



## MARCUS AND REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

1810

→ October 21, Sunday: [Marcus Spring](#) was born in Northbridge, Massachusetts to Adolphus Spring (1772-1847) and Lydia Taft (1772-1838). He would attend Uxbridge Academy.

1811

→ June 8, Saturday: According to an article in the [Cobbett's Weekly Political Register](#) of London, England, [Lieutenant John Thoreau](#) was among the wounded of the "1st Batt. 40th Foot." (This would not have been a 2d wound, but another report of the same one. Again, there was no indication of the severity of his wound, and his subsequent career would indicate that although it might have put him on the sidelines for awhile, it not have been all that bad.)

[Rebecca Buffum](#) was born, daughter of Friend [Arnold Buffum](#).

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

*7th day 8 of 6 Mo// Again much occupied both in trade & in the settlement of Daniel Holloways concerns -*

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RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1831

→ Horace Greeley arrived in New-York.

A revision of [Salma Hale](#)'s 1804 grammar was published in New-York as A NEW GRAMMAR OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

[Marcus Spring](#) relocated to New-York to become a cotton merchant. He would make himself a majority owner of George Kephart's slave-trading firm of Alexandria, Virginia.

The University of the City of New York became New York University (NYU).

Gramercy Park, designed by Samuel Ruggles as a private space, opened between 20th and 22d Street and between 3d and Park Avenue.



**REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING**

**MARCUS SPRING**

**1836**



October 16, Sunday: [Marcus Spring](#) got married with [Rebecca Buffum](#).

1846

August 1, Saturday: [Margaret Fuller](#) embarked on the steamer *Cambria* for England and Europe, to be foreign correspondent for the [New-York Herald Tribune](#) at \$10.<sup>00</sup> per dispatch (her traveling companions were [Marcus and Rebecca Buffum Spring](#)).<sup>1</sup>

As reported in the [Concord Freeman](#), the Woman’s Anti-Slavery Society of Concord held in Walden Woods its annual commemoration of the 1834 emancipation of the slaves of the British West Indies by [William Wilberforce](#). According to the paper, the group included the anti-paganist Reverend [William Henry Channing](#) of Boston:

Rev. W.H. Channing of Boston..., Mr. [Lewis Hayden](#), formerly a slave, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Esq. and Rev. Mr. Skinner, the Universalist clergyman of this place. Rev. Mr. Channing, in his address, if we are correctly informed, went for the formation of a new Union and a new Constitution, and dissolution of all fellowship with slaveholding!



In all likelihood, [Henry Thoreau](#)’s recent night in the local lockup for refusing to pay his poll tax was not a topic of conversation at this celebration in and near Thoreau’s shanty. We note that there is a comment in [WALDEN](#) that reflects the subject of this meeting at the pond:

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

[WALDEN](#): I sometimes wonder that we can be so frivolous, I may almost say, as to attend to the gross but somewhat foreign form of servitude called Negro Slavery, there are so many keen and subtle masters that enslave both north and south. It is hard to have a southern overseer; it is worse to have a northern one; but worst of all when you are the slave-driver of yourself. Talk of a divinity in man! Look at the teamster on the highway, wending to market by day or night; does any divinity stir within him? His highest duty to fodder and water his horses! What is his destiny to him compared with the shipping interests? Does not he drive for Squire Make-a-stir? How godlike, how immortal, is he? See how he cowers and sneaks, how vaguely all the day he fears, not being immortal nor divine, but the slave and prisoner of his own opinion of himself, a fame won by his own deeds. Public opinion is a weak tyrant compared with our own private opinion. What a man thinks of himself, that it is which determines, or rather indicates, his fate. Self-emancipation even in the West Indian provinces of the fancy and imagination, -what Wilberforce is there to bring that about?

PEOPLE OF WALDEN

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

1. After the Springs returned to America, they and Fuller would continue to be dear friends and would keep up a correspondence. Presumably it was through the Springs that Walt Whitman kept informed of Fuller’s activities: “I never met Margaret Fuller, but I knew much about her those years.”



**REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING**

**MARCUS SPRING**

Although we have no direct evidence that Thoreau was present, the consensus opinion of Thoreau scholars is that, most definitely, he would have been present for this occasion.

**1850**

In about this year [Marcus Spring](#) became an investor in the [North American Phalanx](#) of Red Bank, which had established the 1st commercial cannery in New Jersey to pioneer the commercial milling of hominy.

A New-York-to-Boston rail route through Connecticut was opened.

400 to 500 sailing sloops were in regular service on the Hudson River between Albany and New-York.

1852

The expanded edition of the Reverend James Freeman Clarke’s 1844 THE DISCIPLES’ HYMN BOOK: A COLLECTION OF HYMNS FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEVOTION (Boston: Horace B. Fuller) included ten of [Ellen Sturgis Hooper](#)’s poems.

[Marcus Spring](#) purchased 268 acres of land on Raritan Bay in New Jersey about a mile outside Perth Amboy and, with 30 other families dissatisfied with the religious pluralism of the [North American Phalanx](#), established the Raritan Bay Union, a competing utopian community that was to embrace a fixed liturgy and would resemble more closely the Religious Union of Association founded in Boston in 1847 by the Reverend [William Henry Channing](#).

