

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

BENJAMIN “VERSE-MAKERS WERE GENERALLY BEGGARS” FRANKLIN¹



*Son of so-and-so and so-and-so, this
so-and-so helped us to gain our independence,
instructed us in economy,
and drew down lightning from the clouds.*

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

1. [Franklin](#) was distantly related to Friend [Lucretia Mott](#), as was [John Greenleaf Whittier](#), Henry Adams, and Octavius Brooks Frothingham.



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WALDEN: In most books, the **I**, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained; that, in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were any body else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience.

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WALDEN: But all this is very selfish, I have heard some of my townsmen say. I confess that I have hitherto indulged very little in philanthropic enterprises. I have made some sacrifices to a sense of duty, and among others have sacrificed this pleasure also. There are those who have used all their arts to persuade me to undertake the support of some poor family in town; and if I had nothing to do, -for the devil finds employment for the idle,- I might try my hand at some such pastime as that. However, when I have thought to indulge myself in this respect, and lay their Heaven under an obligation by maintaining certain poor persons in all respects as comfortably as I maintain myself, and have even ventured so far as to make them the offer, they have one and all unhesitatingly preferred to remain poor. While my townsmen and women are devoted in so many ways to the good of their fellows, I trust that one at least may be spared to other and less humane pursuits. You must have a genius for charity as well as for any thing else. As for Doing-good, that is one of the professions which are full. Moreover, I have tried it fairly, and, strange as it may seem, am satisfied that it does not agree with my constitution. Probably I should not consciously and deliberately forsake my particular calling to do the good which society demands of me, to save the universe from annihilation; and I believe that a like but infinitely greater steadfastness elsewhere is all that now preserves it. But I would not stand between any man and his genius; and to him who does this work, which I decline, with his whole heart and soul and life, I would say, Persevere, even if the world call it doing evil, as it is most likely they will.

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WALDEN: I am not sure that I ever heard the sound of cock-crowing from my clearing, and I thought that it might be worth the while to keep a cockerel for his music merely, as a singing bird. The note of this once wild Indian pheasant is certainly the most remarkable of any bird's, and if they could be naturalized without being domesticated, it would soon become the most famous sound in our woods, surpassing the clangor of the goose and the hooting of the owl; and then imagine the cackling of the hens to fill the pauses when their lords' clarions rested! No wonder that man added this bird to his tame stock, -to say nothing of the eggs and drumsticks. To walk in a winter morning in a wood where these birds abounded, their native woods, and hear the wild cockerels crow on the trees, clear and shrill for miles over the resounding earth, drowning the feebler notes of other birds, -think of it! It would put nations on the alert. Who would not be early to rise, and rise earlier and earlier every successive day of his life, till he became unspeakably healthy, wealthy, and wise? This foreign bird's note is celebrated by the poets of all countries along with the notes of their native songsters. All climates agree with brave Chanticleer. He is more indigenous even than the natives. His health is ever good, his lungs are sound, his spirits never flag.

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1657

December 23, Wednesday (Old Style): [Josiah Franklin](#) (the father of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born in Ecton, Northamptonshire, England, the ninth and last child of [Thomas Franklin](#), farmer and blacksmith, and [Jane White Franklin](#). After [Jane](#)'s death [Thomas](#) would remarry — and create more children.



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1667

August 15, Thursday: Abiah Folger (the mother of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born on [Nantucket Island](#), the ninth and last child of Peter Folger, a schoolmaster and a miller, and Mary Morrills Folger.²

2. Ben, worlds apart in attitude, would be distantly related by blood to Friend [Lucretia Mott](#) of Nantucket.



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1683

July: Proprietor [William Penn](#) ordered the establishment of a postoffice and put Henry Waldy of Tekonay in charge, “to supply passengers with horses from Philadelphia to New Castle, or to the Falls.” The post was to be carried once a week, and postal rates were to be published “on the meeting-house door, and other public places”:

- A letter from the Falls to Philadelphia 3d
- A letter from the Falls to Chester 5d
- A letter from the Falls to New Castle 7d
- A letter from the Falls to Maryland 9d
- A letter from Philadelphia to Chester 2d
- A letter from Philadelphia to New Castle 4d
- A letter from Philadelphia to [Maryland](#) 6d

Sometime in the second half of 1683, [Josiah Franklin](#), [Ann Child Franklin](#), and their initial three children emigrated from Banbury, Oxfordshire to Boston, Massachusetts.



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1685

August 23, Sunday (Old Style): [Josiah Franklin](#) (half-brother of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born in [Boston](#) (this was the brother who “Went to sea, never heard of”).

September 27, Thursday (Old Style): [Josiah Franklin](#) (father of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) professed his faith and was admitted to membership in the Third or Old South Church in [Boston](#).

[Josiah](#) took up residence in Milk Street in 1685, renting a house from Nathaniel Reynolds on which Simeon Stoddard held a mortgage. Thomas Minns speculated that [Josiah](#) rented a shop at 339-341 Washington Street (the site of the land in 1906) at the same time that he rented the Milk Street house: “the fact that he [[Josiah Franklin](#)] could obtain a house and a shop so near together may have determined the place of his residence.”



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1687

January 5, Wednesday (1686, Old Style): Ann(e) Franklin (half-sister of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born in Boston (married July 10, 1712, William Harris; deceased June 16, 1729).

[John Evelyn](#)'s diary entry for this day was in part as follows:

HUGUENOTS

The [French K\[ing\]](#) now sayd to be healed or rather patch'd up of the [fistula in Ano](#),³ for which he had ben severall times cut: &c: The persecution still raging:

I was to heare the Musique of the Italians in the new Chapel, now first of all opned at White-hall publicely for the Popish Service: Nothing can be finer than the magnificent Marble work & Architecture at the End, where are 4 statues representing st. Joh[n] st. Petre, st. Paule, & the Church, statues in white marble, the worke of Mr. Gibbons, with all the carving & Pillars of exquisite art & greate cost: The history or altar piece is the Salutation, The Volto, in fresca, the Asumption of the blessed Virgin according to their Traditions with our B[lessed] Saviour, & a world of figures, painted by Verio. The thrones where the K[ing] & Q[ueen] sits is very glorious in a Closset above just opposite to the Altar: Here we saw the Bishop in his Miter; & rich

3. Rectal ulcer. [King Louis XIV of France](#) had been suffering from an anal fistula for at least a year. Initially they tried a poultice that wasn't seeming to help and that summer the condition of the monarch's butt became the talk of the French court. He called for other sufferers to report their own experience, and dispatched them to various spas to try the waters and report back to him. When he finally agreed to surgery the royal surgeon, Charles Felix de Tassy, who had never performed such an operation, decided to get in some practice first, on butts of lesser moment. After a couple of unfortunate deaths and a series of successful operations, the surgeon had gained enough confidence that on November 18, 1686 he had the King drop his drawers and assumed the position. The cutting was performed in the presence of the monarch's mistress, the chief minister, and entire medical staff. A special curved scalpel had been fashioned for the occasion. Only an hour after the cutting the King was conducting state business from his bed, and in a few months the wound healed. The bold surgeon would be granted an estate and a pile of money. The event became such a rage at court that some 30 gentleman hangers-on would attempt to persuade this surgeon to perform upon them the monarch's procedure — despite their having no need for it. (Being relieved of his affliction would not induce the Catholic monarch to become more forgiving toward his [Protestant](#) subjects in the south of France, the Vaudois.)

