

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

–WHAT WILLIAM WILBERFORCE IS THERE TO BRING THAT ABOUT?



"Sir, when we think of eternity and the future consequence of all human conduct, what is there in this life that shall make any man contradict the dictates of his conscience, the principles of justice and the law of God!"

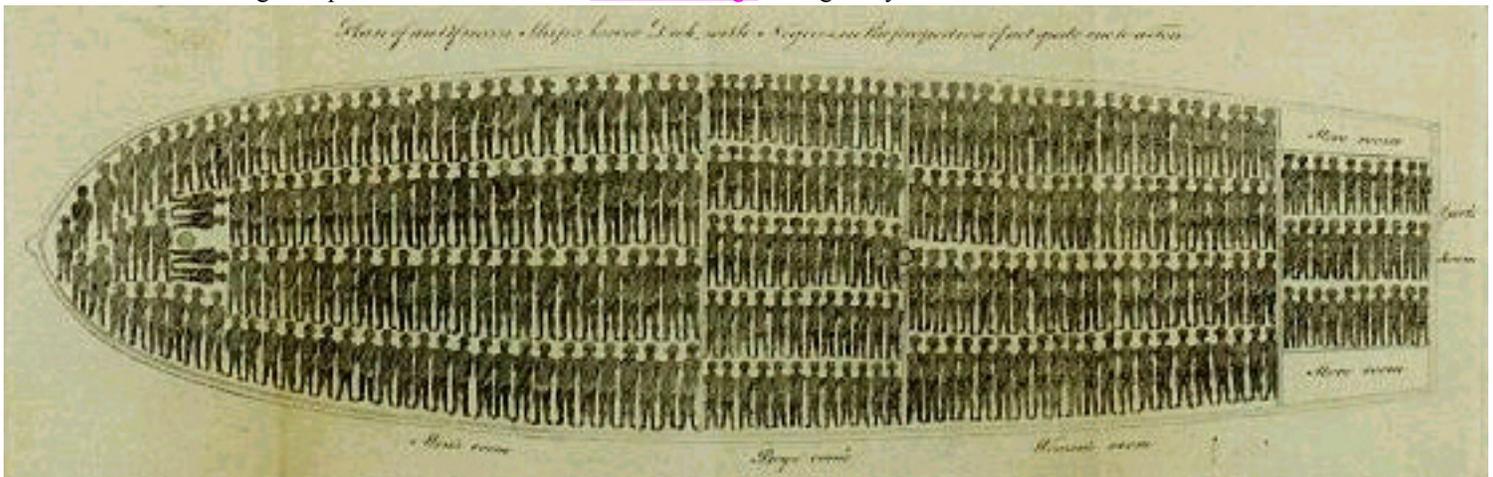
*An inscription on a bench in a wood near London:
"It was here that William Wilberforce first thought to abolish the institution of slavery."*

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1748

In [Rhode Island](#) harbors alone, during this year alone, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 3 [negreros](#) were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109—as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos—then a total of more than 325 souls would have been being transported over the dreadful [Middle Passage](#) during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone.



An invention important to the development of the cloth industry occurred during this year. Lewis Paul devised a carding machine. Because this development would have an impact on the demand for bales of [cotton](#) as a raw material for cloth, it would have an impact on the demand for field labor to grow this cotton, and therefore would have consequences in terms of human [slavery](#) — and in terms of the [international slave trade](#).¹

This was the year of the “grace” experience of [John Newton](#). “Amazing Grace” therefore seems a most inappropriate title for a movie about the crusade against the British slave trade. The hymn would be written by the Reverend Newton (played in Michael Apted’s film by Albert Finney) not about his belated awareness that the business in which he had been engaged was immoral, but about his famous religious “rebirth” experience years before he had become the captain of a negrero vessel. This religious experience was not what led him to abandon the slave trade, but rather, was part of the context that led him to enter upon this immoral way to make a living. The religious awakening he had experienced after a near-fatal illness and a dangerous shipwreck had caused him to seek to become a respectable person, turning away from a youth spent in general dissipation. It would be after getting right with God in this way that he would enter the slave trade and make quite a success of himself, rising to be a captain of a slaving ship and thereby winning the approval of his girlfriend’s parents for their union. He would be writing hymns as his ship lay at anchor along West African shores, collecting its cargo of black slaves. For three decades after his experience of “grace” during this year, nothing would suggest to this man that there was anything wrong with how he was earning his living. It would not be until after he had retired from the slave trade (largely it seems for reasons of health, rather than due to any spiritual uneasiness) and taken up other employment on land, that he would gradually be brought to question the rightfulness of human enslavement. In short, “Amazing Grace” is a record of the religious experience that had turned Newton toward becoming a slavetrader, rather than of any mature reflection that had turned him away from it.

1. Bear in mind that in early periods the Southern states of the United States of America produced no significant amount of [cotton](#) fiber for export — such production not beginning until 1789. In fact, according to page 92 of Seybert’s STATISTICS, in 1784 a small parcel of cotton that had found its way from the US to Liverpool had been refused admission to England, because it was the customs agent’s opinion that this involved some sort of subterfuge: it could not have originated in the United States.



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Also, although the script of this movie tells a pleasant enough personal story, it displays no awareness of the historical influences that had led to the opposition to the continuance of the international slave trade. In the movie, Friend [Thomas Clarkson](#) (played in Apted's film by Rufus Sewell), is portrayed as one who turned [William Wilberforce's](#) anti-slavery sentiments into action, but Friend Thomas did not originate these attitudes. Nor did [Olaudah Equiano](#), himself a slavetrader (played in Apted's film by Youssou N'Dour). The preface to his *ESSAY ON THE SLAVERY AND COMMERCE OF THE HUMAN SPECIES*, written in 1785, acknowledges the priority of the writings of New Jersey's Friend John Woolman, whose *ESSAY ON THE KEEPING OF NEGROES* was first published in Philadelphia in 1754, and the priority of the writings of Pennsylvania's Friend Anthony Benezet, who published a number of anti-slavery works in Philadelphia during the same period, and acknowledges the stance of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting taken in 1754 to absolutely condemn all human slavery. This was not only before either Clarkson or Wilberforce had been born, but also while a saved-by-grace John Newton was still captaining his negrero vessel in the international slave trade.

The "Amazing Grace" movie was meant to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the passing of the bill that allowed the slave trade in the British Empire, an event that constitutes its climactic scene, but the movie leaves it unclear that this legislation did nothing to abolish slavery. The best source for Wilberforce's actual racial attitudes is Jack Gratus's 1973 *THE GREAT WHITE LIE: SLAVERY, EMANCIPATION AND CHANGING RACIAL ATTITUDES* (Hutchinson of London). Actually he was opposed to the immediate abolition of slavery, and this opposition would allow it to persist in Jamaica and other British colonies for another 30 long years, and one is entitled to one's ambivalence about such a track record. Wilberforce (played in Apted's film by Ioan Gruffudd) feared that enslavement had such an impact on the mind of an enslaved person, that it could not be so readily ended: "I look to the improvement of their minds, and to the diffusion among them of those domestic charities which will render them more fit, than I fear they now are, to bear emancipation."

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: The history of slavery and the slave-trade after 1820 must be read in the light of the industrial revolution through which the civilized world passed in the first half of the nineteenth century. Between the years 1775 and 1825 occurred economic events and changes of the highest importance and widest influence. Though all branches of industry felt the impulse of this new industrial life, yet, "if we consider single industries, cotton manufacture has, during the nineteenth century, made the most magnificent and gigantic advances."² This fact is easily explained by the remarkable series of inventions that revolutionized this industry between 1738 and 1830, including Arkwright's, Watt's, Compton's, and Cartwright's epoch-making contrivances.³ The effect which these inventions had on the manufacture of cotton goods is best illustrated by

2. Beer, *GESCHICHTE DES WELTHANDELS IM 19^{TEN} JAHRHUNDERT*, II. 67.

3. A list of these inventions most graphically illustrates this advance: —

1738, John Jay, fly-shuttle. John Wyatt, spinning by rollers.

1748, Lewis Paul, carding-machine.

1760, Robert Kay, drop-box.

1769, Richard Arkwright, water-frame and throstle. James Watt, steam-engine.

1772, James Lees, improvements on carding-machine.

1775, Richard Arkwright, series of combinations.

1779, Samuel Compton, mule.

1785, Edmund Cartwright, power-loom.

1803-4, Radcliffe and Johnson, dressing-machine.

1817, Roberts, fly-frame.

1818, William Eaton, self-acting frame.

1825-30, Roberts, improvements on mule.

Cf. Baines, *HISTORY OF THE COTTON MANUFACTURE*, pages 116-231; *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*, 9th ed., article "Cotton."



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the fact that in England, the chief cotton market of the world, the consumption of raw cotton rose steadily from 13,000 bales in 1781, to 572,000 in 1820, to 871,000 in 1830, and to 3,366,000 in 1860.⁴ Very early, therefore, came the query whence the supply of raw cotton was to come. Tentative experiments on the rich, broad fields of the Southern United States, together with the indispensable invention of Whitney's cotton-gin, soon answered this question: a new economic future was opened up to this land, and immediately the whole South began to extend its cotton culture, and more and more to throw its whole energy into this one staple.

Here it was that the fatal mistake of compromising with slavery in the beginning, and of the policy of *laissez-faire* pursued thereafter, became painfully manifest; for, instead now of a healthy, normal, economic development along proper industrial lines, we have the abnormal and fatal rise of a slave-labor large farming system, which, before it was realized, had so intertwined itself with and braced itself upon the economic forces of an industrial age, that a vast and terrible civil war was necessary to displace it. The tendencies to a patriarchal serfdom, recognizable in the age of Washington and Jefferson, began slowly but surely to disappear; and in the second quarter of the century Southern slavery was irresistibly changing from a family institution to an industrial system.