Phillips, Sampson, and Company of Boston was publishing the two-volume MEMOIRS OF MARGARET FULLER OSSOLI, the best-selling biography of that decade, as expurgated and altered by good ol’ boys [Waldo Emerson](#), the Reverend Clarke, and the Reverend [Channing](#). Opined Horace Greeley:<sup>2</sup>

*Margaret’s book is going to **sell!** I tell you it has the real stuff in it.*



(And [Margaret Fuller](#)’s non-literary remains were lying in a packing crate in a shallow unmarked grave on Coney Island.)

2. The good ’ol boys could allow her Via Sacra to continue to swarm, her temples to glitter, her hills to tower, her togated procession to sweep, and her warriors to display remorseless beaks, but they could not allow her to describe the grand old emperors of Rome as having been “drunk with blood and gold.” What was this? –A cat may look at a king but a woman mayn’t critique a Caesar? **Go figure.**

1853

George Draper came to [Hopedale](#). There were at this period 229 residents in the community (76 members, 22 probationers, 79 family dependents, and 52 others).



Two members of the community were discovered to be committing adultery, and fled, finding their refuge at the free-loving Modern Times community on Long Island which at the time housed fifty to a hundred swingers. Another member of the [Hopedale](#) community, under attack for not having exposed this pair of adulterers, fled to the [North American Phalanx](#), an intentional community on the shore of Raritan Bay in New Jersey across from New-York.

In a dispute over the women's rights and abolitionist movements and in regard to a controversial plan to add a religious affiliation to the community, a portion of the membership of this North American Phalanx seceded to form the [Raritan Bay Union](#). Friend [Rebecca Buffum Spring](#) and Friend [Marcus Spring](#) joined with this group on a large plot of land overlooking the ocean along the northern shore of Raritan Bay. Inspired by the French socialist Charles Fourier, this Union would seek to correct social inequalities and to conserve both labor and money through collective work. Members might choose to live communally or in private residences, but all would share as much in the work of the community as in its social events. The Union would establish a boarding school that would be a pioneer in co-education. Girl students would be encouraged to speak in public, engage in sports, and act in plays, all activities that were in other schools restricted to the boys. Friend [Sarah Moore Grimké](#) and her little sister [Angelina Emily Grimké](#) would teach in the school, which would be headmastered by [Theodore Dwight Weld](#), Angelina's husband. Several other noted reformers would teach and lecture at the school. The school would operate until about 1861, but we simply don't know how long the Union itself endured. We do have an engraving dating to 1858 that shows the large stone phalanstery which

MARCUS SPRING

REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING



## REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

## MARCUS SPRING

by that time had come to house the school, and the living quarters for students and for community members, and feature a common dining room in the middle section of the building as well as work rooms, shops, a laundry, and of course the communal kitchen. (At the left of the picture is the private home of Rebecca and Marcus Spring, who chose not to reside in this phalanstery.)



However, at this early point the site consisted of merely two existing farmhouses. Members of the community were referred to as associates, and all members were able to vote on the membership status of others. For most of the history of this social experiment it would amount to a population of 120-150. Prospective members resided in the community for 30 days before being offered a one-year provisional membership. At the completion of the year of provisional membership, upon the approval of the community, they would become full members.

**COMMUNITARIANISM**



## MARCUS SPRING

## REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

February 14, Monday: [Charles Louis Flint](#) began work as the Secretary of the newly formed Massachusetts Board of Agriculture. Immediately he set to work, and issued THE AGRICULTURE OF MASSACHUSETTS, AS SHOWN IN RETURNS OF THE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES, 1853, by [Charles L. Flint](#), Massachusetts State Board Of Agriculture.

A certificate of incorporation filed for the [Raritan Bay Union](#) indicates that it had been capitalized at \$500,000 and would begin business with \$6,000 divided into 240 shares at \$25.00 each. George B. Arnold, Clement O. Read, Albert O. Read, Theodore Weld and Sarah M. Grimke would be the stockholders. The Board of Trustees was to be made up of George B. Arnold as President, Clement O. Read, [Marcus Spring](#), George B. Arnold, Joseph L. Pennock and Sarah Tyndale as Directors, Clement, Read as treasurer, and Angelina G. Weld as secretary. Corporate existence was to begin March 1st.

1856

Early September: [Bronson Alcott](#) set [Henry Thoreau](#) up for a large surveying job with Friend [Marcus Spring](#) of a colony for [Hicksite Quakers](#) expelled by their meetings, near Perth Amboy, New Jersey across the water from Staten Island.

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](http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm)

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## REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

## MARCUS SPRING

This was the colony in which [Theodore Dwight Weld](#) and his wife [Angelina Emily Grimké Weld](#) and her sister



[Sarah Moore Grimké](#) had started their [Eagleswood](#) School, financed in part by the Mott family, and this was the school in which Ellen Wright, a niece of Friend [Lucretia Mott](#) who later married a son of William Lloyd Garrison, was educated, as well as other Wright children.