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*Copes, with 6 or 7: Jesuits & others in Rich Copes richly habited, often taking off, & putting on the Bishops Miter, who sate in a Chaire with Armes pontificaly, was adored, & censed by 3 Jesuits in their Copes, then he went to the Altar & made divers Cringes there, censing the Images, & glorious Tabernacle placed upon the Altar; & now & then changing place; The Crosier (which was of silver) put into his hand, with a world of mysterious Ceremony the Musique pla[y]ing & singing: & so I came away: not believing I should ever have lived to see such things in the K[ing] of Englands palace, after it had pleas'd God to inlighten this nation; but our greate sinn, has (for the present) Eclips'd the Blessing, which I hope he will in mercy & his good time restore to its purity. This was on the 29 of December:
Little appearance of any Winter as yet:*





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1688

February 6, Monday (1687, Old Style): Joseph Franklin (half-brother of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born in Boston. Since he would die five days later (11 Feb 1688), the next son would also be named Joseph.

August 19, Sunday (Old Style): Abiah Folger (mother of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) professed her faith and was admitted to membership in the Third or Old South Church.



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1689

June 30, Sunday (20th Old Style): Joseph (half-brother of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born in Boston (would die on 15 July 1689; the previous short-lived brother had also been named Joseph).

Monmouth proclaimed himself King at Taunton. In the diary of [John Evelyn](#), we see:

*Dined with me the Countesse of Bristoll & Sunderland, Sir W: Godolphin, Dr. Tenison & Mrs. Penelope Godolphin: Brought newes of a plot discovered, upon which divers were sent to Tower & secured:
Twas now also reported that Col: Kirke had gotten into Lond[on] Derry with supplied: [but this proved false.]*

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The 1st Church of England (Anglican) service in the new [King's Chapel](#), which had been based on slate from Slate Island in Boston Harbor.



This new religious entity of course assumed responsibility for the old Boston burying-ground adjacent to it.

THE SCARLET LETTER: So said Hester Prynne, and glanced her sad eyes downward at the scarlet letter. And, after many, many years, a new grave was delved, near an old and sunken one, in that burial-ground beside which King's Chapel has since been built. It was near that old and sunken grave, yet with a space between, as if the dust of the two sleepers had no right to mingle. Yet one tombstone served for both. All around, there were monuments carved with armorial bearings; and on this simple slab of slate -as the curious investigator may still discern, and perplex himself with the purport- there appeared the semblance of an engraved escutcheon. It bore a device, a herald's wording of which may serve for a motto and brief description of our now concluded legend; so sombre is it, and relieved only by one ever-glowing point of light gloomier than the shadow: -

“ON A FIELD, SABLE, THE LETTER *A*, GULES”

KING'S CHAPEL



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July 9 (June 29, Old Style): [Anne Child Franklin](#) (1st wife of [Josiah Franklin](#)) died in Boston.

[Baron de Lahontan](#) was back in the New France colony. He spoke to no-one about any “Long River.” He said nothing whatever about the native tribes he would later report that he had encountered, the Essanapes, Gnacsitaires, Moozimlek, Nadouessioux, and Panimobas. Is that suspicious? –Well, indeed, yes, it is somewhat suspicious.

November 25 (November 15, Old Style): [Josiah Franklin](#) ([Benjamin Franklin](#)’s father) and [Abiah Folger](#) ([Benjamin Franklin](#)’s mother) were wed in the Old South Church by the Reverend Samuel Willard.



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1690

September 16, Tuesday (Old Style): At 11 PM, a fire broke out at the house of John Allen in [Boston](#), burning his apprentice to death, then, according to the diary of Judge Samuel Sewall, spreading to “the House of Lieut. Reynolds, Mr. Bligh, Langden, and a great part of Savil Simson’s. The wind being Sou-west the South-Meeting House was preserv’d with very much difficulty, being in a flame in diverse places of it.”⁴ If, in this diary entry, “the House of Lieut. Reynolds” refers to the Franklin residence in Boston, then [Josiah Franklin](#), his wife [Abiah](#), and their five children all escaped. Since Lt. Reynolds would take out a mortgage for £50 in the following year, it would seem that the house was partly burned and then repaired (the Franklins would have rented elsewhere temporarily, or stayed with friends for several months, while this work was going on).

December 7, Sunday (Old Style): John Franklin, brother of [Benjamin Franklin](#), was born in Boston (he would get married with Mary Gooch, remarry with Elizabeth Gooch Hubbard, and die in Boston on January 30, 1756).

4. This would not count as one of the major conflagrations engulfing colonial Boston, such as the major conflagration that had just erupted on August 3d.

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1691

Mary Hale was brought before the court on an accusation of [witchcraft](#) in [Boston](#), Massachusetts. The accused had been in court on similar charges before. We don't know how the case came out.



By this year a [Huguenot](#) named Peter Faneuil, from La Rochelle, had settled in [Boston](#). His descendant Andrew Faneuil, merchant, would establish a warehouse on the corner of Merchants Row.

WIKIPEDIA'S LIST OF HUGUENOTS

The house in which [Benjamin Franklin](#) would be born had probably been partly rebuilt after the fire of September 16th in the previous year. The house occupied the corner of High Street (later called Marlborough Street, and after 1789, called Washington Street) and Milk Street, on the southern side of Milk Street. The Old South Church was just across from this home, that is, on the north side of Milk Street (Milk Street ended at High Street). The southwesterly end of the lot contained a well shared with neighbor Jonathan Balston. The last inhabitant of the Reynolds/Franklin house would describe it, some years after it had been demolished, in the following manner:

Its front upon the street was rudely clapboarded, and the sides and rear were protected from the inclemencies of a New England climate by large rough shingles. On the street it measured about twenty feet; and on the sides (the westerly of which was bounded by the passageway, and contained the doorway approached, by two steps) the extreme length of the building, including a wooden lean-to used as a kitchen, was about thirty feet. In height the house was about three stories, the upper being an attic, which presented a pointed gable towards the street. In front, the second story and attic projected somewhat into the street over the principal story on the ground floor. On the lower floor of the main house there was one room only. This, which probably served the Franklins as a parlor and sitting-room, and also for the family eating-room, was about twenty feet square, and had two windows upon the street; and it had, also, one upon the passageway, so near the corner as to give the inmates a good view of Washington Street. Besides these windows there had been



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others in the days of its early proprietors which opened upon the easterly side of the house, the seats of which were retained until the destruction of the building. In the centre of the southerly side of the room was one of those noted large fireplaces, situated in a most capacious chimney, which are so well remembered as among the comforts of old houses; on the left of this was a spacious closet, and on the right, the door communicating with a small entry in which were the stairs to the rooms above and the cellar, the latter of which was accessible to the street through one of the old-fashioned cellar doors, situated partly in the sidewalk. On the ground floor, connecting with the sitting-room through the entry, was situated the kitchen, in a ten-foot addition to the rear part of the main building [the 8-square-foot addition by [Josiah Franklin](#)?]. The only windows from this part of the house looked back upon a vacant lot of land in the extreme rear of the lot which served as a yard and a garden plot. The second story originally contained but one chamber and in this the windows, door, fireplace and closet were similar in number and position to those in the parlor beneath it. The attic was also, originally, one unplastered room, and had a window in front on the street, and two common attic windows, one on each side of the roof, near the back part of it.

April 27, Monday (Old Style): “Granted Libertie to [Josiah Frankline](#) to erect a buildinge of 8 Foote square vpon the Land belonginge to Lt. Nathaniel Reynolds neere the South Meetinge house.” This small structure in [Boston](#) was presumably used as a kitchen during the summers while a fire in the main house would have made the home uncomfortably hot, and, perhaps, it might also have been used for storage of wares.



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1692

November 22, Tuesday (Old Style): [Peter Franklin](#) (brother of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born in [Boston](#) (he would get married on September 2d, 1714 with Mary Harman and die at Philadelphia on July 1st, 1766).