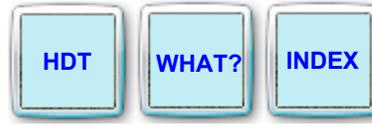
The development of Southern slavery has heretofore been viewed so exclusively from the ethical and social standpoint that we are apt to forget its close and indissoluble connection with the world's cotton market. Beginning with 1820, a little after the close of the Napoleonic wars, when the industry of cotton manufacture had begun its modern development and the South had definitely assumed her position as chief producer of raw cotton, we find the average price of cotton per pound, 8½d. From this time until 1845 the price steadily fell, until in the latter year it reached 4d.; the only exception to this fall was in the years 1832-1839, when, among other things, a strong increase in the English demand, together with an attempt of the young slave power to "corner" the market, sent the price up as high as 11d. The demand for cotton goods soon outran a crop which McCullough had pronounced "prodigious," and after 1845 the price started on a steady rise, which, except for the checks suffered during the continental revolutions and the Crimean War, continued until 1860.⁵ The steady increase in the production of cotton explains the fall in price down to 1845. In 1822 the crop was a half-million bales; in 1831, a million; in 1838, a million and a half; and in 1840-1843, two million. By this time the world's consumption of cotton goods began to increase so rapidly that, in spite of the increase in Southern crops, the price kept rising. Three million bales were gathered in 1852, three and a half million in 1856, and the remarkable crop of five million bales in 1860.⁶

Here we have data to explain largely the economic development

4. Baines, HISTORY OF THE COTTON MANUFACTURE, page 215. A bale weighed from 375 lbs. to 400 lbs.

5. The prices cited are from Newmarch and Tooke, and refer to the London market. The average price in 1855-60 was about 7d.

6. From United States census reports.



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of the South. By 1822 the large-plantation slave system had gained footing; in 1838-1839 it was able to show its power in the cotton "corner;" by the end of the next decade it had not only gained a solid economic foundation, but it had built a closed oligarchy with a political policy. The changes in price during the next few years drove out of competition many survivors of the small-farming free-labor system, and put the slave *régime* in position to dictate the policy of the nation. The zenith of the system and the first inevitable signs of decay came in the years 1850-1860, when the rising price of cotton threw the whole economic energy of the South into its cultivation, leading to a terrible consumption of soil and slaves, to a great increase in the size of plantations, and to increasing power and effrontery on the part of the slave barons. Finally, when a rising moral crusade conjoined with threatened economic disaster, the oligarchy, encouraged by the state of the cotton market, risked all on a political *coup-d'état*, which failed in the war of 1861-1865.⁷

7. Cf. United States census reports; and Olmsted, THE COTTON KINGDOM.



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1759

William Wilberforce was born in Hull as the son of a wealthy merchant who would die while he was still young. For a time the boy would be brought up by an uncle and aunt, but this aunt was so strongly under the influence of the Methodist movement of the Reverend John Wesley that Mrs. Wilberforce would need to retrieve her son for his own wellbeing.



(Her son would grow to five feet tall. Measuring this from pavement level, above, her son would do well.)



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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 "
Gary Coleman ("Arnold Jackson")	4 ' 8 "
Queen Victoria with osteoporosis	4 ' 8 "
Queen Victoria as adult	4 ' 10 "
Margaret Mitchell	4 ' 10 "
length of newer military musket	4 ' 10"
Charlotte Brontë	4 ' 10-11"
Harriet Beecher Stowe	4 ' 11"
Laura Ingalls Wilder	4 ' 11"
a rather tall adult Pygmy male	4 ' 11"
John Keats	5 ' 0 "
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 "
William Wilberforce	5 ' 0 "
Mae West	5 ' 0 "
Mother Teresa	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 " (+)
Bette Midler	5 ' 1 "
Jemmy Button	5 ' 2 "
Margaret Mead	5 ' 2 "



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	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"
	Stephen A. "Little Giant" Douglas	5' 4"
	Francisco Franco	5' 4"
	President James Madison	5' 4"
	Josef 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 "
	<i>comte de Buffon</i>	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"



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	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 "
	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 "



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President Dwight D. Eisenhower	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
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 M. 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"
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"



1773

Hannah More became one of the aspiring writers of London. She would become associated with Sir Joshua Reynolds, [Dr. Johnson](#), [Edmund Burke](#), and [William Wilberforce](#). She would engage David Garrick to produce her plays.

[Professor Christian Garve](#) translated [Edmund Burke](#)'s 1759 A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS OF [THE SUBLIME](#) AND BEAUTIFUL WITH SEVERAL OTHER ADDITIONS, as *ÜBER DEN URSPRUNG UNSERER BEGRIFFE VOM ERHABENEN UND SCHÖNEN* (Riga).

The family of [Gasparo Grimani](#) was still in London, for they were godparents at an Italian christening. (They seem to have been in Paris as well, for the daughter is said to have been kidnapped there and never found. The wife Antonia Fabbri Grimani is said to have fallen ill shortly after this, and she would die in Paris in about 1776.)



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1776

→ When [William Wilberforce](#) went off to St. John's College, Cambridge he found himself shocked at the demeanor of his fellow students: "I was introduced on the very first night of my arrival to as licentious a set of men as can well be conceived. They drank hard, and their conversation was even worse than their lives." One of his friends at university, however, would be William Pitt, who would go on to become the youngest person ever to be selected as England's Prime Minister.



1779

Upon completing the course of studies at St. John's College in Cambridge, [William Wilberforce](#) embarked on his political career. Soon he was a candidate for the Parliament, from Hull, standing successfully against Lord Rockingham, a wealthy and powerful aristocrat, by himself dispersing the great sum of £9,000 for campaign expenses. In the House of Commons Wilberforce would support the Tory government led by his friend and former schoolmate William Pitt.





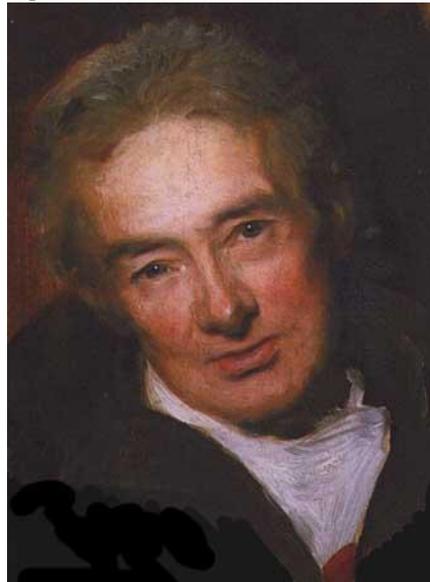
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1784

[William Wilberforce](#) was converted to the evangelical branch of Anglican Church and became a member of the Clapham Set, a group of evangelicals centering around John Venn, the rector of Clapham Church in London. This movement was involved in social reform, and eventually he would be approached by Lady Middleton and persuaded to use his position as a MP to attempt to bring an end to the [international slave trade](#). The [Religious Society of Friends](#) in Britain had presented petitions to Parliament in 1783 and in 1787 to end this international slave trade, and its members had been active in the formation of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Of the dozen persons on this committee, nine were [Quakers](#). In New Hampshire in this year,



SLAVERY

importation of slaves was being declared to be contrary to the state's new Constitution (although it would appear that this state never did forbid participation by its citizens in the trade).

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: The statistics of slavery in New Hampshire show how weak an institution it always was in that colony.⁸ Consequently, when the usual instructions were sent to Governor Wentworth as to the encouragement he must give to the slave-trade, the House replied: "We have considered his Maj^{ties} Instruction relating to an Impost on Negroes & Felons, to which this House answers, that there never was any duties laid on either, by this Govern^t, and so few bro't in that it would not be worth the Publick notice, so as to make an act concerning

8. The number of slaves in New Hampshire has been estimated as follows:

In 1730, 200. NEW HAMPSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLL., I. 229.

" 1767, 633. [Granite Monthly](#), IV. 108.

" 1773, 681. [Granite Monthly](#), IV. 108.

" 1773, 674. NEW HAMPSHIRE PROVINCE PAPERS, X. 636.

" 1775, 479. [Granite Monthly](#), IV. 108.

" 1790, 158. [Granite Monthly](#), IV. 108.



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them.”⁹ This remained true for the whole history of the colony. Importation was never stopped by actual enactment, but was eventually declared contrary to the Constitution of 1784.¹⁰ The participation of citizens in the trade appears never to have been forbidden.

9. NEW HAMPSHIRE PROVINCE PAPERS, IV. 617.

10. *Granite Monthly*, VI. 377; Poore, FEDERAL AND STATE CONSTITUTIONS, pages 1280-1.



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1787

May 22: The twelve founder members of the new nonsectarian Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade were three Anglicans (Granville Sharp, Philip Sansom, and [Thomas Clarkson](#)) and nine [Quakers](#) (William Dillwyn, Samuel Hoare, Jr, George Harrison, John Lloyd, Joseph Woods, John Barton, Joseph Hooper, James Phillips, and Richard Phillips).

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

Influential figures such as John Wesley would give their support to the campaign. Later they would persuade [William Wilberforce](#), the MP for Hull, to be their spokesman in the House of Commons. Thomas Clarkson initially took responsibility for collecting information to support the abolition of the slave trade. This included interviewing 20,000 sailors and obtaining equipment used on the slave-ships such as iron handcuffs, leg-shackles, thumb screws, instruments for forcing open slave's jaws, and branding irons. In this year he would be publishing a pamphlet, A SUMMARY VIEW OF THE SLAVE TRADE AND OF THE PROBABLE CONSEQUENCES OF ITS ABOLITION.



The work of this anti-slavery movement would continue beyond the ending of the English slave trade in 1807, as slavery still existed. The movement actually would grow substantially after the passing of the Emancipation Act which came into force in 1834. A group of Quakers, including Friend William Allen (not the same person as the William Allen of Concord, Massachusetts) and Friend [Luke Howard](#), would form the African Institution. Recognizing that slavery had destroyed the whole basis of African society, the Institution would seek to improve the lives of African people by means of Christianity and education and would survive until 1827.