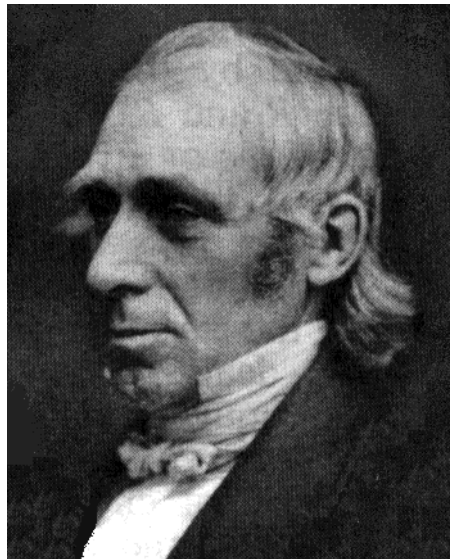


ANGELINA EMILY GRIMKÉ SARAH MOORE GRIMKÉ

## MARCUS SPRING

## REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

Henry Thoreau took the train to Fitchburg and from there walked to Westminster; took the train to Brattleboro VT; explored the Connecticut River and Mount Wantastiquet and investigated plants and animals in Vermont; took the train to Bellows Falls; climbed Fall Mountain; took a wagon to Walpole, New Hampshire to visit [the Alcott family](#).



Here is a recollection by Mary Brown Dunton as reported in Elizabeth B. Davenport's "Thoreau in Vermont in 1856," [Vermont Botanical Club Bulletin III](#) (April 1908), page 37:

He struck me as being very odd, very wise and exceedingly observing. He roamed about the country at his own sweet will, and I was fortunate enough to be his companion on a walk up Wantastiquet Mt. I was well acquainted with the flora and could meet him understandingly there, but was somewhat abashed by the numerous questions he asked about all sorts of things, to which I could only reply "I do not know." It appealed to my sense of humor that a person with such a fund of knowledge should seek information from a young girl like myself, but I could not see that he had any fun in him. The only question I can now recall is this. As we stood on the summit of Wantastiquet, he fixed his earnest gaze on a distant point in the landscape, which he designated, asking "How far is it in a bee line to that spot?"

Before dawn on his 1st morning in Brattleboro VT, on his way to visit the Alcotts in New Hampshire, Thoreau reviewed a [botanical](#) catalog of Vermont plants. Then, as daylight appeared, he sauntered south along the railroad tracks and back along the banks of the Connecticut River, inspecting plants along the way. He climbed down the embankment to "the cold water path" of Whetstone Brook along neighboring Canal Street and Flat Street. Swamp maples along the Whetstone were beginning to turn color. Deep, dark columns of flowers rose like thick red ropes from the pale green leaves of sumac. He spent the afternoon inspecting plants, testing the murky water, and noting the wildlife. He made a note that Brattleboro appealed to him "for the nearness of primitive woods and mountain." He stopped to munch on raspberries and made a note of their "quite agreeable taste." Later that morning he tasted some grapes that were "pleasantly acidic."

On his 2nd morning in the town, Thoreau wandered far north along the Connecticut River, noting the level of the river, the shape of the gravel on its banks, and the explosion of late summer flowers that bloomed everywhere. "Will not the prime of the goldenrods and asters be just before the first severe frost?"



## REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

## MARCUS SPRING

On his 3rd day in the town, Thoreau again went “a-botanizing” up Whetstone Brook. The witch-hazel was out, hemlock lined the stream and asters bloomed everywhere. That night he created a two-page list of each plant. He described the Indian rope plant, named for its use as twine: “How often in the woods and fields we want a string or a rope and cannot find one.... This is the plant which Nature made for that purpose.” He noted that farmers in Vermont used the dried bark to tie up their fences, and wondered if it should be cultivated for that purpose.

While in Brattleboro a man who had recently killed a catamount showed Thoreau its skin and skull. By 1856, the mountain lion had become quite rare in southern Vermont. The skin measured nine feet, including its long tail, and the animal had weighed 108 pounds. Thoreau noted that the man had gotten a \$20 bounty for his kill.

On the morning of his last day in the Vermont town, Thoreau climbed Wantastiquet Mountain, the hill that rises out of the Connecticut River, towering above the downtown buildings. From the top he could see as far as Mount Ascutney, but he was more attentive to the horses and people he could see below him. “Above all this everlasting mountain is forever lowering over the village, shortening the day and wearing a misty cap each morning.” His considered opinion was that “this town will be convicted of folly if they ever permit this mountain to be laid bare.”



**MARCUS SPRING**

**REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING**

## **THOREAU IN VERMONT:**

### **WALKING WITH HENRY DAVID**

**BY ALAN BOYE**

The glorious late-summer sunlight shone golden on the hills above downtown Brattleboro. Ignored by the people passing by, a man stood at the edge of Main Street and tightened the laces of his boots. He checked to see that his pencil and paper were in his backpack, and then climbed down the embankment to the babbling waters of Whetstone Brook.

The swamp maples that grew like weeds along the Whetstone were already showing the first hint of autumnal glory on their leaves. Deep, dark columns of flowers rose like thick red ropes from the pale green leaves of sumac. In the last of summer's brilliant air, insects flickered and then vanished like sparks of memory.

The man paused a moment and then set out on "the cold water path" of Whetstone Brook. He spent the beautiful afternoon inspecting its plants, testing the murky water, and noting the wildlife that scurried along its banks. All the while, the busy residents of the town hurried by on neighboring Canal and Flat streets, unaware of the strange creature below them.