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1693

 8mo. 13: A printed text amounting to some six pages, unsigned except as by “our Monthly Meeting in Philadelphia” but now attributed to [Friend George Keith](#), entitled “An Exhortation & Caution to Friends concerning buying or keeping of Negroes,” was presumably (having been set in type by William Bradford of New-York) the 1st American protest against [slavery](#) to be put through the printing process. This initial publication would be referred to in Gabriel Thomas’s HISTORY OF PENNSYLVANIA (1698) and in a 1789 letter from [Benjamin Franklin](#) to John Wright, and the material would be reprinted on some date in [The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography](#), and reprinted again as an offset by that magazine in 1889.

Although this seems to have been the 1st anti-slavery declaration by American Quakers to make its way through a printing press, it was not their 1st anti-slavery declaration for one such had already been expressed, at a gathering in Germantown five years earlier, in 1688, without then however being distributed in print form.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



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AN EXHORTATION & CAUTION TO FRIENDS

CONCERNING BUYING OR KEEPING OF NEGROES

[GEORGE KEITH]

[Moore, George, ed.]

**The First Printed Protest Against Slavery in America,
Reprinted from "The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography."
Philadelphia: n.p., 1889.]**

Seing our Lord Jesus Christ hath tasted Death for every Man, and given himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time, and that his Gospel of Peace, Liberty and Redemption from Sin, Bondage and all Oppression, is freely to be preached unto all, without Exception, and that *Negroes, Blacks, and Taunies* are a real part of Mankind, for whom Christ hath shed his precious Blood, and are capable of Salvation, as well as *White Men*; and Christ the Light of the World hath (in measure) enlightened them, and every Man that cometh into the World; and that all such who are sincere *Christians* and true Believers in Christ Jesus, and Followers of him, bear his Image, and are made conformable unto him in Love, Mercy, Goodness and Compassion, who came not to destroy men's Lives, but to save them, nor to bring any part of Mankind into outward Bondage, Slavery or Misery, nor yet to detain them, or hold them therein, but to ease and deliver the Oppressed and Distressed, and bring into Liberty both inward and outward.

Therefore we judge it necessary that all faithful Friends should discover themselves to be true *Christians* by having the Fruits of the Spirit of Christ, which are *Love, Mercy, Goodness, and Compassion* towards all in Misery, and that suffer Oppression and severe Usage, so far as in them is possible to ease and relieve them, and set them free of their hard Bondage, whereby it may be hoped, that many of them will be gained by their beholding these good Works of sincere *Christians*, and prepared thereby, through the Preaching the Gospel of Christ, to imbrace the true Faith of Christ. And for this cause it is, as we judge, that in



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some places in *Europe* Negroes cannot be bought and sold for Money, or detained to be Slaves, because it suits not with the Mercy, Love & Clemency that is essential to *Christianity*, nor to the Doctrine of Christ, nor to the Liberty the Gospel calleth all men unto, to whom it is preached. And to buy Souls and Bodies of men for Money, to enslave them and their Posterity to the end of the World, we judge is a great hinderance to the spreading of the Gospel, and is occasion of much War, Violence, Cruelty and Oppression, and Theft & Robery of the highest Nature; for commonly the Negroes that are sold to white Men, are either stollen away or robbed from their kindred, and to buy such is the way to continue these evil Practices of Man-stealing, and transgresseth that Golden Rule and Law, *To do to others what we would have others do to us.*

Therefore, in true Christian Love, we earnestly recommend it to all our Friends and Brethren, Not to buy any Negroes, unless it were on purpose to set them free, and that such who have bought any, and have them at present, after some reasonable time of moderate Service they have had of them, or may have of them, that may reasonably answer to the Charge of what they have laid out, especially in keeping Negroes Children born in their House, or taken into their House, when under Age, that after a reasonable time of service to answer that Charge, they may set them at Liberty, and during the time they have them, to teach them to read, and give them a Christian Education.

Some Reasons and Causes of our being against keeping of Negroes for Term of Life.

First, Because it is contrary to the Principles and Practice of the Christian Quakers to buy Prize or stollen Goods, which we bore a faithful Testimony against in our Native Country; and therefore it is our Duty to come forth in a Testimony against stollen Slaves, it being accounted a far greater Crime under Moses's Law than the stealing of Goods: for such were only to restore four fold, but he that stealeth a Man and selleth him, if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to Death, Exod. 21. 16. Therefore as we are not to buy stollen Goods, (but if at unawares it should happen through Ignorance, we are to restore them to the Owners, and seek our Remedy of the Thief) no more are we to buy stollen Slaves; neither should such as have them keep them and their Posterity in perpetual Bondage and Slavery, as is usually done, to the great scandal of the Christian Profession.

Secondly, Because Christ commanded, saying, All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them. Therefore as we and our Children would not be kept in perpetual Bondage and Slavery against our Consent, neither should we keep them in perpetual Bondage and Slavery against their Consent, it being such intollerable Punishment to their Bodies and Minds, that none but notorious Criminal Offendors



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deserve the same. But these have done us no harm; therefore how inhumane is it in us so grievously to oppress them and their Children from one Generation to another.

Thirdly, Because the Lord hath commanded, saying, Thou shalt not deliver unto his Master the Servant that is escaped from his Master unto thee, he shall dwell with thee, even amongst you in that place which he shall chuse in one of thy Gates, where it liketh him best; thou shalt oppress him, DEUT. 23. 15. 16. By which it appeareth, that those which are at Liberty and freed from their Bondage, should not by us be delivered into Bondage again, neither by us should they be oppressed, but being escaped from his Master, should have the liberty to dwell amongst us, where it liketh him best. Therefore, if God extend such Mercy under the legal Ministration and Dispensation to poor Servants, he doth and will extend much more of his Grace and Mercy to them under the clear Gospel Ministration; so that instead of punishing them and their Posterity with cruel Bondage and perpetual Slavery, he will cause the Everlasting Gospel to be preached effectually to all Nations, to them as well as others; And the Lord will extend Peace to his People like a River, and the Glory of the Gentiles like a flowing Stream; And it shall come to pass, saith the Lord, that I will gather all Nations and Tongues, and they shall come and see my Glory, and I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the Nations, to Tarshish, Pull and Lud that draw the Bow to Tuball and Javan, to the Isles afar off that have not heard my Fame, neither have seen my Glory, and they shall declare my Glory among the Gentiles, Isa. 66. 12-18.

Fourthly, Because the Lord hath commanded, saying, Thou shalt not oppress an hired Servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy Brethren, or of the Strangers that are in thy Land within thy Gates, lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee; Thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppress him, for ye were strangers in the Land of Egypt, DEUT. 24. 14, 15. EXOD. 12. 21. But what greater Oppression can there be inflicted upon our Fellow Creatures, than is inflicted on the poor Negroes! they being brought from their own Country against their Wills, some of them being stollen, others taken for payment of Debt owing by their Parents, and others taken Captive in War, and sold to Merchants, who bring them to the American Plantations, and sell them for Bond Slaves to them that will give most for them; the Husband from the Wife, and the Children from the Parents; and many that buy them do exceedingly afflict them and oppress them, not only by continual hard Labour, but by cruel Whippings, and other cruel Punishments, and by short allowance of Food, some Planters in Barbadoes and Jamaica, 'tis said, keeping one hundred of them, and some more, and some less, and giving them hardly any thing more than they raise on a little piece of Ground appointed them, on which they work for themselves the seventh days of the Week in the after-noon, and on the first days, to raise their own Provisions, to wit, Corn and Potatoes, and other Roots, &c. the remainder of their time



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being spent in their Masters service; which doubtless is far worse usage than is practised by the *Turks* and *Moors* upon their Slaves. Which tends to the great Reproach of the *Christian Profession*; therefore it would be better for all such as fall short of the Practice of those *Infidels*, to refuse the name of a Christian, that those *Heathen* and *Infidels* may not be provoked to blaspheme against the blessed Name of Christ, by reason of the unparallel'd Cruelty of these cruel and hard hearted pretended Christians: Surely the Lord doth behold their Oppressions & Afflictions, and will further visit for the same by his righteous and just Judgments, except they break off their sins by Repentance, and their Iniquity by shewing Mercy to these poor afflicted, tormented miserable Slaves!