“EMANCIPATION IN THE ... INDIES...”: All the great geniuses of the British senate, Fox, Pitt, Burke, Grenville, Sheridan, Grey, Canning, ranged themselves on its side; the poet Cowper wrote for it: Franklin, Jefferson, Washington, in this country, all recorded their votes.

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Josiah Wedgwood, another influential member of the Society—which was, it must be noted, despite the best



efforts of the abolitionist Sharp in that direction, decidedly not a society the aim of which was to abolish slavery—, produced the jasperware cameo “an African in Chains in a Supplicating Posture” at his pottery factory. The design was by William Hackwood or Henry Webber:



Black servants or supplicants typically knelt in the art of this period, a period in which the upper classes did not kneel while praying, so the above image conflates themes of humility and of gratitude and of conversion from heathenism with the concept of emancipation from foreign servitude. Curiously, the primary impact of such a depiction would be to confirm the common white perception of Negro inferiority, and this supplicant posture for black figures would persist long after the abolition of slavery as a standard feature of Western art.



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In this year efforts began to repatriate black people back to Sierra Leone in Africa:

[Paul Cuffe](#) likely heard of Sierra Leone as early as 1787. In that year, a British philanthropist, Granville Sharp, sent three shiploads of former American slaves, since living in London and known as the "black poor of London," to West Africa to establish a "Province of Freedom." Sharp spoke out strongly against the institution of slavery and the horrors of the famed "Middle Passage" through which most slaves destined for the colonies traveled. News of Sharp's endeavor spread quickly among the Society of Friends. Cuffe, however, did not initially agree with the idea of emigration. He believed that the United States, and particularly Massachusetts, was his province of freedom. It was not until 1808 that Cuffe began seriously entertaining the idea of traveling to West Africa.

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: In the individual efforts of the various colonies to suppress the African slave-trade there may be traced certain general movements. First, from 1638 to 1664, there was a tendency to take a high moral stand against the traffic. This is illustrated in the laws of New England, in the plans for the settlement of Delaware and, later, that of Georgia, and in the protest of the German Friends. The second period, from about 1664 to 1760, has no general unity, but is marked by statutes laying duties varying in design from encouragement to absolute prohibition, by some cases of moral opposition, and by the slow but steady growth of a spirit unfavorable to the long continuance of the trade. The last colonial period, from about 1760 to 1787, is one of pronounced effort to regulate, limit, or totally prohibit the traffic. Beside these general movements, there are many waves of legislation, easily distinguishable, which rolled over several or all of the colonies at various times, such as the series of high duties following the Assiento, and the acts inspired by various Negro "plots."

Notwithstanding this, the laws of the colonies before 1774 had no national unity, the peculiar circumstances of each colony determining its legislation. With the outbreak of the Revolution came unison in action with regard to the slave-trade, as with regard to other matters, which may justly be called national. It was, of course, a critical period, – a period when, in the rapid upheaval of a few years, the complicated and diverse forces of decades meet, combine, act, and react, until the resultant seems almost the work of chance. In the settlement of the fate of slavery and the slave-trade, however, the real crisis came in the calm that succeeded the storm, in that day when, in the opinion of most men, the question seemed already settled. And indeed it needed an exceptionally clear and discerning mind, in 1787, to deny that slavery and the slave-trade in the United States of America were doomed to early annihilation. It seemed certainly a legitimate deduction from the history of the preceding century to conclude that, as the system had risen, flourished, and fallen in Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania, and as South Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland were apparently following in the same legislative path,



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the next generation would in all probability witness the last throes of the system on our soil.

To be sure, the problem had its uncertain quantities. The motives of the law-makers in South Carolina and Pennsylvania were dangerously different; the century of industrial expansion was slowly dawning and awakening that vast economic revolution in which American slavery was to play so prominent and fatal a rôle; and, finally, there were already in the South faint signs of a changing moral attitude toward slavery, which would no longer regard the system as a temporary makeshift, but rather as a permanent though perhaps unfortunate necessity. With regard to the slave-trade, however, there appeared to be substantial unity of opinion; and there were, in 1787, few things to indicate that a cargo of five hundred African slaves would openly be landed in Georgia in 1860.

Strangely, there is no plaque to mark the spot in London –2 George Yard– at which this movement began:

2 GEORGE YARD

It is almost as if the matter were too shameful to mention:



We are now so used to thinking about English slavery from the vantage point of its abolition and the humanitarian discourse surrounding it that we have forgotten that at one point to oppose slavery was considered un-English and unpatriotic. As Eric Williams argued powerfully in the second chapter of *CAPITALISM AND SLAVERY*, from Quakers to cardinals and admirals, supporting the slave trade was at one point expected of every true English man and woman. There was a time when William Wilberforce, the abolitionist, was the most hated man in England, his cause considered to be anti-English. Lord Nelson, the hero of Trafalgar, couched his disdain for the abolitionists in the language of patriotism: "I was bred in the good old school, and taught to appreciate the value of our West Indian possessions, and neither in the field nor the Senate shall their just rights be infringed, while I have an arm to fight in their defence, or a tongue to launch my voice against the damnable doctrine of Wilberforce and his hypocritical allies." If Nelson was irritated by abolitionists, it is because the true, unsung heroes and patriots of England in the eighteenth century were slave traders, men like Thomas Golightly, owner of a slaving ship and the mayor of Liverpool, a city built on slave money. On February 14, 1788, Golightly and the slaving interest in Liverpool sent a petition to the House of Commons calling attention to the threat that abolitionism posed to British commerce. The petition is worth quoting in detail, because it illustrates how central slave trading had become to the identity of nation and empire:

FEBRUARY 14, 1788



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1789

May 12: [William Wilberforce](#) made his initial speech in opposition to the [international slave trade](#), advising the House of Commons that a third of the African slaves landed in the West Indies were dying within a few months of arrival, many by suicide.

SLAVERY

1791

February 22: The Reverend John Wesley was being read to before breakfast. He had been one of the subscribers to the [slave](#) narrative of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, and the resulting tract was the reading material which was beginning to be read that morning.



INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

February 24: The Reverend John Wesley wrote one last letter, a letter of encouragement to a Member of Parliament, [William Wilberforce](#), who had been converted under his ministry. Who could resist a deathbed plea like this one?

Balam, February 24, 1791

Dear Sir:

Unless the divine power has raised you up to be as Athanasius contra mundum, I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise in opposing that execrable villainy which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils. But if God be for you, who can be against you? Are all of them together stronger than God? O be not weary of well doing! Go on, in the name of God and in the power of his might, till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before it.

Reading this morning a tract wrote by a poor African [Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa], I was particularly struck by that

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circumstance that a man who has a black skin, being wronged or outraged by a white man, can have no redress; it being a "law" in our colonies that the oath of a black against a white goes for nothing. What villainy is this?

That he who has guided you from youth up may continue to strengthen you in this and all things, is the prayer of, dear sir,

Your affectionate servant,
John Wesley

SLAVERY

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

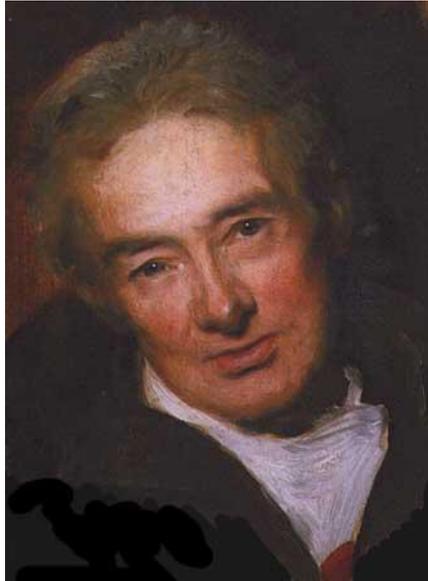


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April 20: When [William Wilberforce](#) presented his first bill in the House of Commons to abolish the [international slave trade](#) it was easily defeated by 163 votes to 88.¹¹



“EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES”: In 1791, Mr. Wilberforce announced to the House of Commons, “We have already gained one victory: we have obtained for these poor creatures the recognition of their human nature, which, for a time, was most shamefully denied them.” It was the sarcasm of Montesquieu, “it would not do to suppose that negroes were men, lest it should turn out that whites were not;” for, the white has, for ages, done what he could to keep the negro in that hoggish state. His laws have been furies.

The House of Commons has been prejudiced by the [slave](#) insurrection at Saint Domingue and by similar revolts in Martinique and Dominica. Most of Wilberforce’s Tory colleagues were opposed to any restrictions on the slave trade and at first he and Friend [Thomas Clarkson](#) and Granville Sharp had to rely on the support

11. Anna Letitia Barbauld would write a poem entitled “Epistle to William Wilberforce, Esq. On the Rejection of the Bill for Abolishing the Slave Trade,” which would in this year be published in London by J. Johnson. The bill would succeed in 1807.

READ THE FULL TEXT



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of Whigs such as Charles Fox, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, William Grenville, and Henry Peter Brougham.

“EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES”: In 1788, the House of Commons voted Parliamentary inquiry. In 1791, a bill to abolish the trade was brought in by Wilberforce, and supported by him, and by Fox, and Burke, and Pitt, with the utmost ability and faithfulness; resisted by the planters, and the whole West Indian interest, and lost. During the next sixteen years, ten times, year after year, the attempt was renewed by Mr. Wilberforce, and ten times defeated by the planters. The king, and all the royal family but one, were against it. These debates are instructive, as they show on what grounds the trade was assailed and defended. Every thing generous, wise, and sprightly is sure to come to the attack. On the other part, are found cold prudence, barefaced selfishness, and silent votes. But the nation was aroused to enthusiasm. Every horrid fact became known.... In 1791, three hundred thousand persons in Britain pledged themselves to abstain from all articles of island produce. The planters were obliged to give way; and in 1807, on the 25th March, the bill passed, and the slave-trade was abolished.