The man was America's greatest naturalist, Henry David Thoreau. It was early September 1856. Thoreau was on his way to visit a friend in New Hampshire and stopped to spend four days walking around Brattleboro. It would be the only time in his life that he would explore Vermont on foot. He wrote in his journal that Brattleboro appealed to him "for the nearness of primitive woods and mountain."

A truck blasts past me and, in a low whine of gears, begins to climb Canal St. from downtown Brattleboro. Behind me, the Whetstone squeezes between a canyon of brick buildings. The water tumbles over massive rocks and then, just as suddenly, surrenders to the placid calm of the wide Connecticut. Cars clanging over the long bridge into New Hampshire nearly drown the sound of the rapids.

I head straight for the Whetstone past the somber, concrete-gray walls behind a bagel shop. A motion distracts me from the ordinary. Something mysterious watches me from the shadowed banks of the brook.

In the weedy edge of the stream stands a creature; the sharply angled body looks more like Egyptian hieroglyph than bird. A green heron walks away cautiously. The spear point of its stout head stabs at the sky with each of its jerking, upstream steps. I move to the bank and follow him, each of my unsure steps an attempt to catch a glimpse of the ghost of Thoreau.

In 1856, Thoreau was at the peak of his literary talents. Walden



had been published only two years earlier. He was gaining a reputation as a profound lecturer. On podiums across New England, he read aloud the essays that would make him famous for centuries to come.

In any era, Thoreau would not have fit well into polite society. First of all, an eagle-sized beak of a nose hung down over a bow-tie mouth; ever a practical man, he had grown a weird, neck-only beard in order to see if it might keep him from getting colds. His hair was almost always unkempt, and his active life gave him the broad, hard look of an athlete.

Thoreau had begun to turn away from the broad, philosophical contemplations that made Walden a masterpiece and towards writing focused on the natural world. Ever a keen observer of the world around him, he had turned more and more of his attention to a close study of the plants and animals. He believed that by paying strict attention to the details of the natural world, humankind would finally come to understand and appreciate the essence of life. "In wilderness," he wrote at about this time, "is the preservation of the world."

Before dawn on his first morning in Brattleboro, Thoreau was studying a catalog of Vermont plants. At daylight he sauntered south along the railroad tracks and then back along the banks of the Connecticut, inspecting every plant along his way. His journal describes with the exactness of a trained botanist each plant he encountered. He stopped to munch on raspberries; he scribbled a note about their "quite agreeable taste." Later that morning, he found some grapes that tasted "pleasantly acidic." On his second morning in Brattleboro, Thoreau wandered far north along the Connecticut, noting the level of the river, the shape of the gravel on its banks, and the explosion of late summer flowers that bloomed everywhere.

"Will not the prime of the goldenrods and asters be just before the first severe frost?" he wrote.

Just twenty yards past the bagel shop, I seem to be in the deepest Vermont wilderness. I have been fighting my way through thick underbrush and stepping from one side of the brook to the other, trying to work my way along the steep banks that tower above me. I stop to inspect an unfamiliar leaf. I spend a good ten minutes with a tree-identification book, only to find the golden treasure I hold is simply the leaf of an ordinary yellow birch.

On the third day in Brattleboro, Thoreau was elated because he could "go a-botanizing" up the Whetstone. The witch-hazel was out, hemlock lined the stream and asters bloomed everywhere. Late that night in his sometimes-erratic handwriting, he meticulously scrawled a list of every plant he had found along the Whetstone. The journal entry fills nearly two pages, but he saves the most extensive entry for the Indian rope plant, named for its use as twine. "How often in the woods and fields we want a string or a rope and cannot find one," he wrote. "This is the plant which Nature made for that purpose."

He noted that farmers in Vermont used the dried bark to tie up their fences, and - ever practical - decided it would be a good idea if they were to cultivate it for just that purpose.

The stream is littered with good-sized, practical rocks. I lift



## MARCUS SPRING

## REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

a smaller one from the mud of the bank. It is cool in my hand. A thin sheen of moss hugs the rough surface of the stone. It's easy to see why early settlers used these for grinding and sharpening tools. Where could a fella get a good sharpener? Why over to the Whetstone Brook, of course.

I set the stone back in its place in the mud. We don't have much need of whetstones anymore or, for that matter, of Indian rope plant. Neither do we have any pressing need for Thoreau's detailed record of Vermont's plants. The days of hook-nosed Transcendental philosophers carefully noting every one of nature's wonders have passed. Perhaps my search for some remnant of Thoreau is as quaint and as useless as sharpening a horse-drawn ploughshare on a pale white whetstone drawn from a mossy brook. Two cold and electronic chirps from my watch mark the passing of another hour. I turn around and start back down the stream.

While in Brattleboro Thoreau saw something that he would spend pages of his journal trying to describe. The man who had recently killed it showed Thoreau the skin and the skull of a catamount. Even in 1856, the mountain lion was a rare creature in southern Vermont. It would be the only catamount, living or dead, that Thoreau would ever see in his lifetime. The beast measured nine feet, including its long tail, and had weighed 108 pounds. Thoreau tried to capture every detail of the beast that he could in his journal. He noted without comment that the man had gotten a \$20 bounty for the kill.

