meadow lark in the morning, and yesterday morn^g. for the first time this spring, we were saluted with the song of a robin in a tree near our house. The song sparrow has been calling the maids to hang on their tea kettles for several weeks, and this morn^g. I heard the crackle of the cow-bunting. I must not forget too that last eveg. I heard the ground notes, speed speed, of the wood cock and his warbling while descending from his spiral flight. The catkins begin to expand upon the willows, and the grass in warm and rich spots, to look green. Truly spring is here, and each day adds to the interest of the season. I hope you will catch a share of its healthful influences, at least feast upon the stock you have in store — for as friend Alcott says in his quaint way, you have all weathers within



DANIEL RICKETSON

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you.

Am I right in my intimations, that you are mending a little, and that you will be able once more to resume your favorite pursuits so valuable to us all as well as yourself? May I not hope to see you the coming season at Brooklawn where you are always a welcome guest? I see that you are heralded in the Atlantic for April, and find a genial & appreciative notice of you under the head of "Forester," which I suppose comes from either Alcott or Emerson, and Channing's lines at the close, which I was also glad to see.

I am reading a very interesting book called "Foot-notes from the page of Nature, or first forms of vegetation" By Rev Hugh Macmillan, Cambridge & London 1861. It treats of Mosses Lichens, Fresh Water Algae & Fungi. The author appears to be rich in lore & writes in an easy manner with no pretention to science. Dont fail to read it if you can obtain it. It is lent me by a friendly naturalist.— Hoping to hear of your improved state of health & with the affectionate regards of my whole family as well as my own,

I remain dear friend

yours faithfully,

Dan. l Ricketson

P. S. I notice that Walden is to appear in a second edition and hope that your publishers will consider your interests as well as their own.

Would they not like to buy your unbound copies of "The Week?"



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

March 30, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) at his “shanty” on his “Brooklawn” estate in [New Bedford](#).



<i>At 2 p.m.</i>	<i>Honk-honk!</i>	<i>Honk! honk!</i>
<i>Two flocks</i>	<i>(drawings)</i>	<i>(drawings)</i>
<i>wild geese just</i>	<i>The Shanty, Brooklawn</i>	
<i>past 4 p.m.</i>	<i>(drawing)</i>	<i>30 March 1862.</i>

Dear Thoreau,
(drawings)
 Alone, and idle, here this
 pleasant sunday p. m., I thought I
 might write you a few lines, not that
 I expect you to answer, but only to bring
 myself a little nearer to you. I have
 to chronicle this time, the arrival of
 the purple Finch, and number of
 warblers & songsters of the sparrow tribe.
 By the way, did I mis-spell Chronicle in
 my last, leaving out the h? I am often
 mortified at my bad orthography,
 partly owing to a natural unaptness



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*and somewhat to carelessness, but
often after I have mailed a letter
I feel sure that I have misspelt some
word.*

(written vertically in left margin of page 1):

*P.S.2 I have just seen a cricket in the path near the house. Flies are
very
lively in my shanty windows.*

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*The spring is coming on nicely here, and
to-day it is mild, calm and sunny.
I hope you are able to get out a little
& breathe the pure air of your fields
& woods. While sawing some pine
wood the other day, the fragrance
suggested to my mind that you might
be benefitted by living among, or at
have least frequenting pine woods. I heard
^ of people much improved in health
who were afflicted in breathing from
this source, and I once seriously thought
of taking my wife to the pine woods
between here and Plymouth, or rather
between Middleborough & P. where
the pine grows luxuriantly in the dry yellow
ground of that section. I have thought
you might if still confined transport
imagination or spirit yourself in ~~thought~~ to your favorite haunts,
^ which might be facilitated by taking*

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*a piece of paper & mapping out your
usual rambles around Concord,
making the village the centre of the
chart & giving the names of each part
marking out the roads & footpaths, as
well as the more prominent natural
features of the country.
I have had two unusually dreamy
nights — last & the one before — Last night
I was climbing mountains, with some
accidental companion, & among the*



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*dizzy heights when near the top
I saw & pointed out to my fellow
traveller, two enormous birds flying
over our heads — these birds soon
increased & from being as I at first supposed
eagles of great size, became griffins!
as large as horses, their huge bodies
moved along by broad spread wings.
The dream continued, but the remainder*

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*is as the conclusion of most dreams
in strange contrast — I found myself
passing through a very narrow & filthy
village street the disagreeable odour
of which so quickened my speed as to
either awaken me or cut off my dream.
At any rate when I awoke, my head was
aching & I was generally exhausted.
But enough of this.
Two young men in a buggy wagon have just
driven up the road singing in very sonorous
strains, the “John Brown” Chorus.
I wish its pathetic and heart stirring
appeals could reach the inward ears
of Congress & the President. I hope you
can see some light on our present benighted
way, for I cannot, ~~not~~ except by the exercise
of my faith in an overruling Providence.
I may write you again soon and hope
I do not tire you. With kind regards
other to your family & my Concord friends,
^ I remain yours affectionately,
Danl Ricketson
P. S. I have eaten no lozenges
since I was at Walden pond
with you the 4th of last Septr.
I thank you for your caution in the case.*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

At some point that Spring: At some point during this spring, shortly before his death, [Henry Thoreau](#) gave to [Edmund Hosmer](#) his personal copy of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#), pointing out the lock of John's hair pasted into the front and the poem that accompanied it, and said:

*You know how a pregnant woman has to eat for two.
I have felt that I needed to live for John.*

According to Raymond R. Borst, this happened on May 5th: "At Thoreau's request, his friend Edmund Hosmer spends the night with him" and "In appreciation for this kindness, Thoreau asks his sister to give Hosmer his memorial copy of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) with a lock of his brother John's hair taped in it." Borst's reference is to the [Concord Saunterer](#), 11, Number 4 for Winter 1976, page 16.

Thoreau was then in the process of revising [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) for [Ticknor & Fields](#) to reissue it.

At some point, also, [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) presented Henry with a handwritten list of people to whom, she suggested, he might want to leave some special gift. Her list included in no particular sequence Bronson Alcott, H.G.O. Blake, Theophilus Brown, [Ellery Channing](#), [Aunt Louisa Dunbar](#), [Edith Emerson](#), [Edward Waldo Emerson](#), [Edmund Hosmer](#), Judge Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar, [Elizabeth Sherman Hoar](#), Horace Mann, Jr., [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), Mrs. Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley, [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), the [Concord Town Library](#), and the [Boston Society of Natural History](#). Thoreau worked at this list, jotting down alongside the names various small gifts (such as his two-volume edition of [Froissart's](#) CHRONICLES for Ellery),

FROISSART'S CHRONICLES, I

FROISSART'S CHRONICLES, II

until he got down to the entry for [Ellen Emerson](#). Evidently at this point he was unable to proceed, for the bequest to her (of his volume on the mineralogy of Maine and Massachusetts, evidently because it was by her uncle [Charles T. Jackson](#)), and all the remainder, are not in his handwriting but instead in [Sophia's](#).

April 6, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Ticknor & Fields](#) in Boston.

Boston April 6, 1862

HD Thoreau Esq

Dear Sir.

Your paper on Wild Apples is rece^d. In a few days we will send proof of the article on "Walking". Touching the "Week on [MS torn] we find by yours of

[Portion of page missing]

those already in cloth if we found them rusty. Since the volume was published prices have changed materially and discounts to Book-sellers have largely increased. We now make 1/3 & 40% to the Trade as a matter of course. What with bad [MS torn]nts we could not





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[Portion of page missing]
our check for the amount.
Yours Very truly
Ticknor & Fields

[Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) at his “shanty” on his “Brooklawn” estate in [New Bedford](#).

The Shanty, April 6th 1862.

My dear Philomath!

Another Sunday has come 'round, and as usual I am to be found in the Shanty, where I should also be glad to have you bodily present. We have had a little interruption to our fine weather during the past week, in the shape of a hail storm, yesterday p. m. and evening, but it is clear again to-day, though cooler. I have to Kronikle the arrival of the White-bellied swallow and the commencement of the frog choir, which saluted my ear for the first time on the eveg. of the 3rd Inst. The fields & the are becoming a little greener ~~long~~, trailing, ^ moss is alreadding waving along the sides of the rivulets. I have n't walked much however, as I have been busy about farm work,

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the months of April, and May, being my busiest time, but as my real business is with Nature, I do not let any of these “side issues” lead me astray. How serenely, and grandly amid this din of arms Nature preserves her integrity, nothing moved; with the return of Spring come the birds, & the flowers, the swollen streams go dancing on, and all the laws of the great solar system are perfectly preserved. How wise, how great, must be the Creator & Mover of it all! But to descend to the affairs of mortals, which particularly concern us at this time, I do not think that the people of the North appear to be awakened, ~~or~~ enlightened rather, ~~as~~ to their duty in this great struggle. I fear that there is a great deal of treachery which time will alone discover & remove, for the Right must eventually prevail Can we expect when we consult the page

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*of history that, this revolution will be more speedily terminated than others of a like nature? The Civil War of England lasted I think some ten years, and the American Revolution some 7 or 8 years besides the years of anticedent agitation. We have no Cromwell, unless Wendell Phillips shall by & by prove one — but at present he rather represents Hampden, whose mournful end was perhaps a better one than to be killed by a rotten egg mob. The voice of “Hogopolis, *” if*



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such grunts can be thus dignified, must prove a lasting disgrace. The Government party, if we have a Govt, seem to continue with a saintly perseverance, their faith in Gen McClellan. How much longer this state of delay will continue to be borne it is difficult to foresee, but I trust the force of circumstances (sub deo) we'll soon require a move for the cause of liberty. I read but little of the newspaper reports of the War rather preferring to be governed by the general characteristics of the case,

**the mob portion of Cincinnati*

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as they involuntarily affect my mind. 4 p.m. Since writing the foregoing, somewhat more than an hour ago, I have taken a stroll with my son Walton & our dog, through the woods & fields west of our house, where you & I have walked several times -- the afternoon is sunny and of mild temperature, but the wind from N. W. rather cool, rendering overcoat agreeable. Our principal object was to look at lichens to & mosses, which W. is paying some attention.