Fifthly, Because Slaves and Souls of Men are some of the *Merchandize of Babylon* by which the Merchants of the Earth are made Rich; but those Riches which they have heaped together, through the cruel Oppression of these miserable Creatures, will be a means to draw Gods Judgments upon them; therefore, *Brethren*, let us hearken to the Voice of the Lord, who saith, *Come out of Babylon, my People, that ye be not partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not her Plagues; for her Sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities; for he that leads into Captivity shall go into Captivity*, Rev. 18. 4, 5. & 13. 10.

Given forth by our Monthly Meeting in Philadelphia, the 13th day of the 8th Moneth, 1693. and recommended to all our Friends and Brethren, who are one with us in our Testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ, and to all others professing Christianity.

THE END.



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1694

February 4, Sunday (1693, Old Style): [Josiah Franklin](#) and his second wife [Abiah Franklin](#) joined those admitted to communion at the Old South Church.

September 26, Wednesday (Old Style): [Mary Franklin](#) (sister of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born in Boston (she would get married with Robert Homes or Holmes, and die in 1731).



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1697

February 4, Thursday (1696, Old Style): [James Franklin](#) was born in [Boston](#), son of [Josiah Franklin](#) and [Abiah Folger Franklin](#). He would learn the printing trade in London.

May 4, Tuesday (Old Style): “At a publick meeting of the inhabitants of [Boston](#) ... [Josiah Franklin](#) ... chosen Tythingmen for the year ensuing.”



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1698

In [Boston](#), the blue ball that [Josiah Franklin](#) mounted over his shop on High Street would bear the date

1698

[John Comer \(2\)](#) got married with Mary Pittom in [Boston](#).

A visitor to [Boston](#) described its four ministers as “one a scholar, one a gentleman, one a dunce, and one a clown.” The visitor, a Mr. Ward, described how a ship captain upon returning from a long voyage had dared to give his wife a kiss in public, and had for this offense been fined ten shillings (Mr. Ward pointed out that in England at this time, “we can not only kiss our own wives, but other men’s, without a danger of penalty”).



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1699

July 9, Sunday (Old Style): [Sarah Franklin](#), a sister of [Benjamin Franklin](#), was born in [Boston](#) (she would get married with James Davenport on May 23, 1722 and die on May 23, 1731).



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1700

The municipality of Philadelphia was ordering that every homeowner plant one or more trees so that their town would “thereby be rendered more healthy.” ([Benjamin Franklin](#), who could see no point whatever to mixing up the forest with the city, would refuse to allow his fire [insurance](#) company to write coverage for any homeowner who obeyed this injunction and fronted his house by plantings –which might be combusted in a municipal fire– between it and the road and sidewalk.)



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1701

March 10, Monday (1700, Old Style): In [Boston](#), “At a Publicke Town meeting of the Inhabitants,” [Josiah Franklin](#) was elected a clerk of the market.

September 20, Saturday (Old Style): [Ebenezer Franklin](#) (brother of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born in [Boston](#) (died February 5, 1702/1703).



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1703

February: A [Jew](#) died in [Boston](#). Because the tenets of this religion were understood to require burial within 24 hours, the corpse was dispatched posthaste (or, one might say, postchaise) to Bristol, and then conveyed by ferry to the Jewish cemetery at [Newport, Rhode Island](#).

During this month there was another death in Boston:

"[Ebenezer Franklin](#) of the South Church, a male-Infant of 16 months old, was drown'd in a Tub of Suds."

March 8, Monday (1702, Old Style): "At a Publick meeting of the Freeholders ... of the Town of [Boston](#)," [Josiah Franklin](#) was chosen a constable.

December 7, Tuesday (Old Style): [Thomas Franklin](#) was born in [Boston](#), a son of [Abiah Franklin](#) and [Josiah Franklin](#) (would die on August 17, 1706).



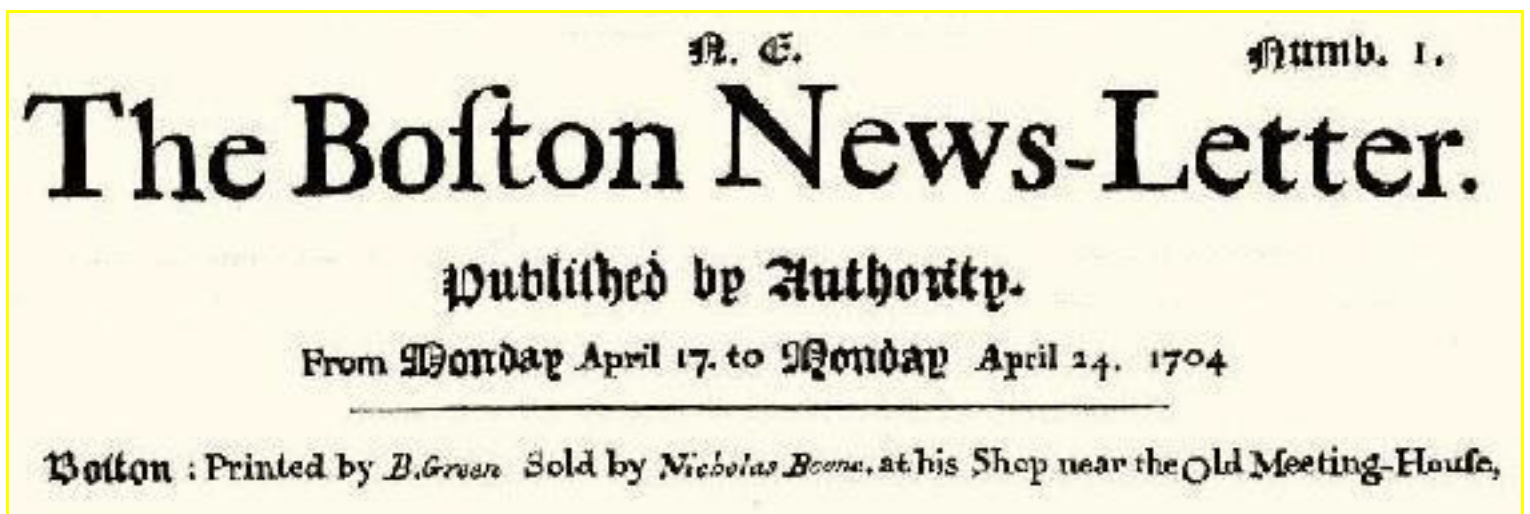
THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1704

April 24, Monday (Old Style): America's first continuously published newspaper, John Campbell's [Boston News-Letter](#), published its 1st issue:





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1705

March 17, Saturday (1704, Old Style): [Samuel Franklin](#) (1681-1720), [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s half-brother, became a member of the Old South Church in [Boston](#).

May 16, Wednesday (Old Style): [Samuel Franklin](#) (half-brother of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) got married with Elizabeth Tyng.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1706

In about this year [Josiah Franklin](#), [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s father, displayed his ingenuity. [Benjamin](#) would advise [Peter Kalm](#) (Pietari Kalm) that his father [Josiah](#) had introduced herring into a river where they had never before propagated themselves.