I spy a ragged and worn house cat, long since having known the comforts of a human home, slinking through the thin underbrush across the brook from where I walk. A series of rusted steel bars poke up through the thin water of the brook.

On the morning of his last day in Brattleboro Thoreau climbed Wantastiquet Mountain, the high hill that jumps straight out of the Connecticut River and towers above downtown Brattleboro. Although from the top he could see as far as Mount Ascutney, he was most fascinated by watching horses and people far below. He marveled at how close nature came to the bustling village. "Above all this everlasting mountain is forever lowering over the village, shortening the day and wearing a misty cap each morning." He cautioned that "this town will be convicted of folly if they ever permit this mountain to be laid bare."

I am nearly back to the bagel shop. Through the trees I see the dark massive shape of Wantastiquet Mountain. Near the top, still covered in thick forest, is the spot where nearly 150 years ago a great man stood and contemplated how the ways of humankind are made small by the glory and grandeur of the remarkable ways of nature.

I look away from the mountain, distracted by a sound. Something stirs near the base of a yellow birch tree. The green heron steps into a clearing and stands at the edge of the water. It stares at me through a black, wild eye. In the brook a few small fish weave threads of pure light through quick, silvery curtains of shadow and water.



## REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

## MARCUS SPRING



October 24, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) traveled with Bronson Alcott by train via Worcester, and then by boat, to New-York, and on to New Jersey to survey [Eagleswood](#). Thoreau would deliver “Walking,” “Moose Story,” and “Life Without Principle” at Eagleswood while surveying in November. Alcott had set this job up for Thoreau with [Marcus Spring](#), the leader at Eagleswood. Thoreau would make a detailed map of the area showing houses and school buildings.

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

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MARCUS SPRING

REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

1859

December: An anonymous missive to Governor Henry A. Wise of Virginia, undated, presumably sometime during December:



*Gov. Wise*

*Hon Sir*

*As Virginia has received from her Sister State Pennsylvania a peace offering flag, it is no more than fair that another sister should be presented in her peculiar way, please therefore accept the accompanying appropriate design.*

*The flag pictured here is the "New England Black Republican, Abolition Rule or Ruin, Disunion Flag" destined to take the place of the present Glorious Eagle, Stars & Stripes Flag of this Great Republic and that no mistake may occur as to the Emblems a description is added.*


*In lieu of the usual spear on the head of the flag & staff (which is in form of a cross) a Gallows with a John Brown embellishment is substituted. A wooden Ham & 32 wooden Nutmegs on a Blood red field take the place of the Eagle and stars. The ballance of the flag being black is quite suggestive of the general intention of the Party of which this is the Standard*

In this timeframe Mrs. [Rebecca B. Spring](#) not only wrote to but, twice, with her son, visited Captain John Brown in prison. Her expenses to provide Captain Brown and [Aaron D. Stevens](#) with flowers, books, clothing, medicine, and food during their incarceration prior to execution amounted to some \$400, approximately one year's income for a day laborer. She even sent them music. She would inform a newspaper reporter that what he had said to her was "I do not think I can better serve the cause I love so much, than to die for it!"

The Republicans were being referred to as the Black Republicans, in order to indicate the general sense of the

country, that these were people who harbored an unsavory prejudice in favor of the unworthy, blacks and Irish:



The long autobiographical letter which John Brown had written on July 15, 1857  to George Luther Stearns was made available to [Waldo Emerson](#), who would use the allegations and much of their phrasing in

his speech of January 6, 1860  in Salem on the history of Brown's abolitionism.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY



According to Seymour Drescher's "[Servile Insurrection](#) and John Brown's Body in Europe":



The most famous and graphic European image to appear in the wake of the raid on Harper's Ferry was an engraving, entitled *John Brown*. Against a dark landscape and a dull, cloudy sky a small human figure hangs from a gallows. The body's features are almost completely blanketed in shadow. From the heavens alone come shafts of light, breaking through the dreary obscurity to fall upon the gallows and the figure. Beneath this bleak illustration initially appeared the words: "*Pro Christo-Sicut Christus, John Brown, - Charleston. Designed by Victor Hugo.*"

The engraving was the frontispiece to the most widely publicized commentary on John Brown to reach America from across the Atlantic. Victor Hugo's letter on John Brown, originally written in early December 1859, was reprinted in newspapers and pamphlets on both sides of the Atlantic and was viewed by American abolitionists as a document that "will be read by millions with thrilling emotions." In it, France's most famous contemporary writer declared in exclamatory prose that the whole civilized world (namely, England, France, and Germany) was witnessing with horror a travesty of justice - "not in Turkey, but in America!" "The champion of Christ ... slaughtered by the American Republic," "the assassination of Emancipation by Liberty," ... "something more terrible than Cain slaying Abel ... Washington slaying [Spartacus](#)!" Hugo had written the letter as an impassioned public plea to save Brown from execution. The engraving was appended to later publications of the letter to portray Brown as a crucified Christian martyr and slave emancipator, with the gibbet as his cross.