^ We started up a woodcock, at the south edge of the woods, & a large number of robins in a field adjoining, also pigeon-woodpeckers, & heard the warble of blue birds.

I remain with faith in the sustaining forces of Nature, and Nature's God, Yours truly, & affectionately,
Daniel Ricketson.

Henry D. Thoreau,

Concord, Mass.

Louisa May Alcott reported to a friend that [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) and Louisa Leavitt were to be wed in Boston by the Reverend James Freeman Clarke, in his Church of the Disciples:

... having lately published his EMANCIPATION IN THE WEST INDIES, is now engaged to one of his teachers, Miss Louisa Leavitt, his cousin. Concord is in a state of intense excitement. She looks enough like him to be his twin sister, and is as cool and sharp as he. A pair of lemons they will be. Sugar will be needed to sweeten the compound. They are to be married in July, then it's on with the school, which is very easy as she is now his only teacher and won't need any salary when she is Mrs. Sanborn.



FRIEND RICKETSON

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April 7, Monday: A treaty between the United States of America and Great Britain for the suppression of the [international slave trade](#).

READ THE FULL TEXT

[Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) replied to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) (however, evidently she would not post this letter until May 11th, after her brother's death).

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.

April 13, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) at his "shanty" on his "Brooklawn" estate in [New Bedford](#).

*The Shanty, Brooklawn,
13th April 1862.
My dear Friend,
I received a letter from*



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

your dear Sister a few days ago informing me of your continued illness, and prostration of physical strength, which I was not altogether unprepared to learn, as our valued friend Mr Alcott who wrote me by your sister's request in February last, that you were confined at home and very feeble. I am glad however to learn from Sophia that you still find comfort and are happy, the reward I have no doubt of a virtuous life, and an abiding faith in the wisdom and goodness of our Heavenly Father. It is undoubtedly wisely ordained that our present lives should be mortal. Sooner or later we must all close our eyes for the last time upon the scenes of this world, and Oh! how happy

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are they who feel the assurance that the spirit shall survive the earthy tabernacle of clay, and pass on to higher and happier spheres of experience.

"It must be so — Plato, then, reasonest well: — Else, whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire This longing after immortality?"

Addison - Cato

*"The soul's dark cottage, battered, and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that time has made.
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become,
As they draw near to their eternal home.
Leaving the old both worlds at once they view
Who stand upon the threshold of the new."*

Waller

*It has been the lot of but few, dear Henry,
to extract so much from life as you have done.
Although you number fewer years than many
who have lived wisely before you, yet I know
of no one, either in the past or present times
who has drank so deeply from the
sempiternal spring of truth & knowledge,
or who in the poetry and beauty of every
day life have enjoyed more, [—————]*



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

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*or contributed more to the happiness of others.
Truly you have not lived in vain — your works,
and above all, your brave and truthful life,
will become a precious treasure to those
whose happiness it has been to have known to uphold you, and who
will continue, though with
feebler hands, the fresh and instructive
philosophy you have taught them.
But I cannot yet resign my hold upon you if here. I will still hope, and
my poor prayer ^ to God may be heard, would ask, that you
may be spared to us awhile longer at least.
This is a lovely spring day here — warm &
mild — The thermometer in the shade at 62 (3 p. m) above zero — I
write with my Shanty door open
and my west curtain down to keep out the sun, —
a red-winged blackbird is regaling me with
a guerelous, half broken, song, from a neighboring
tree just in front of the house, and the gentle S.W.
wind is soughing through my young pines.
Here where you have so often sat with me,
I am alone. — My dear Uncle James whom you
may remember to have seen here, the companion
of my woodland walks for more than quarter
of a century, died a year ago this month.*

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*my boys and girls have grown into men
and women, and my dear wife ~~who~~ is an invalid still, so, though a
pater familia
I often feel quite alone. Years are accumulating
upon me, the buoyancy of youth has erewhile
departed, and with some bodily & many
mental infirmities, I sometimes feel
that the cords of life are fast separating.
I wish at least to devote the remainder of
my life, whether longer or shorter, to the
cause of truth & humanity — a life of
simplicity and humility. Pardon me
for thus dwelling on myself.
Hoping to hear of your more favorable
symptoms, but committing you (all*



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

*unworthy as I am,) unto the tender care
of the great Shepherd, who “tempers the
wind to the shorn lamb” I remain, my
dear friend, and counsellor,
ever faithfully yours,
Danl. Ricketson
P.S. It is barely possible I may come to see
you on Saty. next.*

Also, at about this time in April 1862, the firm of Ticknor & Fields in Boston responded to [Thoreau](#)'s letter of April 2d by purchasing from him all 595 of the remaining copies of WEEK which he had kept for so long in his garret room, 145 of them in the original binding and 450 of them still unbound. The 145 copies that were already bound –if we can judge from the existence of a first edition copy with original flyleaf which bears the signature “Charles J. Taylor” and the date “June 7, 1862”– were put out immediately by the firm to area booksellers. In any case, the 450 unbound copies were soon bound with the firm's new title page, and probably were on sale in area bookstores before the beginning of the summer.

May 4, Sunday: At his home Brooklawn in New Bedford, in the forenoon, [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) was composing and posting a letter to [Henry Thoreau](#).

The Shanty, Sunday 7 1/2 a.m.

4th May 1862.

My dear Friend,

I have just returned from driving our cow to pasture, and assisting in our usual in, and out-door, work, the first making a fire in our sitting room, a little artificial warmth being still necessary for my invalid wife, although I sit most the time as I do now, with my Shanty door open, and without fire in my stove. Well my dear friend, & fellow pilgrim, Spring has again come, and here appears in full glow—the farmers are busy and have been for some weeks, ploughing, and planting,— the necessity of paying more attention to agriculture being strongly felt in these hard times—old fields & neglected places are now being brought into requisition and with a good season, our former neglected farms will teem with abundance.

*I too am busy in my way, but on rather a small scale, principally in my garden, and among my fruit trees— Walton however is head man, and I am obliged generally to submit to his superior judgment. About all the birds have returned—the large thrush (*T. rufus*) arrived here on the 25th last month.— I am now daily expecting the cat-bird, and ground robin, and soon the BobO'link, and Golden robin. With the arrival of the two last, our vernal choir becomes nearly complete. I have know them both to arrive the same day. Of*



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the great variety of little woodland and wayside warblers, I am familiar with but few, yet some of them are great favorites of mine, particularly the oven bird, warbling vireo, veery (T. Wilsonii) &c &c. The windflower & blue violet have been in bloom some time, and I suppose the columbine & wild geranium are also, although I have not been to visit them as yet. How beautiful, & how wonderful, indeed, is this return of life — how suggestive & instructive to mankind. Truly God is great, & good, & wise, and glorious! I hope this will find you mending, and as I hear nothing to the contrary, I trust it may be so that you are. I did expect to be able to come to Concord soon — I still may, but at present I do not see my way clear as we “Friends” say. I often think of you, however, and join hands with you in the spirit, if not in the flesh, which I hope always to do.

I see by the papers, that Concord has found a new voice in the way of a literary journal, Y’clept “The Monitor”, which has my good wishes for its success. I conclude that Mr Sanborn is the pioneer in this enterprise, who appears to be a healthy nursing child of the old mother of heroes. I do not mean to be classic, and only intend to speak of old mother Concord. I hope Channing will wake up, and give us some of his lucubrations, and father Alcott strike his orphic lyre once more, and Emerson discourse wisdom & verse from the woods around. There sings a Whortleberry Sparrow (T. Juncorum) from our lush pasture beyond the garden. I hear daily your sparrow (F. graminus) with his “here! here! there! there! come quick or I’m gone.” By the way is not Emerson wrong in his interpretation of the whistle of the chickadee as “Phebe” — the low, sweet, whistle of the “black cap” is very distinct from the clearly expressed Phoebe of the wood pewee. But I must not be hypercritical, with so true a poet & lover of nature as E.

How grandly is the Lord overruling all for the cause of the slave — defeating the evil machinations of men by the operation of his great universal and regulating laws, by which the Universe of mind and matter is governed. I do not look for a speedy termination of the war although matters look more hopeful, but I cannot doubt but that Slavery will soon find its Exodus. What a glorious country this will be for the next generation should this curse be removed.