1793

Slavery had begun in Canada at or near the beginning of the 17th Century, although it had not grown to be of great economic importance. There had been slaves for instance at Louisburg, which was in regular contact with the West Indies, and in Quebec. Although some of the Loyalists who fled to Canada after the American Revolution were former slaves who had earned the reward of freedom by doing work for the British army, there were also many Loyalist slaveholders, and some of these were able to bring their slaves with them. In “Upper Canada” (now Ontario), however, in this year, the 1st Lieutenant Governor, John Graves Simcoe, who had in England been a supporter of [William Wilberforce](#) in the British parliament, opposed [slavery](#), although unable to abolish slavery outright because some members of his Executive Council were slaveholders, did manage to obtain a law prohibiting further importation of slaves into the province, and allowing for the gradual abolition of the offspring of existing slaves. The practice of slavery would die out in Canada about the time of the War of 1812, because so many black residents enlisted in military and militia forces that guarded Canada’s borders. In Quebec and the Maritimes, slavery would end without legislative action, as judges disposed of cases in which enslaved human “property” was in dispute or in which slaves had run away and been captured. Again, the practice died out in the first decades of the 19th Century. In 1834, with the abolition of slavery on the British islands of the Caribbean, slavery would be discontinued also throughout Canada. Although when the British abolished slavery in the West Indies, where slaves were held for reasons of profit, compensation was paid to the slaveholders, no such compensations were considered in Canada. –Evidently it was taken into consideration that in Canada, slaveholding was not so much for profit as for prestige.



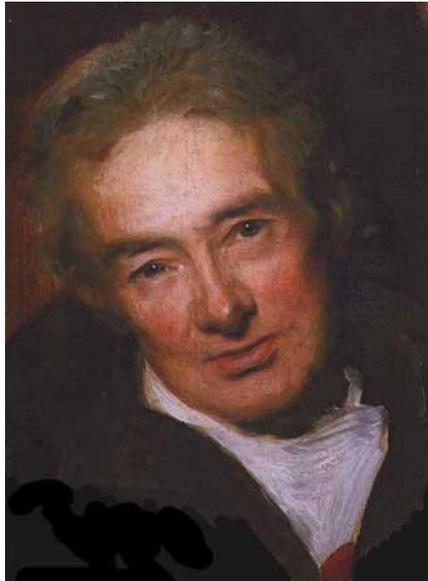
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1798

Through the patronage of [William Wilberforce](#), [Edward Jesse](#) became clerk in a government office on San Domingo in the West Indies.





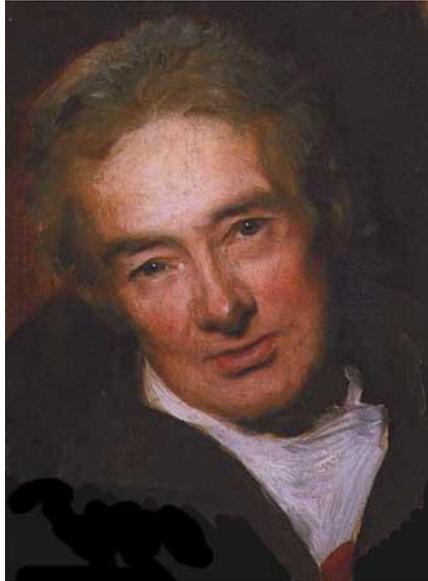
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1799

The Reverend Doctor David Tappan, Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard, warned against attempting loyalty to faction while at the same time attempting Christianity. One can only lead in morality by making of one's life a proper example, he offered, and a case in point would be the inspiration set by the "ardent piety & patriotism & philanthropy" of [William Wilberforce](#).



Wilberforce was anti-slavery, yes, but there was a difference between him and other anti-slavers. The warning Professor Tappan issued might have proven useful to Lewis Tappan, a half a century later when his nephew was so deeply enmired in anti-slavery manipulations — except that really good advice tends to be of the sort that doesn't help our lives to work, and hence is usually the type of advice that we need to discard or disregard:

I have a poor opinion of those federalists & christians however respectable on other accounts, who declaim against French principles, & yet resemble them in practice; who speak highly of religion & the clergy in charges to Juries, in Orations, Toasts, or newspaper paragraphs, & yet practically neglect or trample them under foot.... [Our rulers & influential citizens must argue against] infidelity, impiety, & vice by the weight of their examples.

Isn't it interesting that here we had this guy, whom maybe we would suspect to be stuffy, taking an attitude identical with the one that [Henry Thoreau](#) would take, and even choosing one of Thoreau's heroes as his example?



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1802

→ William Wilberforce postponed a general abolition motion.

RACE SLAVERY

→ June 19: An English lady, close friend of Dr. Johnson, Hester Lynch Thrale Piozzi (1741-1821), apparently was feeling threatened by the attacks being made upon human slavery as an institution of civil society by such sorts of agitators as Hannah More and [Mr. Wilberforce](#) and feared breakdown of the decent hierarchies of social distinction under the impact of this undue emphasis upon freedom and equality, when she wrote her friend Penelope Pennington about **having glimpsed blacks who instead of being in filthy rags were nicely dressed, who instead of leaning over a washtub in a back room were present at consumerist high-culture events such as the Opera, who instead of frequenting the garbage-strewn streets were enjoying the public gardens, who instead of being servants were employing nurses to attend their dusky children.** She had been distressed at thus witnessing the world turning upside-down. The horror! Was their orderly and safe world being seduced into Christianity?

Well! I am really haunted by black shadows. Men of colour in the rank of gentlemen; a black Lady, cover'd with finery, in the Pit at the Opera, and tawny children playing in the Squares, – the gardens of the Squares I mean, – with their Nurses, afford ample proofs of Hannah More and [Mr. Wilberforce](#)'s success towards breaking down the wall of separation. Oh! how it falls on every side! and spreads its tumbling ruins on the world! leaving all ranks, all customs, all colours, all religions jumbled together, till like the old craters of an exhausted volcano, Time closes and covers with fallacious green each ancient breach of distinction; preparing us for the moment when we shall be made

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one fold under one Shepherd, fulfilling the voice of prophecy.



“For when our souls have learn’d the heat to bear
The cloud will vanish; we shall hear his voice,
Saying: ‘Come out from the grove my love & care,
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice.’”
Thus did my mother say and kissed me,
And thus I say to little English boy:
When I from black and he from white cloud free,
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy:
I’ll shade him from the heat till he can bear
To lean in joy upon our father’s knee.
And then I’ll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him and he will then love me.



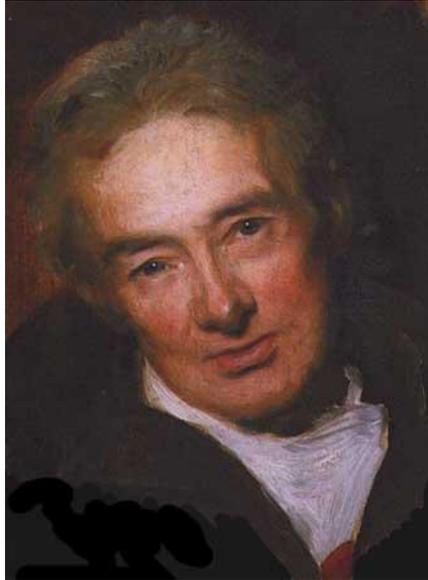
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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1805

 The House of Commons enacted a measure sponsored by [William Wilberforce](#) to make it unlawful for any



British subject to transport slaves. This measure would be tabled in the House of Lords.

However, during this year an order-in-council immediately restricted annual “imports” to 3 percent of the existing slave population, and demanded that the African trade to conquered slave areas be ended by 1807.

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE



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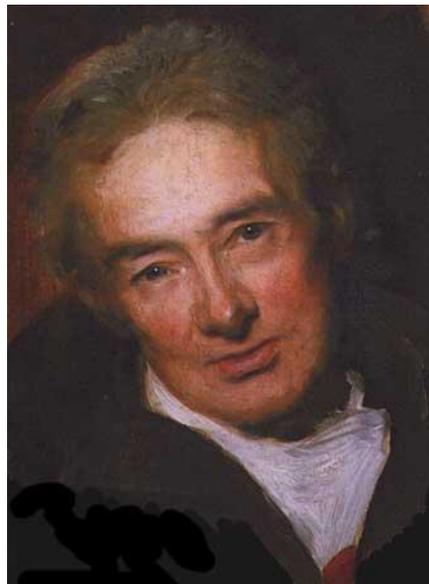
PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1806

February 11: The County of Tirol was annexed to Bavaria.

Lord William Wyndham Grenville, Baron Grenville succeeded William Pitt as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and formed a Whig administration. Prime Minister Grenville and his Foreign Secretary, Charles Fox, were strong opponents of the slave trade and of colonial slavery. Fox and [William Wilberforce](#) would lead the campaign in the House of Commons while Lord Grenville would take up the cudgel in the House of Lords. Sugar prices would fall. When it came to a vote in the House of Lords, the bill would pass by 41 votes over 20. In the House of Commons it would carry by 114 over 15. The Abolition of the Slave Trade bill would become effective on March 25, 1807. British captains caught continuing this trade would be fined £100 for each slave found on board. However, this law would not stop the British slave trade. When slavers were in danger of being captured by the British navy, captains might reduce their fines by having the slave cargo pitched over the far side of the ship to be dragged down by their being chained to each other.

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE



W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: At the beginning of the nineteenth century England held 800,000 slaves in her colonies; France, 250,000; Denmark, 27,000; Spain and Portugal, 600,000; Holland, 50,000; Sweden, 600; there were also about 2,000,000 slaves in Brazil, and about 900,000 in the United States.¹² This was the powerful basis of the demand for the slave-trade; and against the economic forces which these four and a half millions of enforced laborers represented, the battle for freedom had to be fought.