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[Benjamin](#) evidently also related this story to the Reverend Joseph Morgan, for we find the reverend passing it along in an essay on fish ladders and other ways of making fish more plentiful in rivers and streams, in [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#) for June 8, 1732: “There is a Pond and Brook from it, nigh Plymouth in N.E. (as I am informed) where never Herring had been seen, while other Brooks were full; but a certain Man carried a Tub full of Water with a Number of them newly taken, and emptied ’em into that Pond; and ever after they went up that Brook.”





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January 6, Sunday, 1705 (Old Style or Julian Calendar); January 17, Sunday, 1706 (New Style or Gregorian Calendar)⁵: [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s baptism by Samuel Willard at the Old South Church, Boston. Benjamin had been born at 17 Milk Street in [Boston](#) in the house that his father [Josiah Franklin](#) rented from Lieutenant Nathaniel Reynolds, on the south corner of Milk and High streets. Since Milk Street ended at High Street, there were only two corners at Milk and High. The Old South Church was just across the street, at the other corner, on the north side of Milk and High. The [Franklins](#) would reside on Milk Street for the initial six years of Benjamin's life, until January 25, 1712. He was the youngest son and the 15th child born to his father, and the 7th child born to his mother [Abiah Folger Franklin](#). Eleven brothers and sisters were living when he was born: five of Josiah's seven children by his first wife ([Elizabeth Franklin](#), born during 1678; [Samuel Franklin](#), born during 1681; [Hannah Franklin](#), born during 1683; [Josiah Franklin](#), born during 1685; and [Anne Franklin](#), born during 1678); and six of the seven so far born to his 2nd wife, Abiah, who came from a family of [Nantucket Island](#) Puritans ([John Franklin](#), born during 1690; [Peter Franklin](#), born during 1692; [Mary Franklin](#), born during 1694; [James Franklin](#), born during 1697; [Sarah Franklin](#), born during 1699; and [Thomas Franklin](#), born during 1703). Two sisters would follow, [Lydia Franklin](#) (born during 1708) and [Jane Franklin](#) (born during 1712).

January 17, Sunday (New Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#) was baptized in [Boston](#) (January 17th would have been a Thursday, had this record been according to the Old Style or Julian calendar).⁶

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT



June 14, Friday (Old Style): [Josiah Franklin](#) wrote to Peter Folger, Jr. about his experiments with rushes from [Nantucket Island](#) (where Folger lived) as substitutes for candles. He told Folger that in partial payment for the supply of rushes he might retain a "Book of Atheisme" (doubtless, this was a religious treatise in opposition to atheism).

August 17, Saturday (Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s older brother [Thomas Franklin](#) (born December 7, 1703) died.

5. When this infant Benjamin was born the Julian calendar was still in effect in the English-speaking world and the date of his baptism per that calendar was January 6, 1705. When we converted to the Gregorian calendar in around 1752, we added eleven days to dates in the middle of the 18th Century and changed the beginning of the year from March 25th to January 1st. Therefore Ben's baptismal ceremony is now redacted to January 17th and its year is now redacted to 1706.

6. When this infant Benjamin was born the Julian calendar was still in effect in the English-speaking world and the date of his baptism per that calendar was January 6, 1705. When we converted to the Gregorian calendar in around 1752, we added eleven days to dates in the middle of the 18th Century and changed the beginning of the year from March 25th to January 1st. Therefore Ben's baptismal ceremony is now redacted to January 17th and its year is now redacted to 1706.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1707

January 6, Monday (1706, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s 1st birthday.

January 8, Wednesday (1706, Old Style): [Elizabeth Franklin](#) (half-sister of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) got married with Joseph Berry, shipmaster.

July 19, Saturday (Old Style): Micajah and Sarah Torrey sold to Thomas Creese of [Boston](#) the property "Given and bequeathed unto the said Sarah ... by the Last Will and Testament [dated July 8, 1678] of her Father the said Paul Batt part whereof is in the present Tenure and Occupation of [Josiah Franklyn](#) and the other part thereof in the present Tenure and Occupation of Charles Roberts, and is bounded Measuring and Described as followeth ... Measuring in breadth at the Front [Washington Street] from the middle of the Gutter standing between the Land of the said [Thomas] Creese [north] and the Land hereby Sold along by the Shop in the Occupation of the said Franklyn unto the said [William] Turner's Land [south] fourteen feet, more or less; 18 feet and 10 inches wide in the rear; with a depth of 112 feet and 7 inches on the northerly line; the southerly boundary being on an indented line about twenty-six feet north of Ordway Place." It is speculated that Josiah had rented this Washington Street property when he rented the Milk Street house, in 1685. The family shop was at what has become 339-341 Washington Street. When they moved to the much larger Union Street house on January 25, 1711/1712, probably the shop was given up (we know from an advertisement of December 21, 1719 that the blue ball was hanging not on the shop but on his Union Street house).

September 12, Friday (Old Style): The Reverend [Samuel Willard](#) died at the age of 67.

[Samuel Willard](#) one of the most eminent ministers in New England was son of Major [Simon Willard](#) and was born in [Concord](#) January 31, 1640. He was graduated in 1659 and ordained at Groton, Mass., in 1662, from whence he removed to [Boston](#) when that town was destroyed by the Indians in March, 1676, and was installed as colleague pastor with the Rev. Mr. Thacher, over the Old South Church, April 10, 1678. He officiated as Vice President of Harvard College, from September 6, 1701, till his death. He died September 12, 1707 aged 67. His son was Secretary of the province 39 years, and his grandson, Joseph Willard, D.D., LL.D., was President of [Harvard College](#). The notices in "History of the Old South Church," and other works, are so copious, that any further account here is unnecessary.⁷

7. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#) Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)



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It was this Reverend Willard who had baptized [Benjamin Franklin](#). His exposition of New England theology, *A COMPLEAT BODY OF DIVINITY* (Boston: Green and Kneeland, 1726), which was so very compleat that it arrived at a total of 927 pages, would become the largest tome printed in colonial America. [Josiah Franklin](#) would subscribe for two copies of this, and [James Franklin](#), Printer, for one copy. The [Boston News Letter](#) would report:

On Fryday the 12th. Instant Dyed here in the 68 year of his Age, the very Worthy and Reverend Mr. SAMUEL WILLARD, Pastor of the South Church, and Vice President of [Harvard College](#) in Cambridge, unto the Just Grief, not only of the Church and Town, but of all New-England.

October 27, Monday (Old Style): In the [Boston News Letter](#) “Just now Published, a Funeral Sermon of the Death of ... Samuel Willard. ... By the Rev. Mr. Ebenezer Pemberton. ... To which is annexed a Poem on the same sorrowful Occasion: By the Reverend Mr. Benjamin Colman” — [Josiah Franklin](#) and his family may be presumed to have attended this ceremony and listened to this sermon and poem.



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1708

January 6, Monday (1707, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#) reached his 2d birthday (as such, this one stood a fair chance of surviving his infancy).⁸

August 8, Friday (Old Style): [Lydia Franklin](#) was born in [Boston](#), a daughter of [Abiah and Josiah Franklin](#) (she would get married in 1731 with Robert Scott, a sea captain, and die in 1758).

September 8, Monday (Old Style): Samuel Sewall would report in his diary on the following day that “I was mov’d last night at Mr. [Josiah Franklin](#)’s at our Meeting, where I read the Eleventh Sermon on the Barren Fig-Tree.” Presumably what this means is that Josiah had recently begun to participate in Sewall’s prayer group, that was in the habit of meeting at different members’ houses on a rotating basis.