We have had a Miss Dickinson here, who spoke very acceptably. I did not hear her however, but had the pleasure of an interview with her in the Shanty. She is a bright hopeful young creature, and bids fair to be a useful instrument for her own sex — her particular vocation being, as she informed me, “women’s rights.” She intends being in Boston at the May Meetings of the Anti-Slavery Society. The



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*Concord people should hear her.
Amid the song of purple finches, robins meadow larks & sparrows,
a kind of T. solitarius myself, and with a heart full o f kind wishes
and affection for you, I conclude this hasty epistle
as ever yours faithfully,
D. R.
P.S. I believe I answered your sister's kind & thoughtful letter to me.
I also wrote you at length soon thereafter but laid the letter aside in
my drawer where it still remains with other unsent epistles &c.*

According to a letter from [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) to [Friend Daniel](#) on May 20th, shortly before dying [Henry](#) indicated by a shattering remark



Death is as near to you as it is to me.

that he had not deviated in the slightest from his belief in the incommensurability of durations, and his disbelief in any real dimensionality of time. Let us replay this snip of conversation in full: A visitor had ventured the banal remark



We must all go.

And [Henry](#) had responded, faintly, between coughs⁴⁰



When I was a very little boy, I learned that I must die, and I set that down, so of course I am not disappointed now. Death is as near to you as it is to me.

40. When Kurt Vonnegut was interviewed by William Rodney Allen in 1987, Allen asked about Ernest Becker's book THE DENIAL OF DEATH and Vonnegut confessed he hadn't read it:



Allen: Its premise is that Freud was wrong when he said our first repressions are of sexual impulses. Becker says, no, what we repress first is our awareness that we're going to die. And so most of the artificial creations of society – like a class structure, which implies that all the upper class is exempt from certain harsh realities – are attempts to deny our mortality. Do you see that?

Vonnegut: I see it as a very expensive way. [Laughter]
I'm like Thoreau: I like to save money any way I can.



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May 7, Wednesday: There was fighting at Eltham's Landing Barhamsville / West Point.

Word reached [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#) that [Henry David Thoreau](#) had died on the previous day. He wrote in his journal "An irreparable loss; one of the best and truest of men." And after this there appears a later notation:

Non omnis moriar — May 7, 1897.

Bronson Alcott noted in his journal (JOURNALS. Boston MA: Little, Brown, 1938, page 347) that:

I am at Mrs. Thoreau's. She tells me about Henry's last moments and his sister Sophia showed me his face, looking as when I last saw him, only a tinge of paler hue. 44 years last July.

May 9, Friday: The Springfield, Massachusetts [Daily Republican](#) noted [Henry Thoreau](#)'s demise:

Henry D. Thoreau, the recluse author, died of consumption at Concord, 7th inst. aged 44 years. His work entitled "Walden" and his magazine writings evinced great originality and keenness as a student of nature. He was a favorite disciple of Ralph Waldo Emerson.

(It intrigues me, that an obituary can be published by the popular press in such manner as to bear a suppressed final summation: "So that's it, that's all there was, that's everything it amounted to." And, nobody needs to be offended.)

David Hunter, the commander of the federal government's Department of the South, proclaimed the freedom of all the slaves of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) went into Boston to Dunshee's to secure the ambrotype which he had had taken of his friend during his visit in August 1861, and then arranged as precious objects the 27 letters which [Henry](#) had written to him.

Captain [Charles Henry Davis](#) became the Acting Flag Officer in command of the Western Gunboat Flotilla.





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





FRIEND RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

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.





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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.)



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[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, O 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.



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

May 20, Wednesday: The Homestead Act came into effect, limiting the privilege of becoming homesteaders to citizens and to those immigrants whose intention it was to become citizens.

READ THE FULL TEXT

(That, of course, intentionally left free black Americans out in the cold, completely unable to participate in the all-white development of North and South Dakota, and Oklahoma. In the commemorative stamp below, for instance, you can be very certain that the husband and wife depicted as standing outside their sod hut are white people.)



"In those parts of the Union in which the negroes are no longer slaves, they have in no wise drawn nearer to the whites. On the contrary, the prejudice of the race appears to be stronger in the States which have abolished slavery ... and nowhere is it so intolerant as in those States where servitude has never been known."



— Alexis de Tocqueville



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One for me and one for you and one for me, one for me and one for you and one for me. From a demographic standpoint, and from an ecological standpoint, the Homestead Act would be a disaster, as many of the quarter-sections of prairie handed out “for free” would be simply inadequate to support the life of one human being. A number approaching half of the US citizens who would avail themselves of the opportunity would fail to carry the process through to completion and would not ever obtain title to “their land,” while the direct result of this denuding of the countryside would be the great Dust Bowl of the 1930s. –On the bright side, a whole lot of the land would be disposed of in block grants to corporations, primarily railroads, and the railroads would in general do very well indeed.



“There is only one way to accept America and that is in hate; one must be close to one’s land, passionately close in some way or other, and the only way to be close to America is to hate it; it is the only way to love America.”



– Lionel Trilling

Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau wrote about her brother Henry to Friend Daniel Ricketson:

You ask for some particulars relating to Henry’s illness. I feel like saying that Henry was never affected, never reached by it. I never before saw such a manifestation of the power of spirit over matter. Very often I have heard him tell his visitors that he enjoyed existence as well as ever. He remarked to me that there was as much comfort in perfect disease as in perfect health, the mind always conforming to the condition of the body. The thought of death, he said, could not begin to trouble him. His thoughts had entertained him all his life, and did still. When he had wakeful nights, he would ask me to arrange the furniture so as to make fantastic shadows on the wall, and he wished his bed was in the form of a shell, that he might curl up in it. He considered occupation as necessary for the sick as for those in health, and has accomplished a vast amount of labor during the past few months in preparing some papers for the press. He did not cease to call for his manuscripts till the last day of his life.

During his long illness I never heard a murmur escape him, or the slightest wish expressed to remain with us; his perfect contentment was truly wonderful. None of his friends seemed to realize how very ill he was, so full of life and good cheer did he seem. One friend, as if by way of consolation, said to him, “Well, Mr. Thoreau, we must all go.” Henry replied, “When I was a very little boy I learned that I must die, and I sat that down, so of course I am not disappointed now. Death is as near to you as it is to me.”

There is very much that I should like to write you about my precious brother, had I time and strength. I wish you to know how very gentle, lovely, and submissive he was in all his ways. His little study bed was brought down into our front parlor, when he could no longer walk with our assistance, and every arrangement pleased him. The devotion of his friends was most rare and touching; his room was made fragrant by the gift of



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flowers from young and old; fruit of every kind which the season afforded, and game of all sorts was sent him. It was really pathetic, the way in which the town was moved to minister to his comfort. Total strangers sent grateful messages, remembering the good he had done them. All this attention was fully appreciated and very gratifying to Henry; he would sometimes say, "I should be ashamed to stay in this world after so much had been done for me, I could never repay my friends." And they so remembered him to the last. Only about two hours before he left us, Judge Hoar [Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar] called with a bouquet of hyacinths fresh from his garden, which Henry smelled and said he liked, and a few minutes after he was gone, another friend came with a dish of his favorite jelly.

I can never be grateful enough for the gentle, easy exit which was granted him. At seven o'clock Tuesday morning he became restless and desired to be moved; dear mother, Aunt Louisa, and myself were with him; his self-possession did not forsake him. A little after eight he asked to be raised quite up, his breathing grew fainter and fainter, and without the slightest struggle, he left us at nine o'clock.

May 23, Saturday: There was fighting at Front Royal / Guard Hill / Cedarville.

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) mailed to [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) the ambrotype taken of her brother [Henry](#) at Dunshee's in August 1861.

At her request, Ricketson sent Sophia a copy of his poem in which he attempted to describe the memorable evening on which Thoreau, in the best of spirits, had gracefully but wildly executed an improvised dance in the Ricketson parlor (a dance in which repeatedly he had trod on the toes of Bronson Alcott):

The Improvised Dance

Like the Indian dance of old,
Far within the forest shade,
Showing forth the spirit bold
That no foeman e'er dismayed;

Like the dancing of the hours,
Tripping on with merry feet,
Triumphing o'er earthly power,
Yet with footsteps all must greet;

Like the Fauns and Satyrs, too,
Nimbly leaping in the grove,
Now unseen and then in view,
As among the trees they move;

Like the leaves by whirlwind tossed
In some forest's valley wide,
Scattered by the Autumn frost,
Whirling madly, side by side;

Thus, and still mysterious more,
Our philosopher did prance,



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Skipping on our parlor floor
In his wild, improvised dance.



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1863

Louisa Sampson Ricketson died.

Writing to describe his experience of [Henry Thoreau](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) said in part that:



I do not remember of ever seeing him laugh outright, but he was ever ready to smile at anything that pleased him; and I never knew him to betray any tender emotion except on one occasion, when he was narrating to me the death of his only brother, John Thoreau, from lockjaw, strong symptoms of which, from his sympathy with the sufferer, he himself experienced. At this time his voice was choked, and he shed tears, and went to the door for air. The subject was of course dropped, and never recurred to again.