Denmark first responded to the denunciatory cries of the eighteenth century against slavery and the slave-trade. In 1792, by royal order, this traffic was prohibited in the Danish possessions after 1802. The principles of the French Revolution

12. Cf. Augustine Cochin, in Lator, CYCLOPEDIA, III. 723.



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logically called for the extinction of the slave system by France. This was, however, accomplished more precipitately than the Convention anticipated; and in a whirl of enthusiasm engendered by the appearance of the Dominican deputies, slavery and the slave-trade were abolished in all French colonies February 4, 1794.¹³ This abolition was short-lived; for at the command of the First Consul slavery and the slave-trade was restored in An X (1799).¹⁴ The trade was finally abolished by Napoleon during the Hundred Days by a decree, March 29, 1815, which briefly declared: "À dater de la publication du présent Décret, la Traite des Noirs est abolie."¹⁵ The Treaty of Paris eventually confirmed this law.¹⁶

In England, the united efforts of Sharpe, Clarkson, and Wilberforce early began to arouse public opinion by means of agitation and pamphlet literature. May 21, 1788, Sir William Dolben moved a bill regulating the trade, which passed in July and was the last English measure countenancing the traffic.¹⁷ The report of the Privy Council on the subject in 1789¹⁸ precipitated the long struggle. On motion of Pitt, in 1788, the House had resolved to take up at the next session the question of the abolition of the trade.¹⁹ It was, accordingly, called up by Wilberforce, and a remarkable parliamentary battle ensued, which lasted continuously until 1805. The Grenville-Fox ministry now espoused the cause. This ministry first prohibited the trade with such colonies as England had acquired by conquest during the Napoleonic wars; then, in 1806, they prohibited the foreign slave-trade; and finally, March 25, 1807, enacted the total abolition of the traffic.²⁰

13. By a law of Aug. 11, 1792, the encouragement formerly given to the trade was stopped. Cf. *CHOIX DE RAPPORTS, OPINIONS ET DISCOURS PRONONCÉS À LA TRIBUNE NATIONALE DEPUIS 1789* (Paris, 1821), XIV. 425; quoted in Cochin, *THE RESULTS OF EMANCIPATION* (Booth's translation, 1863), pages 33, 35-8.

14. Cochin, *THE RESULTS OF EMANCIPATION* (Booth's translation, 1863), pages 42-7.

15. *BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS*, 1815-6, page 196.

16. *BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS*, 1815-6, pages 195-9, 292-3; 1816-7, page 755. It was eventually confirmed by royal ordinance, and the law of April 15, 1818.

17. *STATUTE 28 GEORGE III.*, ch. 54. Cf. *STATUTE 29 GEORGE III.*, ch. 66.

18. Various petitions had come in praying for an abolition of the slave-trade; and by an order in Council, Feb. 11, 1788, a committee of the Privy Council was ordered to take evidence on the subject. This committee presented an elaborate report in 1789. See published *REPORT*, London, 1789.

19. For the history of the Parliamentary struggle, cf. Clarkson's and Copley's histories. The movement was checked in the House of Commons in 1789, 1790, and 1791. In 1792 the House of Commons resolved to abolish the trade in 1796. The Lords postponed the matter to take evidence. A bill to prohibit the foreign slave-trade was lost in 1793, passed the next session, and was lost in the House of Lords. In 1795, 1796, 1798, and 1799 repeated attempts to abolish the trade were defeated. The matter then rested until 1804, when the battle was renewed with more success.

20. *STATUTE 46 GEORGE III.*, ch. 52, 119; *47 GEORGE III.*, sess. I. ch. 36.



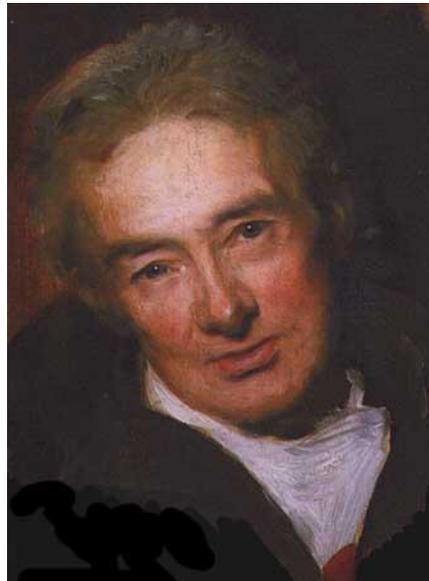
WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

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1807

➡ Some of those involved in England in the anti-slave trade campaign, such as Thomas Fowell Buxton, were arguing that the only way to end the suffering of the slaves was to make slavery itself unlawful. [William Wilberforce](#), in A LETTER ON THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE, disagreed, arguing that in his judgment the black slaves had not yet been adequately prepared for freedom: “It would be wrong to emancipate [the slaves]. To grant freedom to them immediately, would be to insure not only their masters’ ruin, but their own. They must [first] be trained and educated for freedom.”



When at the end of this year the legal US import of black [slaves](#) from overseas abruptly terminated, and the import allegedly ceased, with those citizens who continued to do so becoming allegedly hangable under the maritime code as “[pirates](#),” the interesting fact is that every state of our union, including the slaveholding ones, had **already** banned further foreign imports of slaves, and in fact had done so before the turn of the century! South Carolina alone had repealed its ban of slave imports, in 1803; thus it was only the state of South Carolina that was in any way affected by this new federal law. The sorry fact of the matter is that this wasn’t due to considerations of humanity: at an early point it had become in the general interest of American slavemasters to ban further international trade in slaves — as such a ban had the effect of rendering the existing human property of these American slavemasters yet more valuable on the local auction blocks. Only South Carolina had been running against this trend, a trend which nowhere had anything at all to do with human rights and which nowhere had anything at all to do with human decency.

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE

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March 25, Wednesday: Although in 1805 the British House of Commons had passed a bill that made it unlawful for a British subject to capture and transport [slaves](#), that measure had been blocked by the House of Lords. In February 1806, Lord Grenville had formed a Whig administration. He and Charles Fox, his Foreign Secretary, were opponents of the [slave-trade](#). Fox and [William Wilberforce](#) led the campaign in the House of Commons for a new Abolition of the Slave Trade bill, while Grenville was leading that campaign in the House of Lords. Grenville criticized his fellow Lords for “not having abolished the trade long ago,” offered that it was a practice “contrary to the principles of justice, humanity and sound policy.” The vote in the House of Lords carried by 41 votes over 20. The vote in the House of Commons carried by 114 votes over 15, and the international trade in slaves was outlawed as of March 1, 1808 by “An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade” (STATUTE 47 GEORGE III., 1st session, Chapter 36). British captains caught continuing the trade would be fined £100 for each slave found on board.



The Slave Trade Act outlawing the slave trade in the British Empire immediately received royal assent. However, it would not stop the British slave trade. If slavers were in danger of being captured by the British navy, captains might reduce the fines they had to pay by having the slaves thrown off the far, hidden side of the vessel to be pulled down by the weight of their chains. Some people involved in the anti-slave trade campaign, such as Thomas Clarkson and Thomas Fowell Buxton, would begin to argue that the only way effectively to end the suffering was to make slavery itself illegal. One month later, Parliament would pass the Slavery Abolition Act that gave all slaves in the British Empire their freedom. (Note that this was occurring 16 years after the Danes had abolished their trade. Note that the US had abolished its participation in the international slave trade on March 2d. Note also that British colonial slavery would continue until 1833, and US slavery would continue until toward the close of our Civil War.)

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: At the beginning of the nineteenth century England held 800,000 slaves in her colonies; France, 250,000; Denmark, 27,000; Spain and Portugal, 600,000; Holland, 50,000; Sweden, 600; there were also about 2,000,000 slaves in Brazil, and about 900,000 in the United States.²¹ This was the powerful basis of the demand for the slave-trade; and against the economic forces which these four and a half millions of enforced laborers represented, the battle for freedom had to be fought.

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

4 day 25 of 3 M / Called this Morning to see J.L. who yesterday opened an hat shop in this town, & spent a little time with him, as he is young in years & experience his situation claimed my affectionate sympathy, & my mind was affected with desires for

22. By a law of Aug. 11, 1792, the encouragement formerly given to the trade was stopped. Cf. *CHOIX DE RAPPORTS, OPINIONS ET DISCOURS PRONONCÉS À LA TRIBUNE NATIONALE DEPUIS 1789* (Paris, 1821), XIV. 425; quoted in Cochin, *THE RESULTS OF EMANCIPATION* (Booth's translation, 1863), pages 33, 35-8.

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27. Various petitions had come in praying for an abolition of the slave-trade; and by an order in Council, Feb. 11, 1788, a committee of the Privy Council was ordered to take evidence on the subject. This committee presented an elaborate report in 1789. See published *REPORT*, London, 1789.

28. For the history of the Parliamentary struggle, cf. Clarkson's and Copley's histories. The movement was checked in the House of Commons in 1789, 1790, and 1791. In 1792 the House of Commons resolved to abolish the trade in 1796. The Lords postponed the matter to take evidence. A bill to prohibit the foreign slave-trade was lost in 1793, passed the next session, and was lost in the House of Lords. In 1795, 1796, 1798, and 1799 repeated attempts to abolish the trade were defeated. The matter then rested until 1804, when the battle was renewed with more success.

29. *STATUTE 46 GEORGE III.*, ch. 52, 119; *47 GEORGE III.*, sess. I. ch. 36.



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

his preservation, beyond my capacity of expression

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1808



One of [Waldo Emerson](#)'s sources for his lecture "EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES", [Friend Thomas Clarkson](#)'s THE HISTORY OF THE RISE, PROGRESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE ABOLITION OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE BY THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT,³⁰ was published.

"EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES": Thomas Clarkson was a youth at Cambridge, England, when the subject given out for a Latin prize dissertation, was, "Is it right to make slaves of others against their will?" He wrote an essay, and won the prize; but he wrote too well for his own peace; he began to ask himself, if these things could be true; and if they were, he could no longer rest. He left Cambridge; he fell in with the six Quakers. They engaged him to act for them. He himself interested Mr. Wilberforce in the matter. The shipmasters in that trade were the greatest miscreants, and guilty of every barbarity to their own crews. Clarkson went to Bristol, made himself acquainted with the interior of the slave ships, and the details of the trade. The facts confirmed his sentiment, "that Providence had never made that to be wise, which was immoral, and that the slave-trade – was as impolitic as it was unjust;" that it was found peculiarly fatal to those employed in it. More seamen died in that trade, in one year, than in the whole remaining trade of the country in two. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox were drawn into the generous enterprise.... Mr. Clarkson, early in his career, made a collection of African productions and manufactures, as specimens of the arts and culture of the negro; comprising cloths and loom, weapons, polished stones and woods, leather, glass, dyes, ornaments, soap, pipe-bowls, and trinkets. These he showed to Mr. Pitt, who saw and handled them with extreme interest. "On sight of these," says Clarkson, "many sublime thoughts seemed to rush at once into his mind, some of which he expressed;" and hence appeared to arise a project which was always dear to him, of the civilization of Africa, – a dream which forever elevates his fame.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

30. But [Emerson](#) would repudiate [Friend Thomas Clarkson](#)'s religious and moral focus, in favor of a pretense, a pleasant fiction, that the elimination of oppression of [slaves](#) would be to the "advantage" of the oppressor, the [slaveholder](#), or "for what the grossest calculation calls his advantage."

NOTE: There is a convenient new facsimile impression of the 1st edition of this in two volumes, published in London by Cass as of 1968, based on the 1st edition by Longman, Hurst, Rees & Orme as of 1808. I will include here the 1st of the volumes.



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

[Click here for the full text of Volume One:](#)



[\(Vol. 2 has not as yet been electronically captured.\)](#)

1816



April: Robert Dale Owen made a presentation on factory reform to a House of Commons committee chaired by Robert Peel, and then went on tour, lecturing to the public about his experiment in benevolent treatment of employees in his textile mills at New Lanark, Scotland. These speeches would see publication as pamphlets. In one two-month period he would expend the sum of £4,000 publicizing his agenda of a “new moral world, a world from which the bitterness of divisive sectarian religion would be banished.” Such attacks upon the Church of England were offensive to many, including even reformers such as [William Wilberforce](#) and William Cobbett.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN



September: Although [Samuel Taylor Coleridge](#)'s chemical dependency had gotten so bad that he had had to voluntarily commit himself to the care of Dr. James Gillman in a supervised residence in Highgate (and would need to remain under supervision until his death in 1834), he was still playing both ends against the middle by encouraging his public in the perception that his best works, such as "Kubla Khan," "Christobel," and "The Pains of Sleep," had been inspirations resulting from [opium](#). Like today's drug users, he would not have appreciated being labeled an addict.³¹



[T]he anguish of my mind concerning ... [my drug abuse], my anxiety to warn others against the like error in the very commencement, and the total absence of all concealment, have been far more than the thing itself the causes of its being so much and so malignantly talked about. For instance, who has dared blacken Mr [Wilberforce](#)'s good name on this account? Yet he has been for a long series of years under the same necessity. Talk with any eminent druggist or medical practitioner, especially at the West end of the town, concerning the frequency of this calamity among men and women of eminence.

The controls were not completely effective. Occasionally he was able to sneak out to the Highgate chemist, Dunn, and purchase 3/4ths of a pint of [laudanum](#), which in his case he could stretch out to cover five days of his need.

31. Within his lifetime he was not ever termed an addict because the concept of addiction had not yet been extended to include chemical dependency (you will note that within the boxed self-description, he does not characterize his situation as one of addiction). The term had originated in ancient Rome to indicate the legal status of a citizen enslaved due to unpaid debt. From the 2d Century until well into the 19th, this was merely a behavioral term implying weakness of character or moral failing ("addicted to the infernal passion, anger"; "addicted to practices of the deceptive kind"; "they are much addicted to gambling, and spend all their leisure hours at cards and smoking opium"; "addicted to wenching"; "Edward II. was much addicted to buffoons, singers, tragedians, waggoners, ditchers, rowers, sailors, and other such low company"), and not until late in the century would it enter the medical lexicon as a descriptor of the difficulty of withdrawal from opium and morphine abuse, and not until considerably later than that would it be used in regard to ethanol (alcoholism and attendant necrosis of the liver) and nicotine (risk of cancer).

HDT

WHAT?

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WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Over the years, however, he was managed down to a more carefully supervised dose rate.





WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1818



In this year [Thomas De Quincey](#), an English [opium](#) addict,³² wrote his mother that his intention was to become the intellectual benefactor of “my species,” to place education upon a new footing, to be the first founder of

32. In studying the early 19th Century in the US, we are studying a period in which [opium](#) was legal, omnipresent, and cheap. A child could push a penny across a market counter and obtain opium to make it through the school day, literally. Yet nowhere do we find any remark about opium withdrawal presenting any sort of problem. Today, I understand, opium is widely used in elder homes in England, and the chief problem with this is that it tends to cause a degree of constipation. The nurses need to keep after these oldsters to hydrate themselves and add fiber to their diets.

Today, of course, there would be much talk about addiction and withdrawal. However, do we know for sure that opium is addictive? It may be that the “addiction and withdrawal” scenario which we have constructed is a social consequence of a socially imposed illegality and scarcity and expense. It may be that we focus on this “addiction and withdrawal” scenario in order to legitimate our social taboos about recreational drug use. Too sudden withdrawal from a customary dose of opium can definitely be unpleasant and can definitely have health side-effects. Illegality, and the consequent scarcity and expense, however, have created this situation in which withdrawal from a customary dose of opium can easily become too sudden. For instance, nowadays a person who is accustomed to a daily dose of opium may be arrested for theft (because due to the artificially high cost of a dose of opium, theft had become a way of life for them), and when thrown into jail, suddenly the customary dose would be unavailability and the result would be a very unpleasant and unhealthy “cold turkey” withdrawal. However, the determinants of that scenario would be in the social situation as now constructed by us (illegality, scarcity, expense) rather than in the substance itself or in the practice itself.

I have been told, and I don’t know whether this is accurate or inaccurate, that in China, when a person has needed to withdraw from opium use for one reason or another, withdrawal has not been regarded as any sort of problem. One simply reduces one’s dose gradually until use ceases. The 1994 movie “To Live” (directed by Zhang Yimou based on a novel by Yu Hua) may be instructive in that regard, for in this movie a wealthy opium user is portrayed as losing his money by gambling, and needing consequently to discontinue his opium use, and in this movie, although his financial loss is depicted as having a great impact on his life and the life of his family, his withdrawal itself is treated by the script and the director as being entirely unremarkable.

We do know that there is such a thing as “the addictive personality.” There are in fact compulsions and they do in fact cause problems. A person who is compulsive in this way may select opium use as his or her compulsion, and this may be an unpleasant thing, but I would wonder: is the unpleasantness of this a consequence of the substance, opium, or is it a consequence of the mental condition, compulsiveness? If the unpleasantness of this is indeed a consequence of the substance, opium, then of course we are doing the correct and the effective thing, in attempting to control use of the substance. However, if the unpleasantness of this is a consequence of the mental condition, compulsiveness, then what we are doing, in attempting to control opium, is evading the real problem, while persecuting people who have the mental disorder of being compulsive.

It seems to me that we simply have not done the research which would indicate to us, whether the problem is opium (or, expanding this, recreational drugs in general) or whether the problem is compulsiveness (in its many manifestations). Until we have done that research, I would suggest, we are the blind leading the blind, and cannot even begin a proper study of the 19th Century, let alone a proper management of the 21st Century.

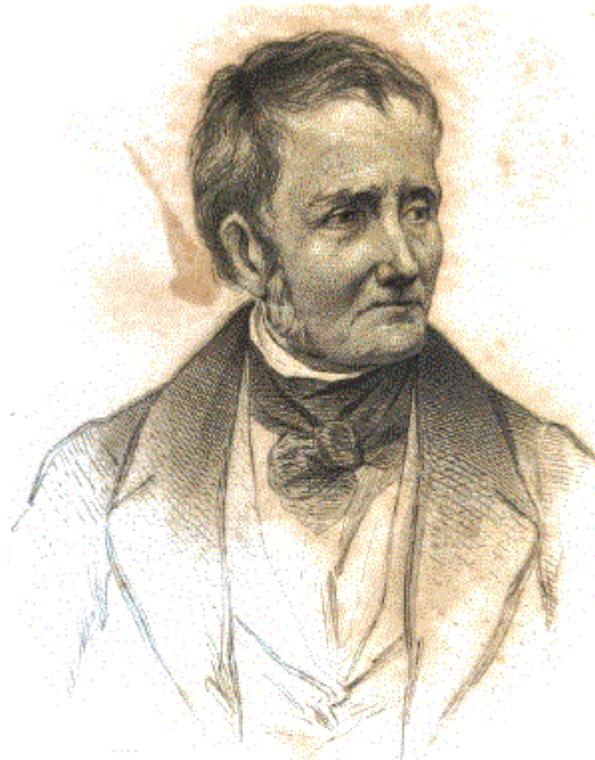


WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

a true Philosophy, and to be the re-establisher in England (with great accessions) of Mathematics.



*Very truly yours,
Thomas De Quincey.*

With Wordsworth, De Quincey published CLOSE COMMENTS UPON A STRAGGLING SPEECH, a Tory denunciation of Henry Brougham, an Independent Whig candidate in the parliamentary election campaign at Westmorland. He was appointed editor of the local Tory newspaper, The Westmorland Gazette. He slid deeper into debt.