8. During this year [Deborah Read](#), daughter of John and Sarah Read (and future wife of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was being born in Philadelphia.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1709

January 6, Thursday (1708, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#) reached his 3d birthday (as such, this one stood an excellent chance of living to grow up).

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



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1710

The Reverend [Cotton Mather](#)'s last publication of any significance, BONIFACIUS; OR ESSAYS TO DO GOOD, urged voluntaristic do-goodist activism.

[Benjamin Franklin](#), who was four years of age at this time, would eventually aver that this volume had influenced him throughout his life "for I have always set a greater value on the character of a doer of good, than on any other kind of reputation."

WALDEN: But all this is very selfish, I have heard some of my townsmen say. I confess that I have hitherto indulged very little in philanthropic enterprises. I have made some sacrifices to a sense of duty, and among others have sacrificed this pleasure also. There are those who have used all their arts to persuade me to undertake the support of some poor family in town; and if I had nothing to do, -for the devil finds employment for the idle,- I might try my hand at some such pastime as that. However, when I have thought to indulge myself in this respect, and lay their Heaven under an obligation by maintaining certain poor persons in all respects as comfortably as I maintain myself, and have even ventured so far as to make them the offer, they have one and all unhesitatingly preferred to remain poor. While my townsmen and women are devoted in so many ways to the good of their fellows, I trust that one at least may be spared to other and less humane pursuits. You must have a genius for charity as well as for any thing else. As for Doing-good, that is one of the professions which are full. Moreover, I have tried it fairly, and, strange as it may seem, am satisfied that it does not agree with my constitution. Probably I should not consciously and deliberately forsake my particular calling to do the good which society demands of me, to save the universe from annihilation; and I believe that a like but infinitely greater steadfastness elsewhere is all that now preserves it. But I would not stand between any man and his genius; and to him who does this work, which I decline, with his whole heart and soul and life, I would say, Persevere, even if the world call it doing evil, as it is most likely they will.

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Here [Henry Thoreau](#) would take issue not only with the Reverend [Cotton Mather](#) but also with [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s DOGOOD PAPERS. He would be offering that their attitude, which they had put forward as an expression of one's personal ethical responsibility, amounted instead to a direct and deliberate **evasion** of that ethical responsibility. —Strong stuff indeed!

January 6, Friday (1709, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#) reached his 4th birthday.



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June 22, Thursday (Old Style): The widow [Hannah Franklin Eddy](#) ([Benjamin Franklin](#)'s half-sister) remarried with Thomas Cole.

July 7, Friday (Old Style): [Uncle Benjamin Franklin](#) wrote verses to his nephew [Benjamin Franklin](#) about young [Benjamin](#)'s desire to be a soldier.

July 15, Saturday (Old Style): [Uncle Benjamin Franklin](#) wrote an acrostic poem for his nephew [Benjamin Franklin](#), one that urged him to be virtuous and religious.

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





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1711

Joseph Dorr graduated from [Harvard College](#). He would become a minister at Mendon. By 1828, ten young men of this name “Dorr” would graduate from that institution (plus, four from other institutions). Presumably these were all descendants of the Edward Dorr, who perhaps had settled at Roxbury and founded a family in the 1680s after coming down to the [Boston](#) area from Pemaquid in Maine, where he had sworn fidelity during 1674.

When not more than 5 or 6 years old, presumably in about this timeframe, [Benjamin Franklin](#) saw a moose wandering down the city street. A bagatelle he would author on November 10th, 1779, “The Whistle,” describes how delighted he had been in tootling on a whistle he had purchased — and then how crestfallen he was upon learning that for the price paid, he might have obtained four such toys.

[John Comer \(3\)](#) attended school in [Boston](#), his teacher being Ames Angier.

January 6, Saturday (1710, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#) turned 5 years of age (Jane Franklin Mecom told Ezra Stiles that [Benjamin](#) could read the Bible “at five years old”).

October 2, Tuesday (Old Style), evening: Over a hundred [Boston](#) homes were destroyed by fire; in the aftermath, the food situation would get so bad that mobs of citizens would be looting warehouses for grain to feed their families. According to the diary of Judge Samuel Sewall, “About 7 or 8 aclock of the night ... a Dreadful Fire happens in Boston. ... Old Meeting House and Town-House burnt. Old Meeting House had stood near 70. years.” To stop the course of the fire, a number of houses had needed to be deliberately blown up. [Uncle Benjamin Franklin](#) wrote a poem thanking God that [Josiah Franklin](#)’s home on Milk Street was spared. This poem is an acrostic in which the first word of each stanza begins with a letter that, in fourteen stanzas, spells JOSIAH FRANKLIN.

This actually amounted to the 8th general conflagration to strike the town since 1653.

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1712

Sir William Keith superseded Gookin as Governor of Pennsylvania.



He would continue in that office till the year 1726, making deceptive and flattering pretensions to young [Benjamin Franklin](#). [Hannah Penn](#), the executrix of the Penn estate, would be displeased with him as he tended to side with the people against her family's interest.

January 6, Sunday (1711, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#) turned 6 years of age.



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January 25, Friday (1711, Old Style): The Franklins moved from their rented home on Milk Street in [Boston](#) when they negotiated the purchase of a house from Peter Sargeant for £320, at the southwest corner of Union Street and Hanover Street. The lot was over 3,500 square feet, about five times as large as the approximately 600 square feet of the Milk Street lot. Although the location was almost equidistant between the Old North and the Old South churches, and although the Brattle Street church was the closest, [Josiah and Abiah Franklin](#) would continue as members of the Old South church. [Benjamin Franklin](#) would reside here with his parents (except for a brief stay with his cousin Samuel in 1717, at the age of 11) until about 1720, when he would move to the family with whom his brother [James Franklin](#) lived. The house and lot were “at the front or Eastward end by Union street so called, measuring there in breadth thirty-eight feet or thereabout; on the Northward side by Hanover street so called, measuring there in length ninety-three feet or thereabout; on the rear or Westward end by land formerly of Josiah Cobham, dec[ease]d, in the present tenure & occupation of Joseph Smith, saddler, where it measureth in breadth twenty-three feet five inches or thereabout; and on the Southward side by land formerly the said Cobham’s, and the house of and land formerly appertaining to John Cotta, now wholly on this side the inheritance of the heirs of Thomas Bridge, late of Boston, aforesaid, marriner, dece[ase]d, where it measureth in length about eight-seven feet or thereabout.” The property contained four structures. A Boston [Evening Post](#) advertisement of July 23, 1753 would describe these four structures:

To be sold by publick Vendue, On Tuesday the 21st of August next, Four Lots of Ground, with the Buildings thereon, fronting on Hanover and Union-Street, at the Blue Ball, viz. one Lot (No. 1) of Seventeen Feet four Inches Front on Hanover-Street, and twenty-five Feet deep. One Ditto (No. 2) Twenty-one and an half Feet Front on said Street, and Twenty-five and an half Feet deep. (No. 3) Twenty-seven Feet Front on said Street, and Thirty Feet deep. (No. 4) a Corner Lot, Twenty-eight Feet Front on Hanover Street, and Thirty-eight Feet front on Union Street, very well situated for Tradesmen or Shopkeepers, being in the Heart of the Town, and the Buildings conveniently divided as above, having originally been different Tenements. The Title is indisputable, the Sale to begin at four o’Clock in the Afternoon, on the Premises, one quarter Part of the Money, to be paid at the signing of the Deeds. Twelve Months Credit will be given, if required, on Security and paying Interest for the Remainder, by John Franklin and William Homes.