LOCKJAW

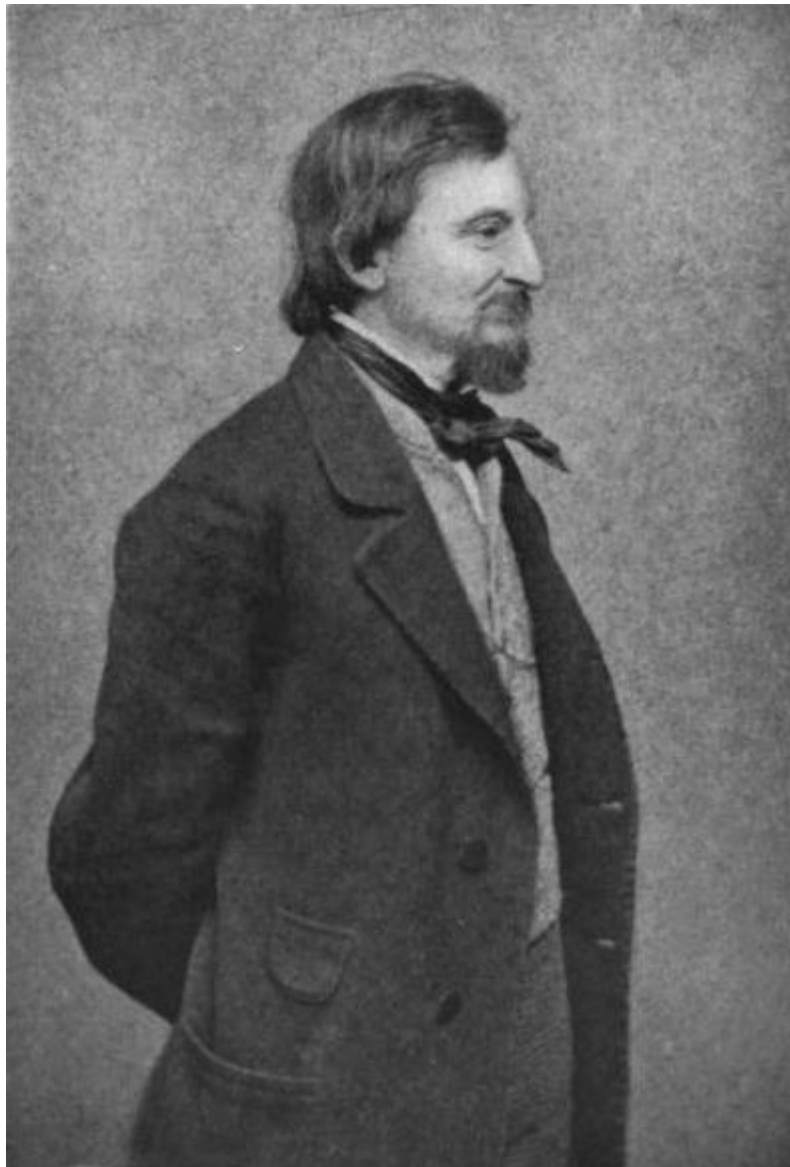
JOHN THOREAU, JR.
NEW BEDFORD MA



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1868

January 19, Sunday: Theophilus Brown wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), per [Anna Ricketson](#) and [Walton Ricketson](#)'s DANIEL RICKETSON AND HIS FRIENDS (Boston MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1902, pages 213-4):

It may interest you to hear of the last visit which I with Blake made at his [Thoreau's] house a short time before he died. We took our skates, and then the cars as far as Framingham. From some two miles north of Framingham we took to the river and skated nearly to Thoreau's house. We found him pretty low, but well enough to be up in his chair. He seemed glad to see us. Said we had not come much too soon. We spent some hours with him in his mother's parlor, which overlooks the river that runs all through his life. There was a beautiful snowstorm going on the while which I fancy inspired him, and his talk was up to the best I ever heard from him,—the same depth of earnestness and the same infinite depth of fun going on at the same time.

I wish I could recall some of the things he said. I do remember some few answers he made to questions from Blake. Blake asked him how the future seemed to him. "Just as uninteresting as ever," was his characteristic answer. A little while after he said, "You have been skating on this river; perhaps I am going to skate on some other." And again, "Perhaps I am going up country." He stuck to nature to the last.

He seemed to be in an exalted state of mind for a long time before his death. He said it was just as good to be sick as to be well,—just as good to have a poor time as a good time.



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1869

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s THE AUTUMN SHEAF: A COLLECTION OF MISCELLANEOUS POEMS. BY DANIEL RICKETSON, published at New Bedford by himself, a book of poems which included the one he had written about Thoreau's wild improvised dance on one memorable evening in his parlor:

The Improvised Dance

Like the Indian dance of old,
Far within the forest shade,
Showing forth the spirit bold
That no foeman e'er dismayed;

Like the dancing of the hours,
Tripping on with merry feet,
Triumphing o'er earthly power,
Yet with footsteps all must greet;

Like the Fauns and Satyrs, too,
Nimbly leaping in the grove,
Now unseen and then in view,
As among the trees they move;

Like the leaves by whirlwind tossed
In some forest's valley wide,
Scattered by the Autumn frost,
Whirling madly, side by side;

Thus, and still mysterious more,
Our philosopher did prance,
Skipping on our parlor floor
In his wild, improvised dance.

A copy of this would wind up in Special Collections at the Concord Free Public Library, inscribed "Miss Sophia E. Thoreau, / with the affectionate regards / of Danl. Ricketson. / Brooklawn, / April 24th 1869."

CONCORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1873

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)'s FACTORY BELL AND OTHER POEMS.



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1874

August 31, Monday: Calvin H. Greene noted that the grove of trees that [Henry Thoreau](#) had planted in his [beanfield](#) “looked quite sorry from a heartless fire that had run through them a short time ago.” [Ellery Channing](#) presented him with something [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) had presented to him, a paper-folder made from one of the shingles to [Thoreau's \(Emerson's\) shanty](#).



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1887

[The Reverend David Greene Haskins, D.D.](#)'s [RALPH WALDO EMERSON](#): HIS MATERNAL ANCESTORS
(Boston: Cupples, Upham, 1887):

On pages 121-2, curiously, this author confesses that “after conversing with Mr. Emerson for even a brief time, I always found myself able and inclined to adopt his voice and manner of speaking.” He, however, deflects this self-awareness onto [Henry Thoreau](#) primarily, mentioning himself only it would seem in passing. We are left, therefore, with the historical quandary of the extent to which this description is a description of Thoreau, versus the extent to which it is a description of Haskins. We should consider, in evaluating comments made by other commentators along this same line, the degree to which these comments are original, versus the degree to which they have been contaminated by a prior examination of this Haskins source:

I happened to meet Thoreau in Mr. Emerson's study at Concord.



I think it was the first time we had come together after leaving college. I was quite startled by the transformation that had taken place in him. His short figure and general cast of countenance were, of course, unchanged; but in his manners, in the tones and inflections of his voice, in his modes of expression, even in the hesitations and pauses of his speech, he had become the counterpart of Mr. Emerson. Mr. Thoreau's college voice bore no resemblance to Mr. Emerson's, and was so familiar to my ear that I could readily have identified him by it in the dark. I was so much struck with the change, and with the resemblance in the respects referred to between Mr. Emerson and Mr. Thoreau, that I remember to have taken the opportunity as they sat near together talking, of listening to their conversation with closed eyes, and to have been unable to determine with certainty which was speaking. It was a notable instance of unconscious imitation. Nevertheless it did not surpass my comprehension. I do not know to what subtle influence to ascribe it, but, after conversing with Mr. Emerson for even a brief time, I always found myself able and inclined to adopt his voice and manner of speaking.

RWE'S MOTHER'S FOLKS

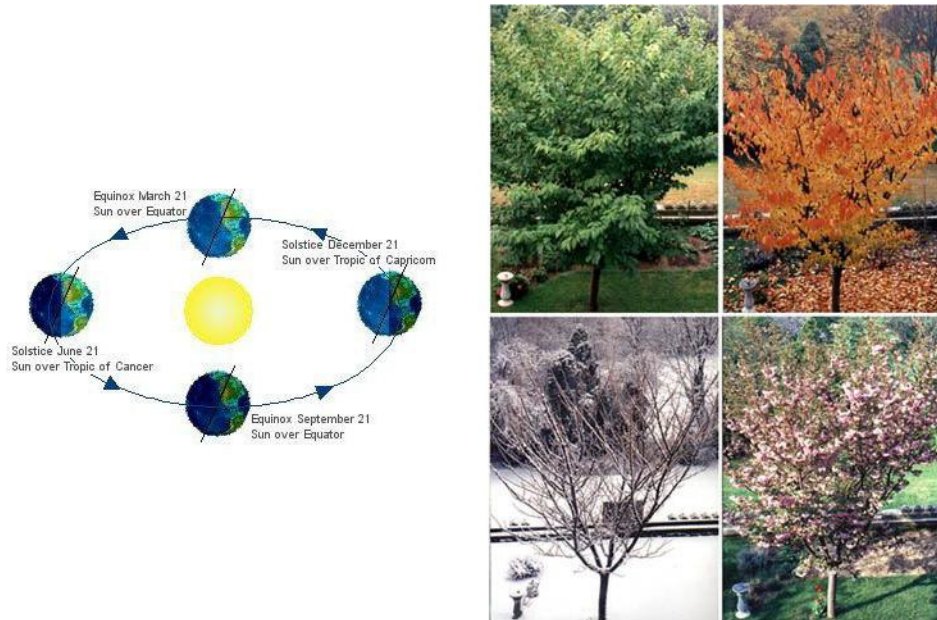


FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

Lawrence Buell has pointed out, on pages 221-32 of *THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMAGINATION: THOREAU, NATURE WRITING, AND THE FORMATION OF AMERICAN CULTURE*, that it is “[n]ot by chance” that Thoreau’s journal was first excerpted and published, “a generation after his death, as four season books.”