Another English [opium](#) eater, [William Wilberforce](#), was in this year managing with medical assistance to bring

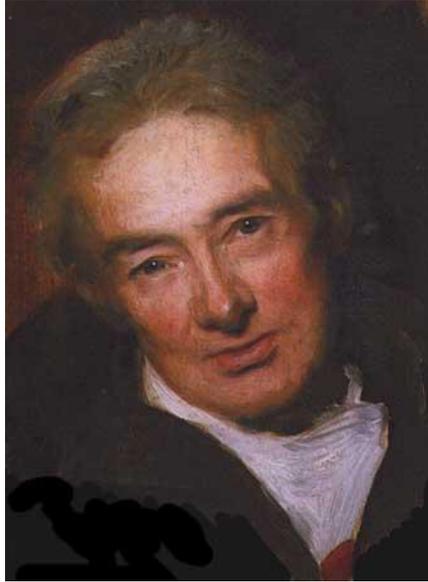


WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

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himself down to a maintenance dosage of 12 grains a day.



During this year and the next the daily dosage maintained by [Walter Scott](#), who had completed *ROB ROY* and *THE HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN* and was writing *THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR*, would be 200 drops of [laudanum](#)

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

and 6 grains of opium.³³



At the author's request the Scottish Regalia, which is to say the Crown and Sceptre and Sword of State

33. Hayter, A. OPIUM AND THE ROMANTIC IMAGINATION. London, 1968.



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

presented in 1507 to James IV by Pope Julius II, were recovered from a dusty trunk and displayed to him.

[Robert Jamieson](#) and [Walter Scott](#) edited the 5th edition of a 1754 volume, LETTERS FROM A GENTLEMAN IN THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND TO HIS FRIEND IN LONDON: CONTAINING THE DESCRIPTION OF A CAPITAL TOWN IN THAT NORTHERN COUNTRY, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF SOME UNCOMMON CUSTOMS OF THE INHABITANTS; LIKEWISE *AN ACCOUNT OF THE HIGHLANDS*, WITH THE CUSTOMS AND MANNERS OF THE HIGHLANDERS. TO WHICH IS ADDED, A LETTER RELATING TO THE MILITARY WAYS AMONG THE MOUNTAINS, BEGUN IN THE YEAR 1726 (two volumes, London: Printed for Rest Fenner, Paternoster-Row).

EDWARD BURT'S LETTERS

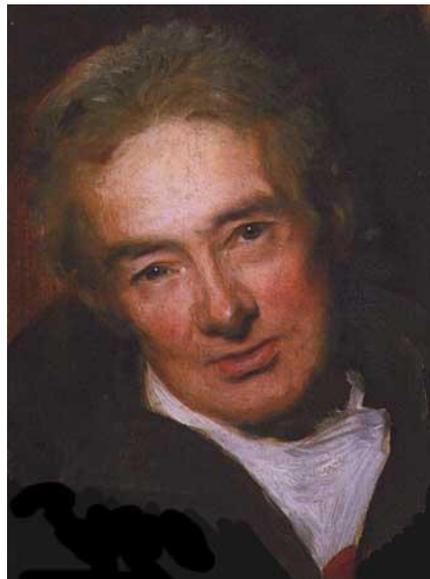
EDWARD BURT'S LETTERS

1819

 [William Wilberforce](#)'s enormously popular devotional work A PRACTICAL VIEW OF THE PREVAILING SYSTEM OF PROFESSED CHRISTIANS, IN THE HIGHER AND MIDDLE CLASSES IN THIS COUNTRY, CONTRASTED WITH REAL CHRISTIANITY. (This is the work which has become famous as "PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY.")

1821

 In England, [William Wilberforce](#) appealed to Thomas Fowell Buxton to undertake an inquiry into [slavery](#) in Parliament.





WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1823

➡ Although Lord Sidmouth had rejected [Friend Elizabeth Fry](#)'s criticism of the British prison system, his successor as Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, had introduced a series of reforms. In this year he sponsored a Gaols Act. Instead of a gaols being funded by exacting fees upon its prisoners, England began to pay a salary to its gaolers. Female prisoners were to be directly supervised by female rather than male gaolers. Arrangements were made for regular visits from prison chaplains. (These reforms did not, however, apply to debtors' prisons or local town and county gaols.)

England paid a £300,000 compensation to Portugal and extended Portugal's deadline for ending the [international slave trade](#) until February 1830. Thomas Fowell Buxton, Friend [Thomas Clarkson](#), and [William Wilberforce](#) founded The Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions, and began publishing its influential [Monthly Reporter](#). Parliament debated emancipation.³⁴ A slave uprising in Demerara polarized the factions.



Friend [Thomas Clarkson](#)'s THOUGHTS ON THE NECESSITY OF IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF THE SLAVES IN THE BRITISH COLONIES, WITH A VIEW TO THEIR ULTIMATE [EMANCIPATION](#); AND ON THE PRACTICABILITY, THE SAFETY, AND THE ADVANTAGES OF THE LATTER MEASURE was printed in London by R. Taylor.

34. In this year St. Stephen's Chapel—a sham Gothic pile where the Houses of Parliament were meeting—burned. Only a small portion of this structure now survives. The immense antique-looking structure with which we are now so familiar, that houses the present-day Parliament, and features Big Ben, would not be steel-framed until 1860. Buxton, who would retire from the House of Commons in 1825, would not play an important further part in persuading the Parliament to force an end to human enslavement.



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WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

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1824

Friend Elizabeth Heyrick's IMMEDIATE, NOT GRADUAL, ABOLITION; OR, AN INQUIRY INTO THE SHORTEST, SAFEST, AND MOST EFFECTUAL MEANS OF GETTING RID OF WEST INDIAN SLAVERY (click here).

1828



The negrero Blue-eyed Mary, of Baltimore, had been sold to Spaniards. It was captured with a cargo of 405 slaves by a British cruiser (Niles's Register, XXXIV. 346).

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

There was a great parade down Broadway Avenue in New-York, celebrating the New York Emancipation Act. As black women cheered from the sidewalks, the black men were led by the New York African Society for Mutual Relief, by the Clarkson Benevolent Society, and the Wilberforce Benevolent Society (named of course in honor of the famed English reformers Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce). The manumitted were marching along under banners on which was painted the word AFRICAN. This was, in a sense, a veterans' march — for hundreds of people were in attendance who had personally experienced the Middle Passage.

MANUMISSION

In this year the white city fathers, fearing "civil discord," would shut down the African Grove Theater which had been entertaining the black community since 1821, where they had been segregating white visitors into the rear since they had not seemed in general to understand "how to conduct themselves at entertainments of ladies and gentlemen of color." The slaves of New York State having been emancipated, it had apparently become illegal to accumulate people into coffles, or nightclubs. (Or, it being pointless in the State of New York to protest that one was being held in the condition known as slavery, the official reason why this was pointless was changed: whereas previously it had been pointless to point out that one was enslaved because the authorities would respond "Yes, and you're a slave," as of this year this had become pointless because the authorities had come to be able to respond "No, you are quite mistaken, in fact slavery is illegal here. Now get back to work.") At an unknown date within this time period, Sojourner Truth's husband Thomas died free. Beginning roughly at this point and definitely continuing in the following year, Isabella Van Wagenen (Truth) was working as a free domestic servant in Kingston in Ulster County. Slightly to the south of this, however, living with the Auld family in a rented house on Philpot Street in Fells Point in Maryland near the facilities of the slave trader Austin Woolfolk, Frederick Douglass was lying at night, listening as slave coffles shuffled along from the pens to the port for transportation. He was learning about the enduring, obdurate nature of the world.³⁵



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1829

→ The ex-slave Israel Lewis, of Cincinnati, negotiated the “purchase” of an 800-acre township north of London in Canada. This would become the community of Wilberforce (named in honor of the famed English reformer [William Wilberforce](#)), despite the fact that the cash to complete the purchase would never be forthcoming and the fact that most of the black farmers of this community would come to be regarded by the courts as mere squatters. Only about 40,000 Americans, max, would ever escape to such communities in Canada, and since this would be spread over a period of three decades, it means that fewer than four persons per day would be

35. This was the year of the United States’s first touring “minstrel show,” in which a white man with his face painted black,