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

MARCUS SPRING





## REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

## MARCUS SPRING

I don't know when he wrote this, but Bronson Alcott would write a "Sonnet XXIV, Addressed to John Brown, Harper's Ferry":

Bold Saint, thou firm believer in the Cross,  
Again made glorious by self-sacrifice,—  
Love's free atonement given without love's loss,—  
That martyrdom to thee was lighter pain,  
Since thus a race its liberties should gain;  
Flash its sure consequence in Slavery's eyes  
When, `scaping sabre's clash and battle's smoke,  
She felt the justice of thy master-stroke:  
Peaceful prosperity around us lies,  
Freedom with loyalty thy valor gave;  
Whilst thou, no felon doomed, for gallows fit,  
O Patriot true! O Christian meek and brave!  
Throned in the martyrs' seat henceforth shalt sit;  
Prophet of God! Messiah of the Slave!

I don't know when she wrote this, but [Louisa May Alcott](#) would write a poem "With a Rose, That Bloomed on the Day of John Brown's Martyrdom":

In the long silence of the night,  
Nature's benignant power  
Woke aspirations for the light  
Within the folded flower.  
Its presence and the gracious day  
Made summer in the room.  
But woman's eyes shed tender dew  
On the little rose in bloom.

Then blossomed forth a grander flower,  
In the wilderness of wrong.  
Untouched by Slavery's bitter frost,  
A soul devout and strong.  
God-watched, that century plant uprose,  
Far shining through the gloom.  
Filling a nation with the breath  
Of a noble life in bloom.

A life so powerful in its truth,  
A nature so complete;  
It conquered ruler, judge and priest,  
And held them at its feet.  
Death seemed proud to take a soul  
So beautifully given,  
And the gallows only proved to him  
A stepping-stone to heaven.

Each cheerful word, each valiant act,  
So simple, so sublime,  
Spoke to us through the reverent hush  
Which sanctified that time.  
That moment when the brave old man  
Went so serenely forth  
With footsteps whose unfaltering tread  
Reëchoed through the North.

The sword he wielded for the right  
Turns to a victor's palm;  
His memory sounds forever more,  
A spirit-stirring psalm.  
No breath of shame can touch his shield,  
Nor ages dim its shine;  
Living, he made life beautiful,—

REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

MARCUS SPRING

Dying, made death divine.

No monument of quarried stone,  
No eloquence of speech  
Can grave the lessons on the land  
His martyrdom will teach.  
No eulogy like his own words,  
With hero-spirit rife,  
"I truly serve the cause I love,  
By yielding up my life."

1860

March 15: Walden Pond thawed.

On the eve of his execution, Albert Hazlett wrote to Mrs. [Rebecca B. Spring](#): "Your letter gave me great comfort to know that my body would be taken from this land of chains.... I am willing to die in the cause of liberty, if I had ten thousand lives I would willingly lay them all down for the same cause."



Green

Copeland

Hazlett



March 15: A hen-hawk [**Red-tailed Hawk** *Buteo jamaicensis*] sails away from the wood southward. I get a very fair sight of it sailing overhead. What a perfectly regular and neat outline it presents! an easily recognized figure anywhere. Yet I never see it represented in any books. The exact correspondence of the marks on one side to those on the other, as the black or dark tip of one wing to the other, and the dark line midway the wing. I have no idea that one can get as correct an idea of the form and color of the under sides of a hen-hawk's wings by spreading those of a dead specimen in his study as by looking up at a free and living hawk soaring above him in the fields. The penalty for obtaining a petty knowledge thus dishonestly is that it is less interesting to men generally, as it is less significant. Some, seeing and admiring the neat figure of the hawk sailing two or three hundred feet above their heads, wish to get nearer and hold it in their hands, perchance, not realizing that they can see it best at this distance, better now, perhaps, than ever they will again. What is an eagle in captivity! – screaming in a courtyard! I am not the wiser respecting eagles for having seen one there. I do not wish to know the length of its entrails.

How neat and all compact this hawk! Its wings and body are all one piece, the wings apparently the greater part, while its body is a mere fullness or protuberance between its wings, an inconspicuous pouch hung there. It suggests no insatiable maw, no corpulence, but looks like a larger moth, with little body in proportion to its wings, its body naturally etherealized as it soars higher.

These hawks, as usual, began to be common about the first of March, showing that they were returning from their winter quarters.

**Cruickshank  
commentary**

March 15. I hear that there was about one acre of ice only at the southwest corner (by the road) of Flint's Pond on the 13th. It will probably, then, open entirely to-day, with Walden.

Though it is pretty dry and settled travelling on open roads, it is very muddy still in some roads through woods, as the Marlborough road or Second Division road.

2 P. M.—To Lee's Cliff.

Thermometer 50°. On the whole the finest day yet (the thermometer was equally high the 3d [2d and 8th. Vide next page.]), considering the condition of the earth as well as the temperature of the air. Yet I think I feel the heat as much if not more than I did on the 23d of February, when the thermometer rose to 58°. Is it because there was more snow lying about then? The comparative stillness, as well as the absence of snow, has an effect on our imaginations, I have no doubt. Our cold and blustering days this month, thus far, have averaged about 40°. Here is the first fair, and at the same time calm and warm, day.

Looking over my Journal, I find that the—

1st of March was rainy.