He traces the history of this sort of season book back through Susan Fenimore Cooper’s *RURAL HOURS* of 1850 and James Thompson’s *THE SEASONS* of 1726-1740 through Virgil’s *GEORGICS* and [China](#)’s *BOOK OF SONGS* and [Hesiod](#)’s *WORKS AND DAYS* even unto “the art of paleolithic cave drawings.” — An extended tradition, that. Buell even has the wit to characterize *WALDEN* here as “the most famous of all American season books,” and we observe again the oft-observed phenomenon I characterize as “flattening,” as the most excellent standard-bearers are portrayed as merely instances of one or another debased category in a categorization scheme. A necessary part of the business/busyness of academe is that each effort is to be subsumed to its genre. (They’ve got us surrounded — they’re not gonna get away this time!)

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) even attempted to imagine how his friend [Henry Thoreau](#), “A Shanty Man,” might have appeared had he reached the age of 70.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

INTRODUCTORY

To those who are not specially interested in the character of Thoreau, who regard him merely as a writer who has sometimes expressed original thoughts in a happy way, who has made some interesting observations of natural phenomena, and at times written beautifully about nature, it may seem hardly worth while to publish more of his journal. But from time to time I meet with or receive letters from persons who feel the same deep interest in him as an individual, in his thoughts and views of life, that I do, and who, I am sure, will eagerly welcome any additional expression of that individuality. Of course there are many such persons of whom I do not hear.

Thoreau himself regarded literature as altogether secondary to life, strange as this may seem to those who think of him as a hermit or dreamer, shunning what are commonly considered as among the most important practical realities, trade, politics, the church, the institutions of society generally. He took little part in these things because he believed they would stand in the way of his truest life, and to attain that, as far as possible, he knew to be his first business in the world. Even in a philanthropic point of view, any superficial benefit he might confer by throwing himself into the current of society would be as nothing compared with the loss of real power and influence which would result from disobedience to his highest instincts. "Ice that merely performs the office of a burning glass does not do its duty." It was not sufficient for him to entertain and express as an author "subtle thoughts," but he aspired rather "so to love wisdom as to live, according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust, "to solve some of the problems of life not only theoretically, but practically." It is the clear insight early creating a deep, persistent determination so to live, rather than his genius, which gives value to Thoreau's work, though this insight itself may well be regarded as the highest form of genius. It is the attitude one takes toward the world, far more than any abilities he may possess, which gives significance to his life. It has been well said by Brownlee Brown that "courage, piety, wit, zeal, learning, eloquence, avail nothing, unless the man is right."

As the young pass out of childhood, that foretaste or symbol of the kingdom of heaven, the expression of serene innocence is too apt to fade from their faces and the clouds to gather there, while it is considered a matter of course that each one should attach himself to the social machine. One becomes a lawyer, another a clergyman, another a physician, another a merchant, and the treasure which the childlike soul has lost is sought to be regained in some general and far-off way by society at large. But the burden which men thus readily take upon themselves in



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the common race for comfort, luxury, and social position is out of all proportion to their spiritual vitality, and so the truest life of individuals is being continually sacrificed to the Juggernaut of society. Men associate almost universally in the shallower and falser part of their natures, so that while institutions may seem to flourish, corruption is also gaining ground through the spiritual failure of individuals; finally the fabric falls, and a new form rises to go through the same round. The highest form of civilization at the present day seems to be an advance upon all that have preceded it, though in some particulars it plainly falls behind. Perhaps only by this alternate rising and falling can the human race advance. But the progress of individuals is the essential thing; only so far as that takes place will the real progress of the race follow, and those persons contribute most to this real progress who, stepping aside from the ordinary routine, give us by their lives and thoughts a new sense of the reality of what is best, of the ideal towards which all civilization must aim; who are so in love with truth, rectitude, and the beauty of the world, including in this, first of all, the original, unimpaired beauty of the human soul, that they have little care for material prosperity, social position, or public opinion. It was not merely nature in the ordinary sense, plants, animals, the landscape, etc., which attracted Thoreau. He is continually manifesting a human interest in natural objects, and thoughts of an ideal friendship are forever haunting him. Touching the highest and fairest relation of one human soul to another, I do not believe there can be found in literature, ancient or modern, anything finer, anything which comes closer home to our best experience, than what appears in Thoreau's writings generally, and especially in "Wednesday" of the "Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers."



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1889

[Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson](#)'s [EMERSON IN CONCORD](#) was published by Houghton, Mifflin.⁴¹

"Dr." Samuel Arthur Jones commented to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) about [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#): "I remembered to Sanborn Emerson's having asked him why he did not **participate** in the war he had done so much to precipitate. [Note: This may have something to do with Emerson later excluding Sanborn from participation in his deathbed ceremonial.] I tell you, God's sunlight shone through all the man's disguises. I saw he was a sham. He may pose in whatsoever attitude he can devise, but he can be only and always an Insincerity."

[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) wrote to [Henry S. Salt](#) about [Henry Thoreau](#):

He was a man of rare courage, physically and intellectually. In the way of the former, he arrested two young fellows with horse and wagon on the lonely road leading to his hermitage at Walden pond, who were endeavoring to trap a young woman on her way home, and took them to the village; whether they were brought to court I do not remember, and may not have given an exact account of the affair, but it is circumstantially correct.

41.  [Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson](#). [EMERSON IN CONCORD](#). Houghton, Mifflin, 1889



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1890

Professor [Bliss Perry](#)'s THE BROUGHTON HOUSE.

(NOT WORTH YOUR WHILE)

According to Lawrence Buell, during this decade [Henry Thoreau](#) would be considered just another of those cranky [hermits](#) in just another of those secluded nooks (the evidence for this is pages 146, 153, and 479 of THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMAGINATION: THOREAU, NATURE WRITING, AND THE FORMATION OF AMERICAN CULTURE, as instanced below). The Professor alleges, in addition, that by this point in time [John Burroughs](#) had become "aware of Thoreau's shadow," aware, that is, that in resorted to a cabin in a secluded nook, "Slabsides," even though his cabin and its locale were rather unlike Henry's shack in the Walden woods, he was running a risk of becoming like his mentor a cranky hermit:

[O]ne of WALDEN's first enthusiastic readers, [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), had serendipitously built a cabin retreat for himself on his [New Bedford](#) property. Thoreau and Ricketson were but two variants of a long-publicized type of American eccentric: the cranky hermit, who for a variety of possible reasons retreated to his (or her) secluded nook. [Continuing in an endnote: For an amusing bestiary of profiles, see Carl Sifakis, AMERICAN ECCENTRICS (New York and Bicester, England: [Facts on File](#), 1984). His roster includes Francis Phyle, "the hermit of Mount Holly"; Sarah Bishop, "the atrocity hermitess"; Albert Large, "the hermit amidst the wolves"; and many more.]... [[Henry Thoreau](#)] elevates the Horatian and Virgilian love of rural retirement, a neoclassical motif of great resonance to the Anglo-American squierarchy, a motif on which Thoreau had written a college essay, to the level of a lifework. ...Some readers will resist this side of Thoreau's genius.... Thus we normalize the Walden sojourn by imagining it as an efficient way to get a lot of writing done, or normalize WALDEN by positing a firm aesthetic structure or ideational commitment. This tends to suppress both the worst and the best about Thoreau.... In the early 1870s, John Muir probably built his shack over a Yosemite sawmill without thinking about Thoreau, even though he already had begun to read him. By the 1890s, [John Burroughs](#) was far more aware of Thoreau's shadow, often evincing a prickly, hypersensitive anxiety of influence; but Burroughs probably was not copying Thoreau when he built his cabin, Slabsides. In modern times, however, the commemoration of Muir and Burroughs as naturist prophets has been cross-pollinated by the myth of a Thoreauvian tradition.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1897

May 7, Friday: On this anniversary of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s death, [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) went back to where he had written on May 7, 1862 in his journal "An irreparable loss; one of the best and truest of men" and added the following notation:

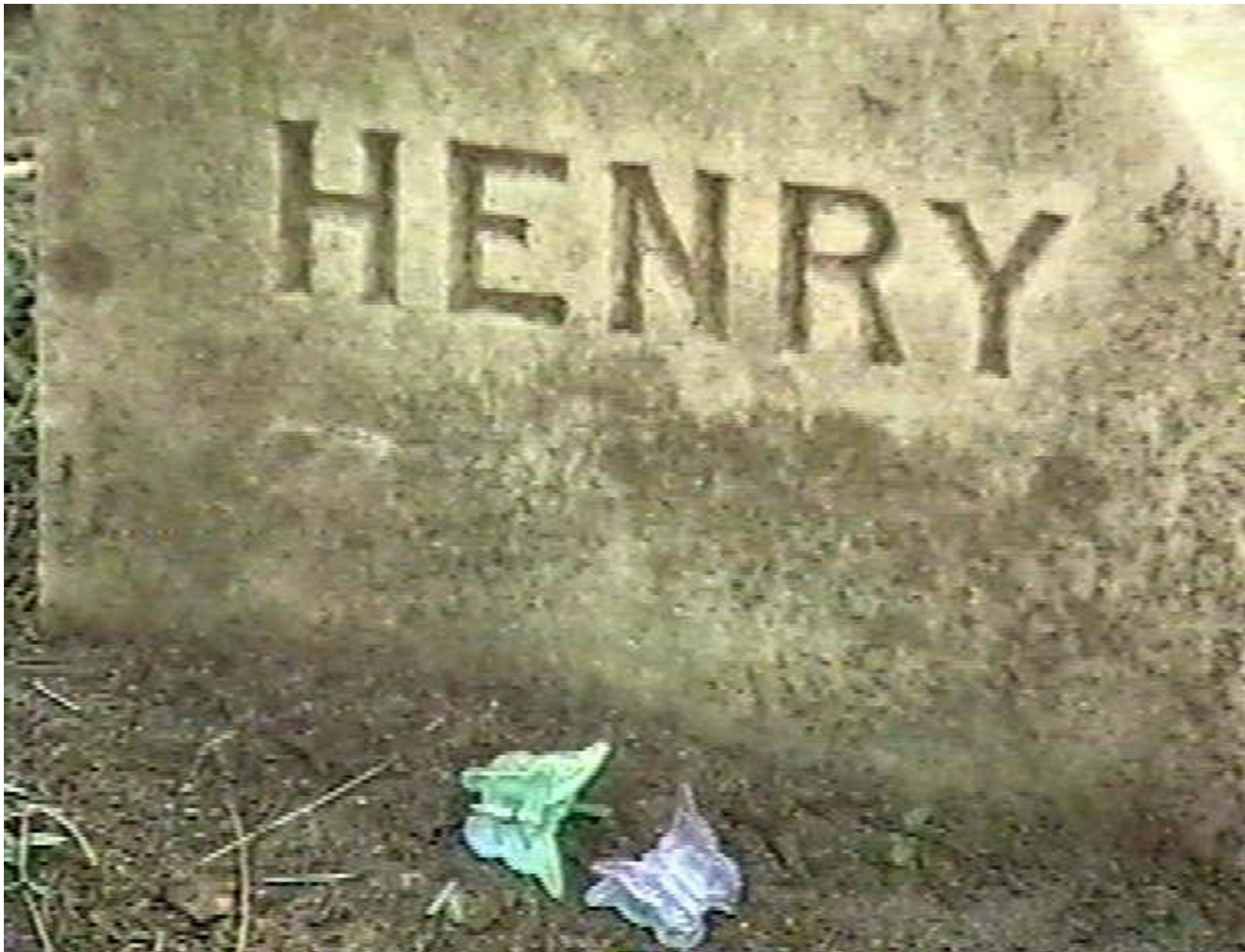


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Non omnis moriar — May 7, 1897.





DANIEL RICKETSON

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1898

July 16: [Daniel Ricketson](#) died.



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1902

DANIEL RICKETSON AND HIS FRIENDS. LETTERS POEMS SKETCHES ETC. EDITED BY HIS DAUGHTER AND SON ANNA AND WALTON RICKETSON WITH ILLUSTRATIONS (Boston MA: Houghton Mifflin, pages 11-12, 252-3), in which the actually gray-eyed Thoreau was said to have “full blue eye[s]”:

VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES

As a writer Thoreau was sententious rather than elegant or graceful; his style was his own and well-adapted to his subject matter. Originality, perhaps more than any other quality, marked his thought; yet at times he uttered old truths in a new dress so well adapted to his object of conveying practical ideas, that they have the charm of novelty and are calculated to edify the attentive reader. More than any other writer perhaps of his time does he require a careful reading to fully arrive at the pith of his matter, which is often marked by a subtlety that he appears to have chosen to conceal a too glaring expression of his meaning. He could, however, at will execute his thought in the most graceful and poetic manner, and a judicious selection of these passages from his work would form a volume of remarkable beauty.



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM



My first interview with him was so peculiar that I will venture to state it. The season was winter, a snow had lately fallen, and I was engaged in shovelling the accumulated mass from the entrance to my house, when I perceived a man walking towards me bearing an umbrella in one hand and a leather travelling-bag in the other. So unlike my ideal Thoreau, whom I had fancied, from the robust nature of his mind and habits of life, to be a man of unusual vigor and size, that I did not suspect, although I had expected him in the morning, that the slight, quaint-looking person before me was the Walden philosopher. There are few persons who had previously read his works that were not disappointed by his personal appearance. As he came near to me I gave him the usual salutation, and supposing him to be either a pedler or some way-traveller, he at once remarked, "You don't know me." The truth flashed on my mind, and concealing my own surprise I at once took him by the hand and led him to the room already prepared for him, feeling a kind of disappointment – a disappointment, however, which soon passed off, and never again obtruded itself to the philosopher's disadvantage. In fact, I soon began to see that Nature had dealt kindly by him, and that this apparently slender personage was physically capable of enduring far more than the ordinary class of men, although he had then begun to show signs of failure of strength in his knees.... Many a long ramble have I taken with him, and although I am a pretty good walker, he usually quite fatigued me before he had accomplished his object, perhaps the pursuit of some rare plant. In a boat of his own construction I have sailed with him up and down the slow gliding Concord River, and found him a good boatman, both in sailing and sculling. Once, during a winter visit to him, we took a tramp through the snow to White Pond, some two or three miles beyond Walden, then surrounded by heavy wood, and frequented by huntsmen. He was fond of hardy enterprises, and few of his companions could compete with him. In fact I have heard that he quite tired out an Indian guide, on one of his excursions in Maine. I do not remember of ever seeing him laugh outright, but he was ever ready to smile at anything that pleased him; and I never knew him to betray any tender emotion except on one occasion, when he was narrating to me the death of his only brother, John Thoreau, from lockjaw, strong symptoms of which, from his sympathy with the sufferer, he himself experienced. At this time his voice was choked, and he shed tears, and went to the door for air. The subject was of course dropped, and never recurred to again.

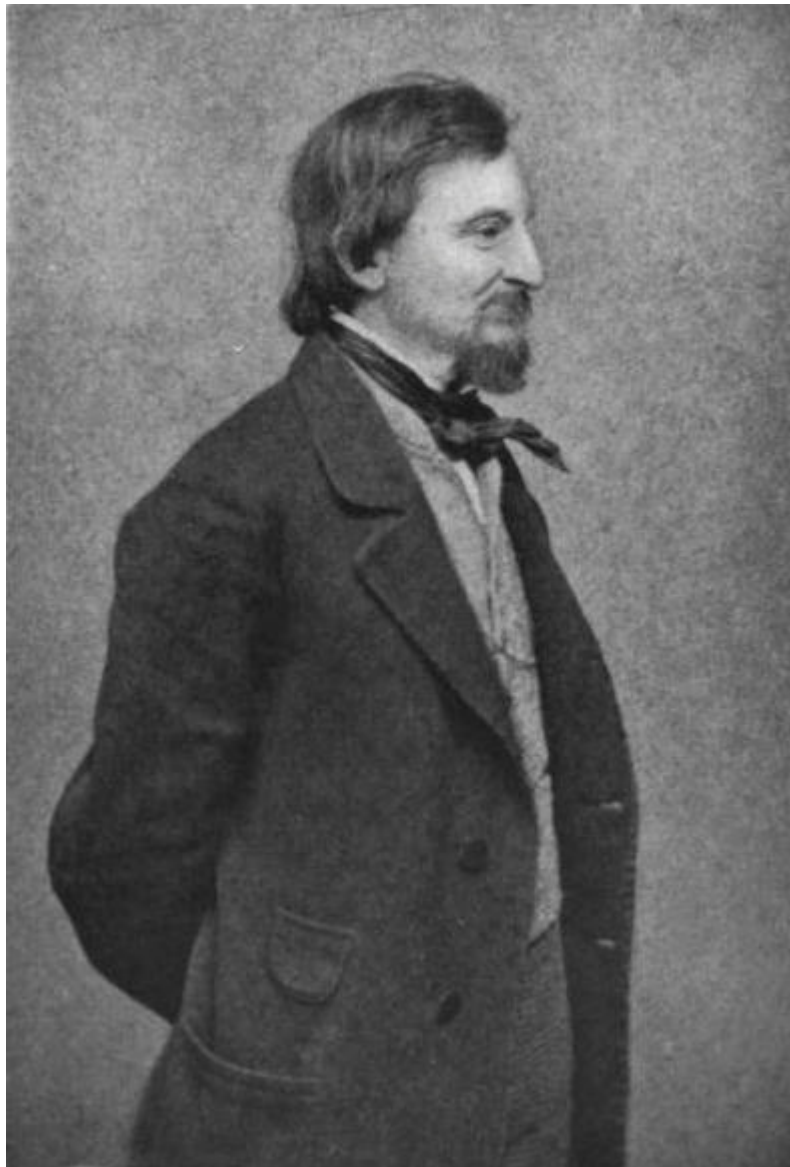
FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON



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1903

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the first of [New Bedford](#)'s Polish parishes, was established.