Josiah and Abiah probably lived in the corner house, renting out the other structures. When Josiah would make his will on October 20, 1744, he would give “to my loving wife Abiah Franklin all the income or rents of my whole estate and goods, and the use of the two rooms we now live in, allowing the lodgers to be in as it is used, she allowing out of it the interest that will be due to my creditors while she lives.” Josiah would die on January 16, 1744/1745, but his will would not be proved until five years later, on August 7, 1750. Two years after the decease of his wife Abiah in 1752, an inventory of his estate would be taken and his house and land in Union Street would appraise at £253.6s.8d. The lots would be advertised on November 6, 1752 and on July 23, 1753 by John Franklin and William Homes. John Franklin would sell his portion on April 15, 1754, to William Homes for £188 13s. 4d. On June 2, 1757 Homes would resell the property to Jonathan Dakin for £266 13s. 4d. When Jane (Franklin) Mecom would write Benjamin Franklin on August 16, 1787, she would hark back to their childhood home:

It was Indeed a Lowly Dwelling we were brought up in but we were fed Plentifully, made comfortable with Fire and cloathing, had seldom any contention among us, but all was Harmony: Especially



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between the Heads – and they were Universally Respected, & the most of the Family in good Reputation, this is still happier living than multitudes Enjoy.

Despite her nostalgic recollection of the concord between the parents and happiness of the children, she was of course aware that these premises of yours had been rather skudgy-looking, and would conclude with “Blessed be God that you & I by your means have the Addition of more Pleasing appearance in our Dwellings.”

February 8, Friday (1711, Old Style): [Josiah Franklin](#) mortgaged the house and land at the southwest corner of Union Street and Hanover Street to Simeon Stoddard for £250 (the mortgage would be closed out on January 28, 1722/1723 when the family would refinance the house with Hannah Clarke for £220). Perhaps Josiah in 1722/1723 loaned [James Franklin](#) money for the purchase of an additional printing [press](#).

February 12, Tuesday (1711, Old Style): [Uncle Benjamin Franklin](#) wrote to Mary Franklin Fisher in Dartmouth, thanking her for medicines she had sent: “I have now thoughts of laying down my business tho I know not what to turn to not being able to doe as when I was young for I run in debt and see no likelyhood of recovering it and I beleeve must give up all into my Creditors hands and what will be the Issue God only knows, but I hope I shall not be much concern’d at that If I can but keep a good Conscience as the Apostle speekes. verse 16.”

March 27, Thursday (Old Style): [Jane Franklin](#) (youngest sister of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) was born (she would get married with Edward Mecom on July 27, 1727; her funeral would be on May 10, 1794).

July 10, Thursday (Old Style): [Ann\(e\) Franklin](#) (half-sister of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) got married with William Harris of Ipswich.



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1713

Again Friend Richard Estes of [Boston](#) had been refusing to pay the tax that supported the Puritan minister, and again the authorities came to confiscate his assets. This time it was “4 bushels and odd of Indian corn” valued at £1 and three pence. Action against members of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) who refused to pay this poll tax seems to have been sporadic.


[Uncle Benjamin Franklin](#) wrote his 7-year-old nephew [Benjamin Franklin](#) a poem in praise of his early writing. There is an anecdote from this year, about blowing bubbles with soap suds by the use of a tobacco pipe. There is an anecdote from this period, of Benjamin’s keeping pigeons. Young Benjamin was teaching himself geography while his father was making family prayers, by sneaking peeks at four large maps that were hanging on the parlor walls of the home. “As his father was accustomed to precede all his meals with long prayers, and even to say grace over every particular dish, he [[Benjamin](#)] was desirous to correct this folly by means of the following sally of wit: Old Franklin, one day, at the beginning of winter, being busied in salting provisions; ‘Father,’ says his son, ‘you ought to ask a blessing, once for all, upon the whole cask of provisions, as it would be a wonderful saving of time!’” William Temple Franklin evidently has adapted this, for he has written as follows: “Dr. Franklin, when a child, found the long graces used by his father before and after meals very tedious. One day after the winter’s provisions had been salted, — ‘I think, Father,’ said Benjamin, ‘if you were to say Grace over the whole cask –once for all– it would be a vast saving of time.’”

In [Boston](#) in this year, there was a 2-month epidemic of measles.

January 6, Tuesday (1712, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#)’s 7th birthday.

March 2, Monday (1712, Old Style): In the [Boston News Letter](#): “At the House of Mr. George Brownell in Wings-Lane Boston, is Taught, Writing, Cyphering, Dancing, Treble Violin, Flute Spinnet &c. Also English and French Quilting, Imbroidery, Florishing, Plain Work, marking in several sorts of Stiches, and several other works, where Scholars may board” (Brownell would become, as of Fall 1715, the teacher of [Benjamin Franklin](#)).

April 29, Wednesday (Old Style): In the diary of [Judge Samuel Sewall](#): “I go to the Meeting at [Mr. Franklin](#)’s. Pray, read Mr. Doolittle’s Morning Lecture about Leading of the Spirit.”

 June 22, Monday (Old Style): In the [Boston News Letter](#):

Three able Negro men and three Negro women to be Sold by Messieurs Henry Dewick and William Aslin, and to be seen at the house of Mr. [Josiah Franklin](#) at the Blue Ball in Union Street near the Star Tavern, Boston.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

August 3, Monday (Old Style): In the [Boston News Letter](#):

Three Negro men and two Negro women to be sold and seen at the

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house of Mr. [Josiah Franklin](#) at the Blue Ball in Union Street Boston.

September 16, Wednesday (Old Style): [Judge Samuel Sewall](#)'s son Joseph Sewall was ordained as colleague-pastor of the Old South Church of [Boston](#), with the Reverend Ebenezer Pemberton (this ordination ceremony was doubtless attended by the family of [Josiah Franklin](#), including of course 7-year-old [Benjamin](#)). We find in the Judge's diary:

Began a little after Ten. Dr. Cotton Mather begun with Prayer, Excellently, concluded about the Bell ringing for Eleven. My son preached from 1 Cor. 3.7. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that Watereth; but God that gives the Increase. Was a very great Assembly; were Elders and Messengers from 9 Churches ... Mr. Pemberton made an August Speech, Shewing the Validity and Antiquity of New English Ordinations. Then having made his way, went on, ask'd as Customary, if any had to say against the ordaining the person. ... Dr. Increase Mather, Dr. Cotton Mather, Mr. Benjamin Wadsworth, Mr. Ebenezer Pemberton and Mr. Benjamin Colman laid on Hands. Then Mr. Pemberton Pray'd, Ordain'd, and gave the Charge Excellently. Then Dr. Increase Mather made a notable Speech, gave the Right Hand of Fellowship, and pray'd. Mr. Pemberton directed the three and Twentieth Psalm to be sung. The chief Entertainment was at Mr. Pemberton's; but was considerable elsewhere.





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1714

January 6, Wednesday (1713, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s 8th birthday.