2	at 2 P. M.	56°
3		50
4		44
5	(probably as low)	
6	at 3 P. M.	44
7	" " " "	34
8	2 P. M.	50
9	" " "	41
10		30
11		40
12		40
13		36
14		39
15		50

The temperature has been as high on three days this month, and on the 3d [sic] considerably higher, and yet this has seemed the warmest and most summer-like, evidently owing to the calmness and greater absence of snow. How admirable in our memory lies a calm warm day amid a series of cold and blustering ones! The 11th was cold and blustering at 40; to-day delightfully warm and pleasant (being calm) at 50°.

I see those devil's-needle-like larvae in the warm pool south of Hubbard's Grove (with two tails) swimming about and rising to the top.

What a difference it makes whether a pool lies open to the sun or is within a wood,—affecting its breaking-up. This pool has been open at least a week, while that three or four rods from it in the woods is still completely



closed and dead.

It is very warm under the south edge of the wood there, and the ground, as for some time,—since snow went off,—is seen all strewn with the great white pine cones which have been blown off during the winter,—part of the great crop of last fall,—of which apparently as many, at least, still remain on the trees.

A hen-hawk sails away from the wood southward. I get a very fair sight of it sailing overhead. What a perfectly regular and neat outline it presents! an easily recognized figure anywhere. Yet I never see it represented in any books. The exact correspondence of the marks on one side to those on the other, as the black or dark tip of one wing to the other, and the dark line midway the wing. I have no idea that one can get as correct an idea of the form and color of the under sides of a hen-hawk's wings by spreading those of a dead specimen in his study as by looking up at a free and living hawk soaring above him in the fields. The penalty for obtaining a petty knowledge thus dishonestly is that it is less interesting to men generally, as it is less significant. Some, seeing and admiring the neat figure of the hawk sailing two or three hundred feet above their heads, wish to get nearer and hold it in their hands, perchance, not realizing that they can see it best at this distance, better now, perhaps, than ever they will again. What is an eagle in captivity!—screaming in a courtyard! I am not the wiser respecting eagles for having seen one there. I do not wish to know the length of its entrails.

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These hawks, as usual, began to be common about the first of March, showing that they were returning from their winter quarters.

I see a little ice still under water on the bottom of the meadows by the Hubbard's Bridge causeway.

The frost is by no means out in grass upland.

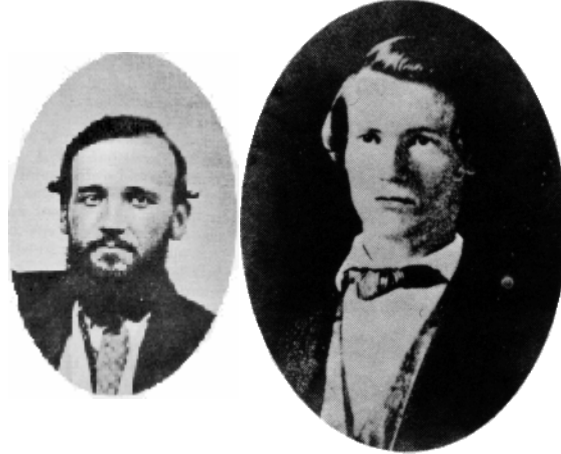
I see to-day in two places, in mud and in snow, what I have no doubt is the track of the woodchuck that has lately been out, with peculiarly spread toes like a little hand.

Am surprised to hear, from the pool behind Lee's Cliff, the croaking of the wood frog. It is all alive with them, and I see them spread out on the surface. Their note is somewhat in harmony with the rustling of the now drier leaves. It is more like the note of the classical frog, as described by Aristophanes, etc. How suddenly they awake! yesterday, as it were, asleep and dormant, to-day as lively as ever they are. The awakening of the leafy woodland pools. They must awake in good condition. As Walden opens eight days earlier than I have known it, so this frog croaks about as much earlier.

Many large fuzzy gnats and other insects in air.

It is remarkable how little certain knowledge even old and weather-wise men have of the comparative earliness of the year. They will speak of the passing spring as earlier or later than they ever knew, when perchance the third spring before it was equally early or late, as I have known.

 March 16: [Aaron D. Stevens](#) and Albert Hazlett were hanged.



The gallows that had turned off John Brown would be made into a portico in front of a private residence in Charlestown, Virginia. Pieces of the leftover timber, after this conversion, would be handed around as mementos as if they were pieces off the True Cross. Because of a relationship Stevens had with [Rebecca B. Spring](#), the bodies of Stevens and Hazlett would be interred on the grounds of the former [Eagleswood](#) social experiment near Perth Amboy, New Jersey.<sup>3</sup>