[Daniel Ricketson](#)'s NEW BEDFORD OF THE PAST.

VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES





FRIEND RICKETSON

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1909

[Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#)'s collection of essays CARLYLE'S LAUGH AND OTHER SURPRISES.

[Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), in his RECOLLECTIONS OF SEVENTY YEARS BY F.B. SANBORN OF CONCORD IN TWO VOLUMES, identified the "tailoress" of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s "Economy" chapter as [Mary Minot](#) of Concord but neglected to specify which one of the three persons of that name in the town he had intended:

WALDEN: When I ask for a garment of a particular form, my tailoress tells me gravely, "They do not make them so now," not emphasizing the "They" at all, as if she quoted an authority as impersonal as the Fates, and I find it difficult to get made what I want, simply because she cannot believe that I mean what I say, that I am so rash. When I hear this oracular sentence, I am for a moment absorbed in thought, emphasizing to myself each word separately that I may come at the meaning of it, that I may find out by what degree of consanguinity **They** are related to **me**, and what authority they may have in an affair which affects me so nearly; and, finally, I am inclined to answer her with equal mystery, and without any more emphasis on the "they," -"It is true, they did not make them so recently, but they do now." Of what use this measuring of me if she does not measure my character, but only the breadth of my shoulders, as it were a peg to hang the coat on? We worship not the Graces, nor the Parcaë, but Fashion. She spins and weaves and cuts with full authority. The head monkey at Paris puts on a traveller's cap, and all the monkeys in America do the same. I sometimes despair of getting any thing quite simple and honest done in this world by the help of men. They would have to be passed through a powerful press first, to squeeze their old notions out of them, so that they would not soon get upon their legs again, and then there would be some one in the company with a maggot in his head, hatched from an egg deposited there nobody knows when, for not even fire kills these things, and you would have lost your labor. Nevertheless, we will not forget that some Egyptian wheat is said to have been handed down to us by a mummy.

EGYPT

MARY MINOT



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

[Ellery Channing](#) took this opportunity to record, on pages 400-1 of Sanborn's Volume II, that:



He [[Henry Thoreau](#)] was very reticent of biographical recollections; yet I recall that he well remembered a certain field, through which we walked in Concord, a good distance from the village, to which he used to drive his cow, with bare feet, like the other village boys. He did not dwell on the past. I am confident he rarely read a book over twice, and he loved not to repeat a story after its first freshness. His talent was onward, vigorous, in the moment, which was perfectly filled, and then he went to the next with great speed.

But I doubt not he loved to linger in mind over the old familiar things of boyhood; and he occasionally let fall some memory of the "Mill Dam" when he was a boy, and of the pond behind it, now a meadow. Of the many houses in which he lived (for his was a very moving family), I heard him rarely speak: that one, now torn away, at the corner of the slaughter-house street (Walden Road); another, where the Library now stands (the Parkman house), farther towards the railroad; and still another which had been "fixed over" for more aspiring villagers than the Irish, who succeeded the Thoreaus in the Parkman house. Three of these mansions he passed in his daily walks to the Post Office, a duty he fulfilled after the death of his father, for the benefit of his family, -for he was a martinet in the family service,- but I never heard him say more than, "I used to live in that house," or, "There it was that so-and-so took place"; thus refreshing his memory by the existing locality. In the year before he built for himself at Walden his only true house, he assisted in making a house in that western part of the village



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called "Texas," not far from the River. To this spot he was always much attached; it commended an excellent view toward the southwest, was retired, and he had planted a small orchard there.

Franklin Benjamin Sanborn recollected on page 44 of Volume I that:

Gov. Banks's grand muster in 1859 ... was the opportunity for a jest by Thoreau at the expense of the State authorities. A friend met him on his way from his mother's house to the Village, and said, "I hear the Governor comes to Concord today." "Yes," said the philosopher, "I am going down to buy a lock for our front-door." "But the Legislature are coming too." "Indeed?" said Thoreau, "then I must put a lock on our back-door."

— and on page 320 of Volume II that:

It once happened that Alcott and Thoreau spent some days together at Hillside, and in their walks through the surrounding wood encountered the remains of a dead hog — his white, firm jawbone, and his bristles quite untouched by decay. "You see," said Thoreau to his vegetarian friend, "here is something that succeeded, beside spirituality, and thought, — here is the tough child of nature," — and they fell into high converse respecting the bristly darling of the Great Mother.

— and on page 397 of Volume II that:

The Ricketsons said, when asked about the visit of Thoreau, Alcott, and Channing at their New Bedford house (Brooklawn) in April, 1857, that Thoreau sang and danced there to the accompaniment of Mrs. Ricketson's piano. Mr. Alcott, then giving Conversations in New Bedford, visited the Ricketsons for two or three weeks. Thoreau went there April 2d, and returned April 15th; but was at Plymouth and elsewhere part of the time. Channing, then living in New Bedford, came out to dine or take tea at Brooklawn several times a week. On this particular evening, Daniel Ricketson and Channing, after tea, had gone out to the "shanty," where the friends smoked and talked, while Alcott and Thoreau remained with Mrs. R. and Walton. Anna was taking her usual walk on the verandas, before going to bed. As Mrs. R. struck up a lively Scotch air ("The Campbells are Comin'"), Thoreau felt moved to try a dance, and did so, — keeping time to the music perfectly, but executing some steps more like Indian dances than the usual ball-room figures. Anna was so amused at the sight, which she saw through the window, that she ran and called her father and Channing, who came and looked on, — Alcott sitting on the sofa, meanwhile, and watching the dance. Thoreau continued the performance for five or ten minutes; it was earnest and spontaneous, but not particularly graceful.

FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON

ELLERY CHANNING



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

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1910

Anna Ricketson and Walton Ricketson issued DANIEL RICKETSON: AUTOBIOGRAPHIC AND MISCELLANEOUS.



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1923

August 11, Saturday: [Walton Ricketson](#) died. He had never married.



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

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1927

June 23, Thursday: [Anna Ricketson](#) died. She had never married.



FRIEND RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1936

November: Any number of readers have been thrown off stride by the manner in which [Henry Thoreau](#) critiqued a hapless family of [Irish](#) ecological refugees in the “Baker Farm” chapter of [WALDEN](#), and have drawn an adverse conclusion as to Thoreau’s general sociability. But consider, this book had begun with a pointed discussion of household economy, of aims and manners of living. The record is more complex than what is contained in just this one chapter, in regard to Thoreau’s attitudes toward and dealings with people, common or otherwise, and such a mere excerpt should not be tendentiously taken out of its evocative context to make a point that could only be sustained by carefully disregarding other evidence. What comes to light in the aggregate, not only on the basis of Thoreau’s own reports but also on the basis of the testimonies of the many who knew him, is that he was a gentle and considerate man whose dealings with common people were predominantly marked by neighborly interest and fellow feeling. Although [WALDEN](#) happens to have become the primary repository of his cultural legacy, in fact Thoreau didn’t spend his whole life as a youth at Walden Pond, or crowing about that early experiment in living, or condemning others for failing to live as skillfully as he himself lived. He had found that he had several more lives to live, and had been in the process of living them, when snuffed by TB in 1862 — howevermuch the popular imagination seems intent upon containing this changing person at Walden Pond and in the years 1845-1846. There was so much more, and part of this is the nature and extent of Thoreau’s relations with his neighbors and passing strangers (including runaway slaves and poor Irishmen) during the years that he was no longer elaborating his early manuscript A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS while in residence at Walden Pond.

MEN OF CONCORD AS PORTRAYED IN THE JOURNAL OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, ed. [Francis Henry Allen](#) with illustrations by [Newell Convers Wyeth](#), issued in this year, is simply a 240-page compilation of excerpts from the JOURNAL in which Thoreau is allowed to describe and discuss, and report his walks and talks with, various of his neighbors, as a corrective for this general misperception of Thoreau’s neighborliness:

Many readers, thinking of [Henry Thoreau](#) as the stanch individualist, the apostle of wild nature, the rebel against man-made institutions, the “hermit of Walden,” forget that he had any but the most formal relations with human beings outside of his own family. And yet his JOURNAL records many and many a conversation with fellow-townsmen, and its readers encounter much shrewd and understanding comment on the ways and manners of this and that individual or group. He talked familiarly with farmers, hunters, and fishermen — as familiarly as he did with his friend [Ellery Channing](#), with [Edward Sherman Hoar](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), and H.G.O. Blake. [Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson](#), in his

HENRY DAVID THOREAU AS REMEMBERED BY A YOUNG FRIEND

has testified to the regard in which Thoreau’s humbler neighbors held him.... [A]fter speaking of Thoreau’s propensity for taking the other side in conversation “for the joy of the intellectual fencing,” Dr. Emerson goes on to say: “Thoreau held this trait in check with women and children, and with humble people who were no match for him. With them he was simple, gentle, friendly,

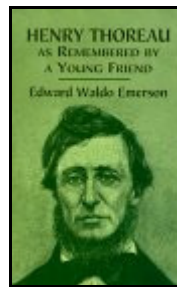


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FRIEND RICKETSON

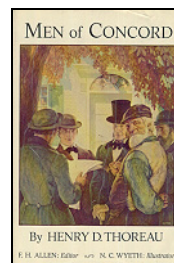
GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

and amusing." "His simple, direct speech and look and bearing were such that no plain, common man would put him down in his books as a fool, or visionary, or helpless, as the scholar, writer, or reformer would often be regarded by him.... He loved to talk with all kinds and conditions of men if they had no hypocrisy or pretense about them, and though high in his standard of virtue, and most severe with himself, could be charitable to the failings of humble fellow-men." A man who lived on a farm and had worked in the Thoreaus' [plumbago](#)-mill told Dr. Emerson that Thoreau was the best friend he ever had. "He was always straight in his ways: and was very particular to be agreeable.... When I saw him crossing my field I always wanted to go and have a talk with him.... He liked to talk as long as you did, and what he said was new."