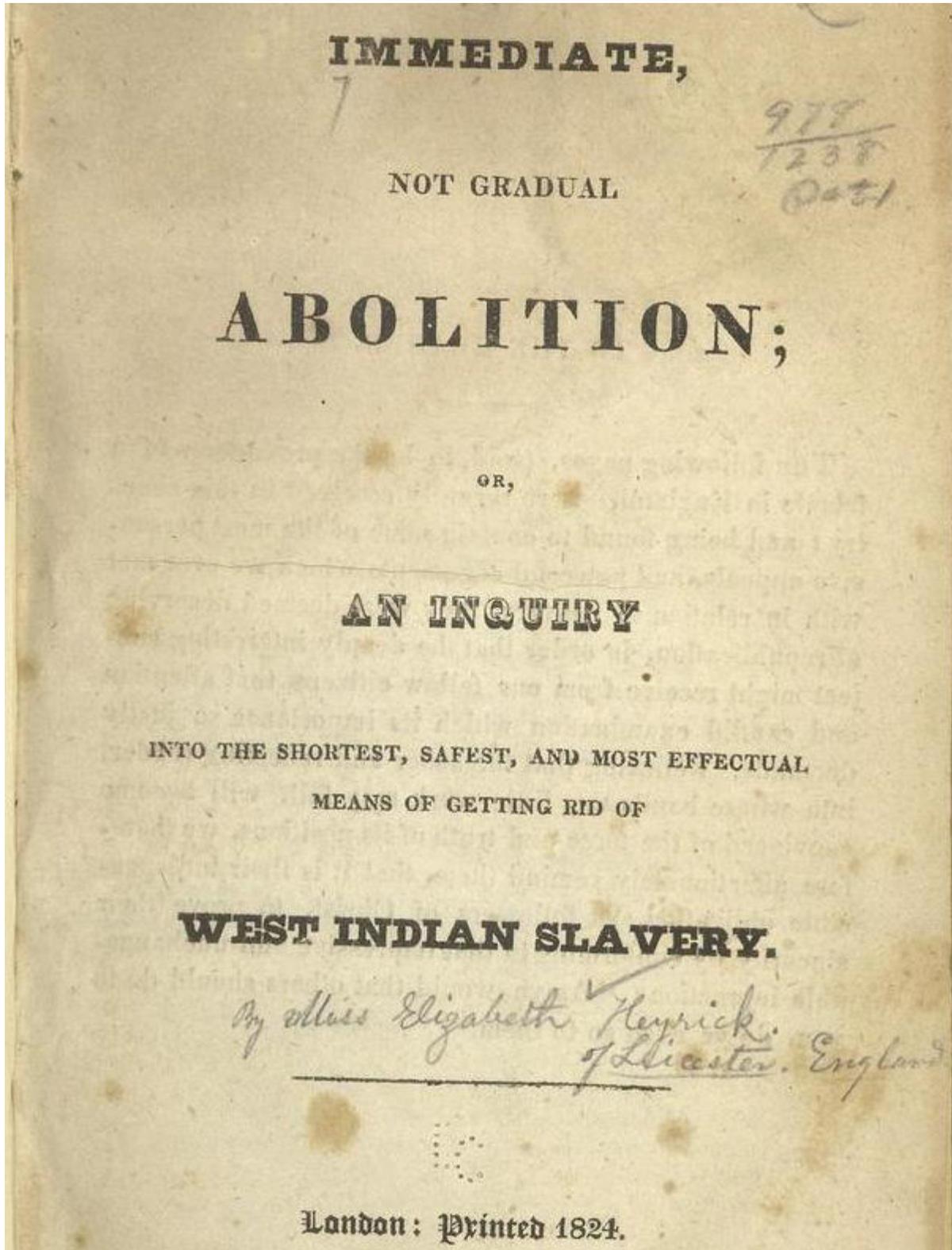
Thomas D. Rice, presented himself as a character named “Jim Crow.” By the time of the Civil War this would amount to a national industry of sorts, with more than 30 full-time white touring companies going from city to city putting on professional imitations of black comedians. (During the US Civil War a shortage of white comics would cause some of these troupes to employ some black performers — who of course would perform, as did the whites, in blackface.)



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successfully using the fabled Underground Railroad:



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Thus such sentimental depictions as the above, done in the warm eye of retrospect as of 1893 by Charles T. Webber, are utterly inaccurate.

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1833

→ July 29, Monday: Charles Babbage reported to the British Treasury that he had had an unsatisfactory meeting with the contractor Joseph Clement subsequent to their letter to him dated May 29th, and had requested that the contractor for his Calculational Engine express his views in writing.

[William Wilberforce](#) died.



That Sunday in London, [Waldo Emerson](#) would attend Wilberforce's Westminster Abbey funeral — and would be able there to get quite a good look at a much more lively and interesting and living personage, man of the

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

hour, alpha male, [Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington](#).



Commander [George Back](#) arrived at Fort Chipewyan.

After some detentions of an ordinary kind, we got to Fort Chipewyan on the 29th of July. We arrived so early, that we were not in the least expected; and the canoe was not seen until within a short distance of the land, - a circumstance by no means pleasing to the guide, who, besides his own decorations of many coloured feathers, &c., had taken more than ordinary pains to display to the best advantage the crimson beauties of a large silk flag.



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

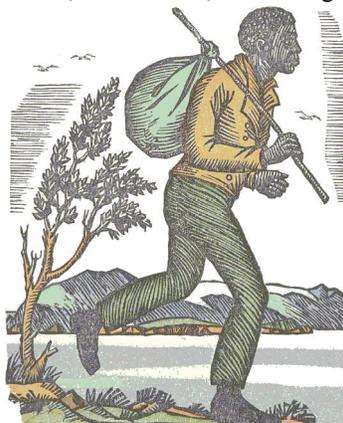
PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

➡ August 28, Wednesday: Subsequent to the passage of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act by Parliament, British captains who had been being caught continuing in these international business activities had been being fined £100 for every slave found on board their vessel. However, this 1807 law had by no means been effective in halting British participation in the [international slave trade](#) — because, when slavers were in danger of being overtaken by the British navy, their captains could sometimes reduce the fines by having the cargo of blacks shoved off the other side of the vessel, to be dragged under the waves by their chains.

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE



Some involved in the anti-trade campaign found themselves therefore arguing that to end this cruel practice the entire traffic in humans must be outlawed, and in 1823 a new Anti-Slavery Society had been formed. Members had included Friend [Thomas Clarkson](#), Henry Peter Brougham, [William Wilberforce](#), and Thomas Fowell Buxton. On this day Parliament passed the Slavery Abolition Act. This act [manumitted](#) all slaves anywhere in the British Empire (such as, for instance, in our neighbor to the north, Canada) under the age of



six years with the British government itself to pay full compensation to the deprived slavemasters. All slaves in the West Indies already above the age of six were by this act to be bound as apprentices for a term of 5 to 7 years (this would be reduced to 2 years), to be followed by their manumission. Said liberation was scheduled to begin on August 1, 1834 ➡ with the last batch of slaves to receive their manumission papers by August



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1, 1838. As a condition of their cooperation the white “owners” of these 700,000 black and red workers were to receive some £20,000,000 sterling in compensation. (For instance, the Bishop of Exeter alone, with 665 slaves to manumit, would receive £12,700 in compensation out of the government’s tax revenues.)

SLAVERY

1834

August 1, Friday: Slavery already being illegal in England and [William Wilberforce](#) having emancipated the slaves of the English Antilles, at this point the British parliament emancipated the 800,000 black slaves of the British West Indies. In the beginning of this long process of emancipation, those under six years of age were freed, and all others were bound there as “apprentice laborers” to continue to serve their former owners at specified wages for the term of 5 to 7 years (later this would be reduced to 2 years) to be followed by their emancipation, a phase to be completed on August 1, 1838, under conditions of the Abolition Act of August 28, 1833. As a condition of their cooperation the white “owners” of these black and red “slaves” were to receive some £20,000,000 in compensation.

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

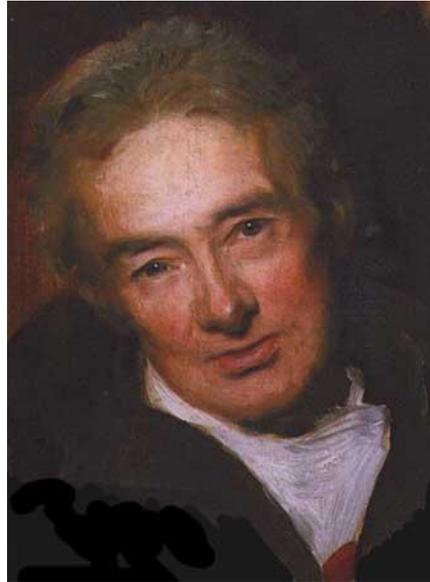
WILLIAM WILBERFORCE



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

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35,000 slaves became free in South Africa and South Africa was on its march to becoming what it is now, a haven of sweetness and light (of course, this simplified account leaves out some of the intermediate stages in the South African progress).

With a large population of Quakers who were staunchly anti-slavery, [New Bedford, Massachusetts](#) had become a stop on the Underground Railroad, helping blacks flee the oppression of the American Southern states, so it had acquired a reputation as a safe haven. There would be a few from the West Indies who would make their way there. These West Indians who would settle in the local area of course would remember this Emancipation Day and make it an annual event. Something for everyone, even for the white people: on this

ABOLITIONISM

momentous day, also, England forbade [hanging](#) as punishment for “returning too soon from transportation!”



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1845



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Lecture Season: The 17th course of lectures offered by the Salem Lyceum consisted of:

The Salem Lyceum — 17th Season

H.N. Hudson

King Lear, (Shakspeare)

The Reverend William Henry Channing

The College, the Church, and the State

E. Darling

Chemistry, including Solidification of Carbonic Acid Gas

W.B. Sprague

Life of [Wilberforce](#)

Stephen Pearl Andrews

Phonography

George H. Devereux of Salem

Man

Charles T. Brooks

Omnipresence of the Poetic

James T. Fields

Books

A.F. Boyle

Phonography

Caleb Stetson

Individuality of Man

Lieutenant Halleck

The Battle of Waterloo

Amory Holbrook of Salem

Galileo

Samuel Osgood

Rousseau

Charles B. Haddock

Cultivation of a Taste for Letters by Men of Business

Fletcher Webster

China (1st lecture)

China (2d lecture)

Edwin P. Whipple

Wit and Humor

The Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)

The Progress of Man

[Professor Asa Gray](#)

Geographical Botany (1st lecture)

Geographical Botany (2d lecture)

Thomas D. Anderson

Reverence for our Government and Laws

[Waldo Emerson](#) of Concord

Napoleon Bonaparte



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

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 \$10.⁰⁰ per dispatch. 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

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.



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

2005

Wayne Ackerson's THE AFRICAN INSTITUTION (1807-1827) AND THE ANTISLAVERY MOVEMENT IN GREAT BRITAIN was published by the Edwin Mellen Press of Ceredigion, United Kingdom. (This "African Institution" was an antislavery group formed by a group of members of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), including British Friends William Allen and [Luke Howard](#) during the early 19th Century, and its members had included royalty, prominent lawyers, Members of Parliament, and noted reformers such as [William Wilberforce](#), Thomas Clarkson, and Zachary Macaulay. Focusing on the spread of Western civilization to Africa, the abolition of the foreign slave trade, and improving the lives of slaves in British colonies, the group's influence extended far into Britain's diplomatic relations in addition to the government's domestic affairs. The 20-year period of its existence was a crucial transitional period for the antislavery movement.)





WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

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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 3, 2013



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

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.



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

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 researchlibrarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

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Arrgh.