March 16. 2 P. M.—Thermometer 55; wind slight, west by south. To Abner Buttrick’s Hill.  
 The buttercup radical leaves are many of them now a healthy dark green, as if they had acquired new life. I notice that such are particularly downy, and probably that enables them to endure the cold so well, like mulleins. Those and thistles and shepherd’s-purse, etc., have the form of rosettes on the brown ground.  
 Here is a flock of red-wings. [**Red-winged Blackbird** *Agelaius phoeniceus*] I heard one yesterday, and I see a female among these. These are easily distinguished from grackles by the richness and clarity of their notes, as if they were a more developed bird. How handsome as they go by in a checker, each with a bright-scarlet shoulder! They are not so very shy, but mute when we come near. I think here are four or five grackles with them, which remain when the rest fly. They cover the apple trees like a black fruit. The air is full of song sparrows and bluebirds to-day.  
 The minister asked me yesterday: “What birds are they that make these little tinkling sounds? I haven’t seen one.” Song sparrows.  
 C. saw a green fly yesterday.  
 Saw a flock of sheldrakes [**Common Merganser** *Mergus merganser*] a hundred rods off, on the Great Meadows, mostly males with a few females, all intent on fishing. They were coasting along a spit of bare ground that showed itself in the middle of the meadow, sometimes the whole twelve apparently in a straight line at nearly equal distances apart, with each its head under water, rapidly coasting along back and forth, and ever and anon one, having caught something, would be pursued by the others. It is remarkable that they find their finny prey on the middle of the meadow now, and even on the very inmost side, as I afterward saw, though the water is quite low. Of course, as soon as they are seen on the meadows there are fishes there to be caught. I never see them fish thus in the channel. Perhaps the fishes lie up there for warmth already.  
 I also see two gulls nearly a mile off. One stands still and erect for three quarters of an hour, or till disturbed, on a little bit of floated meadow-crust which rises above the water,—just room for it to stand on,—with its great white breast toward the wind. Then another comes flying past it, and alights on a similar perch, but which does not rise quite to the surface, so that it stands in the water. Thus they will stand for an hour, at least. They are not of handsome form, but look like great wooden images of birds, bluish-slate and white. But when they fly they are quite another creature.  
 The grass is covered with gossamer to-day, though I notice no floating flocks. This, then, is a phenomenon of the first warm and calm day after the ground is bare.

3. The graves would at least initially be guarded out of a fear either real or imaginary that they would otherwise be desecrated by local people.

See larks about, though I have heard of them in the winter.



1861

The Raritan Bay Union having failed, [Marcus Spring](#) repurposed the properties outside Perth Amboy as the [Eagleswood Military Academy](#). As students and faculty were attracted away from the facility by outbreak of civil war, he would be forced again repurpose the properties, this time as an "Eagleswood Park Hotel."

New Jersey still had a total of 18 persons still legally classified as [slaves](#) (apprentices for life).



"It is simply crazy that there should ever have come into being a world with such a sin in it, in which a man is set apart because of his color – the superficial fact about a human being. Who could **want** such a world? For an American fighting for his love of country, that the last hope of earth should from its beginning have swallowed [slavery](#), is an irony so withering, a justice so intimate in its rebuke of pride, as to measure only with God."



– Stanley Cavell, MUST WE MEAN WHAT WE SAY? 1976, page 141



REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

MARCUS SPRING

1874

August 21, day: [Marcus Spring](#) died. His widow would relocate with daughter Jeannie and son Herbert to Los Angeles, California (she would survive until 1911, a few months short of her hundredth birthday).

#### MARCUS SPRING.

The death of this eminent New-York merchant occurred yesterday morning at Eagleswood, Perth Amboy, N. J., after an illness of thirteen days, resulting from an attack of vertigo. Mr. Spring was a native of Northbridge, Mass., born in 1810, and was a descendant of John Spring, who came to Massachusetts in the "good ship" Elizabeth from Ipswich, England, in the very early colonial days, and settled in Watertown, Mass. Marcus entered business in this City in 1831, assuming the settlement of an insolvent estate, heavily burdened with debt. He paid off over \$100,000, all the obligations of the estate, and, after a mercantile career of singular liberality and honor, retired in 1852 from the active duties of business with ample means. His intelligence and liberal tastes brought him into association with the best minds of his day. Among his friends was the late Freeman Hunt, of *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine*. He made a journey to the West in 1841, with William Cullen Bryant and reached what was then considered very far West, going beyond Indiana. In 1846 he made his first journey to Europe with his family, accompanied by Margaret Fuller Ossoli, whose sad fate was a severe blow to Mr. Spring and his family, with whom, on her return, she and her family were to have been guests. During this journey Mr. Spring developed a natural love of art, laid the foundation for that taste which made his house, Rose Cottage, in Brooklyn, what Frederica Bremer described afterward as one of the typical houses of the new world. While in the United States Miss Bremer made Mr. Spring's beautiful residence her head-quarters, and the hospitable entertainers are gratefully remembered in her subsequent accounts of her travels. In 1852 Mr. Spring again visited Europe and was the guest of Miss Bremer, through whom he enjoyed the society of the most cultivated people in Sweden and Denmark, among others that of Hans Christian Andersen.

Mr. Spring was the founder of the co-operative experiment known as the Raritan Bay Union, at Eagleswood, N. J., and the well-known school conducted by Theodore D. Weld, in which physical exercise was combined with study. At the beginning of the war he established the Eagleswood Military Academy, which for some years was the nursery of many brave defenders of their country. He leaves a widow, two sons, and a daughter. One of his sons is Edward A. Spring, the sculptor, and his daughter is married in California.



REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING

MARCUS SPRING

1888

The [Eagleswood](#), New Jersey estate of [Marcus Spring](#) was sold by the Mutual Benefit Insurance Company to Calvin Pardee, who would be establishing a tile business there.

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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: June 7, 2013

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT  
GENERATION HOTLINE



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



**REBECCA BUFFUM SPRING**

**MARCUS SPRING**

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

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