Although the matter was not publicized, MEN OF CONCORD's pen-and-ink drawings had been done by his son Andrew Wyeth, rather than by the painter himself. Wyeth hoped to induce the [Concord Free Public Library](#) to pay him \$5,000 for the entire set of a dozen original painted panels that had been used to create this book, but that was something that would not come about. The paintings would be sold individually on the general market, and eventually the library would come into possession of five of them, "The Carpenters Repairing Hubbard's Bridge," "Thoreau and Miss Mary Emerson," "Johnny and His Woodchuck-Skin Cap," "Fishing Through the Ice," and "The Muskrat Hunters...." Other of the paintings would go to:

- pen-and-ink drawings — privately held
- jacket illustration — Brandywine River Museum



- endpaper illustration — Canajoharie Library and Art Museum
- "Mr. Alcott in the Granary Burying Ground" — Boston Athenaeum
- "A Man of a Certain Probity..." — privately held
- "Barefooted Brooks Clark Building Wall" — privately held
- "Thoreau and the Three Reformers" — privately held
- "Barefooted Brooks Clark Building Wall" — privately held

[HDT](#)

[WHAT?](#)

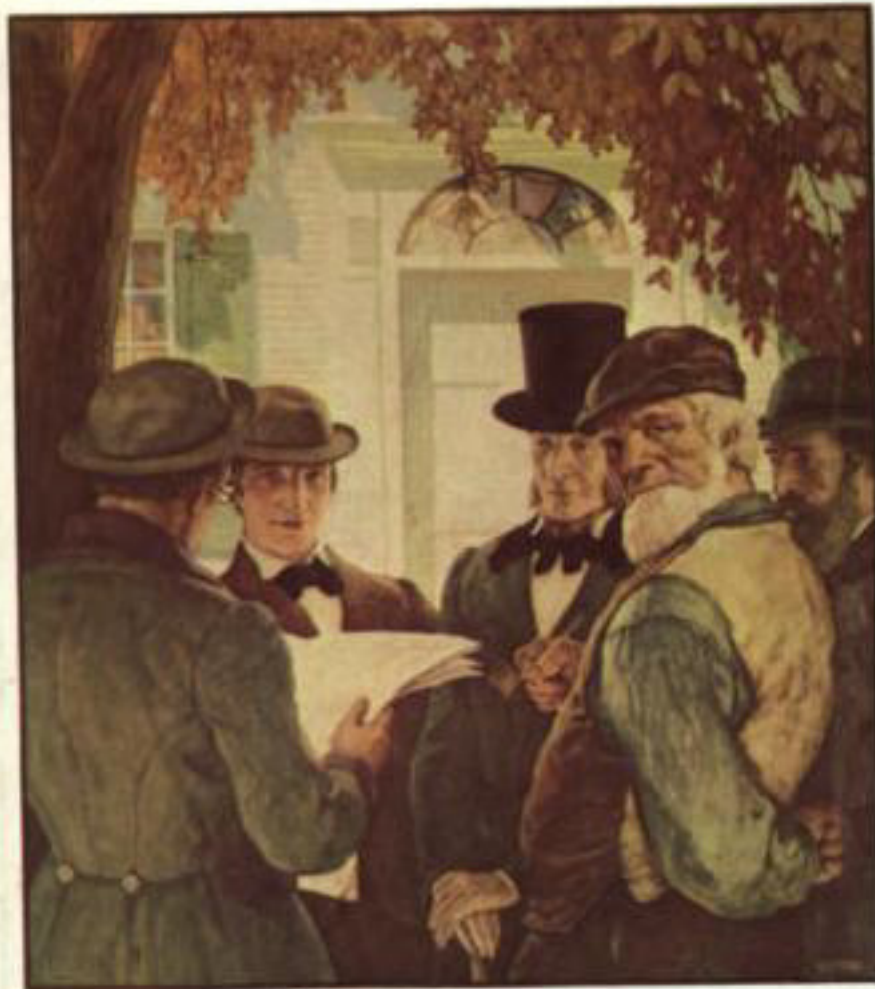
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MEN of CONCORD



By HENRY D. THOREAU

F. H. ALLEN: *Editor* N. C. WYETH: *Illustrator*



DANIEL RICKETSON

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

- “Thoreau Fishing” — location unknown

According to the Preface, “Wyeth was a lifelong admirer of Thoreau, whose spirit has become a part of him. His work for this book, therefore, is a tribute from an intellectual disciple to an author who has had an important formative influence on his character and work.” One of the pieces of material selected is from the journal of February 13, 1841:

A Lean Farm



February 13, 1841: My neighbor says that his hill-farm is poor stuff and “only fit to hold the world together.” He deserves that God should give him better for so brave a treatment of his gifts, instead of humbly putting up therewith. It is a sort of stay, or gore or gusset, and he will not be blinded by modesty or gratitude, but sees it for what it is; knowing his neighbor’s fertile land, he calls his by its right name. But perhaps my farmer forgets that his lean soil has sharpened his wits. This is a crop it was good for, and beside, you see the heavens at a lesser angle from the hill than from the vale.



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1953

September: Earl J. Dias's "[Daniel Ricketson](#) and [Henry Thoreau](#)" appeared in The New England Quarterly.

VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1962

[Daniel Ricketson](#)'s 2d shanty, the larger board-and-batten one on his "Brooklawn" estate, was still standing in [New Bedford](#)'s Brooklawn Park, well over a century old (although it would be demolished at some point after this year).



FRIEND RICKETSON

DANIEL RICKETSON

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1998

July 1, Wednesday: The newly constituted Northern [Ireland](#) Assembly named David Trimble as First Minister. That night 10 Roman Catholic churches were torched in the province.

Eternity's Sunrise for soprano, flute, oboe, lute, handbells and strings by John Tavener to words of Blake was performed for the initial time, in St. Andrew's Church, Holborn.

Tempo e tempi, a song for soprano, oboe, clarinet, violin, and cello by Elliott Carter, was performed for the initial time, at the Pontino Festival, Castelo Caetani, Sermoneta, Italy.

In [New Bedford](#), a newspaper article "Memorial honors city's first historian":



NEW BEDFORD — Mayor Frederick M. Kalisz Jr. joined with city councilors to dedicate a memorial to [Daniel Ricketson](#), New Bedford's first historian, at Brooklawn Park last Sunday.

It was at Brooklawn, Ricketson's former estate, that the history of New Bedford was written and published by the author in 1858. It was also at Brooklawn that the leading writers, philosophers and abolitionists of 19th-century America sought the hospitality and friendship of Ricketson and his family. Such illustrious figures as [Henry Thoreau](#), [Ralph Waldo Emerson](#), A. Bronson Alcott and others frequented the estate. Collectively, they became known as the Shanty Society.

Despite the luxurious mansion which Ricketson had built at Brooklawn, he and guests would retreat to a 12-by-14-foot board-and-batten shanty located near his house. It was there that Ricketson wrote two books of poetry as well as the city's history.

Since the fall of 1995, cousins Michael and Douglas Walsh, working as the Ricketson Commission, have



DANIEL RICKETSON

FRIEND RICKETSON

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researched the life of the historian. Michael, a New Bedford High School and Newbury College history teacher, discovered Ricketson's original letters in the Whaling Museum and used them to learn more about the local figure. The memorial is the result of the his endeavor and that of the New Bedford City Council Ad Hoc Committee chaired by Councilor George Rogers, the Mayor's office, and the New Bedford Park Board. "People have definitely shown an interest in Ricketson," said Michael Walsh. "The dedication was well-attended. We found that there were a lot of senior citizens who came and spoke to us about their memories of Brooklawn." Students at Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational-Technical High School will begin constructing an actual shanty where the former shanty once stood, at which time the memorial plaque will be placed on or near it.

Study the 2d edition of [Daniel Ricketson](#)'s history of [New Bedford](#), Massachusetts:

NEW BEDFORD OF THE PAST

"MAGISTERIAL HISTORY" IS FANTASIZING: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY



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

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



Prepared: December 7, 2014



DANIEL RICKETSON

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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



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



FRIEND RICKETSON

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

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