September (to May 1715): At the age of 8, [Benjamin Franklin](#) entered the South Grammar School in [Boston](#).⁹ “My elder Brothers were all put Apprentices to different Trades. I was put to the Grammar School at Eight Years of Age, my Father intending to devote me as the Tithes of his Sons to the Service of the Church.” The master there was Nathaniel Williams (1675-1738) and the usher Edward Wigglesworth (*circa* 1693-1765). Mr. Williams, who had become a full member of the Old South Church in the same year as had [Josiah Franklin](#) and [Abiah Folger Franklin](#), was well-known to the Franklin family. Mr. Wigglesworth was at this time also an attender at the Old South Church and would be made a member on September 14, 1718. Franklin would later explain his father's decision: “My early Readiness in learning to read (which must have been very early, as I do not remember when I could not read) and the Opinion of all his Friends that I should certainly make a good Scholar, encourag'd him in this Purpose of his.” He would add that “My Uncle Benjamin too approv'd of it, and propos'd to give me all his Shorthand Volumes of Sermons, I supposed as a Stock to set up with, if I would learn his Character” (shorthands were common in that period). Numerous devout parishioners like Uncle Benjamin were recording the gist and many details of their ministers' sermons in such shorthand volumes. However, if Uncle Benjamin Franklin did indeed advise in said manner, this could only have been via the post, for Uncle Benjamin would not arrive in Boston until Fall 1715. Franklin reports to us that he did quite well at this elite school: “I continu'd however at the Grammar School not quite one Year, tho' in that time I had risen gradually from the Middle of the Class of that Year to be the Head of it, and farther was remov'd into the next Class above it, in order to go with that into the third at the End of the Year.” Two other young scholars who presumably would have been with him at the South Grammar School were Edmund Quincy (1703-1788) and Ebenezer Pemberton (1705-1777), for Quincy would graduate from Harvard in 1722 and, in correspondence with Franklin, we find him referring to himself as his old schoolmate. Ebenezer Pemberton, since he was the son of the Franklin family's minister of the same name, no doubt also was in attendance at this South Grammar School. Pemberton would graduate from Harvard in 1721, becoming the minister of the Presbyterian Church in New York and serving as a member of the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia, and in 1735 Franklin would defend the Reverend Samuel Hemphill against the Reverend Pemberton and the Presbyterian Synod. It is likely also, because their parents attended the Old South Church and hence probably lived near the South Grammar School, that Daniel Oliver (1704-1727) and John Smith (1704-1768), who both graduated from Harvard along with Quincy, knew Franklin and may have been in classrooms with him. Two Harvard graduates of 1723 were also associated with the Old South Church: Samuel Hirst (1705-1727), grandson of [Samuel Sewall](#), and Habijah Savage (1704-1743), and may have been fellow young scholars with Franklin at the South Grammar School. When in 1753 Franklin was awarded an honorary MA from Harvard College, his name would be inserted in the catalogue with the Class of 1724, thus indicating that it was being presumed that had he gone on to college, he would have been a member of that Class; however, no member of the Harvard Class of 1724 appears to have been attending at the Old South Church. Franklin surely knew Nicholas Bowes (1706-1755) because, like Franklin, he was baptized by Samuel Willard plus his family resided on Union Street. Bowes would graduate from Harvard College with the Class of 1725, along with Jeremiah Gridley (1702-67), another member of the Old South Church. [Franklin](#) probably knew Dr. William Clark (1709-1760), who, like Quincy, would later be one of his correspondents — Clark was a member of the Old South Church member and would graduate from Harvard College with the Class of 1726. It is very likely that Franklin was acquainted with Simeon Stoddard (1707-1776), who was baptized at the Old South on November 23, 1707 and who in

9. Later this school would come to be known as the Boston Latin School.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1751 would be declared *non compos*, because his father Anthony Stoddard belonged to the same prayer group as Josiah Franklin. According to a CATALOGUE OF THE MASTERS AND SCHOLARS WHO HAVE BELONGED TO THE BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL issued in 1878 that supplements the available records by acceptance of family traditions, Benjamin Gibson, Mather Byles, Samuel Freeman, and Jeremiah Gridley were in attendance at the school with Franklin. Gibson (1700-1723), who would graduate from Harvard College with the Class of 1719, would presumably have been classes ahead of young Franklin. Byles (1707-1788) and Freeman (1707-1728) both graduated from Harvard College with the Class of 1725, along with Bowes and Gridley. Presumably Joseph Green (who had been born in the same month as Benjamin), was also a member of his grammar school class (Samuel Mather and John Martyn, however, presumably were scholars instead at the North Grammar School).

THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT



September 2, Thursday (Old Style): [Peter Franklin](#) (brother of [Benjamin Franklin](#)) got married with Mary Harman.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1715

January 6, Thursday (1714, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s 9th birthday.

March 14, Monday (Old Style): "At a Meeting of the Free-holders ... of the Town of [Boston](#)," [Josiah Franklin](#) was elected a "Tythingman."

September: For his 2d and final year of formal schooling, [Benjamin Franklin](#) would be attending the English school in [Boston](#) taught by George Brownell, which followed a non-classical curriculum (until May 1716).

October 2, Sunday (Old Style): It seems likely that the Reverend Increase Mather preached for the Reverend Pemberton on this worship day at the Old South Church in [Boston](#), for [Benjamin Franklin](#) would recall that "The Father, Increase, I once when a Boy, heard preach at the Old South, for Mr. Pemberton; and remember his mentioning the Death of 'that wicked old Persecutor of God's People, Lewis XIV.' of which News had just been received; but which proved premature." King Louis XIV of France died on September 1st and news of the event would have reached across the Atlantic within the month, so Benjamin would have been not older than nine: "I was some Years afterwards at his [Increase's] house at the North End, on some Errand to him, and remember him sitting in an easy Chair, apparently very old and feeble. But Cotton I remember in the Vigour of his Preaching and Usefulness."

October 10, Monday (Old Style): [Uncle Benjamin Franklin](#) (March 20, 1650/1651-March 17, 1726/1727) arrived in [Boston](#).¹⁰ Per Uncle Benjamin's own poem:

In seventeen hundred and fifteen,
Of August's calends twenty-sixt,
Bound for America unseen,
On board Nantucket sloop I fixt.
We lanced forth on the abyss,
And oft beheld great wonders there,
Where nought but sky and wayter is;
And only sun and stars appear.
October seventh or eighth we made
Distant discovery of Cape Codd,
At this good news we were all glade,
And I gave thanks unto my God.
At Marblehead we anchored first,
There the first house, grass, appple saw,
And there with cyder quenched my thirst,
Good as from apples they could draw.
But unto Boston we were bound,
On Lord's Day ere I saw that place,
And there a dear, kind Brother found,
Bless't with a Wife and Num'rous Race.

10. Writing to his sister Jane on July 17, 1771, [Franklin](#) would reminisce that "Our Father, who was a very wise man, us'd to say, nothing was more common than for those who lov'd one another at a distance, to find many Causes of Dislike when they came together; and therefore he did not approve of Visits to Relations in distant Places, which could not well be short enough for them to part good Friends. I saw a Proof of it, in the Disgusts between him and his Brother Benjamin; and tho' I was a Child still remember how affectionate their Correspondence was while they were separated, and the Disputes and Misunderstandings they had when they came to live some time together in the same House."



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Four years they did me kindly Treat
But noe Imployment did present,
Which was to me a burden great
And could not be to their content.

DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1716

[Benjamin Franklin](#) was assisting his family in the tallow-chandlery business in [Boston](#).

Probably in this year, [Benjamin](#) would later recall, 13 children gathered at table for “an Entertainment was made in our House on Occasion of the Return of our Brother [Josiah](#), who had been absent in the East Indies, and unheard of for nine Years.” [Uncle Benjamin Franklin](#) had composed to welcome home his nephew Josiah an imitation of the “Third part of the 107 psalm,” but the sailor, like his brothers [James](#) and [Benjamin](#) being something of an iconoclast, “being unaffected with Gods Great Goodness in his many preservations and Deliverances,” reacted to this “coldly.”

In about June, after the conclusion of the school year, the only two years of formal education he would ever receive being over and done with, [Benjamin](#) would go to work with his father making candles and soap and find this not much to his taste. He would develop “a strong Inclination for the Sea.”

January 6, Friday (1715, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#)’s 10th birthday.

February 29, Wednesday (1715, Old Style): Per the diary of Judge [Samuel Sewall](#): “Got home so as to go seasonably to our Meeting at [Mr. Franklin](#)’s; though the way was very bad.”

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL

April 3, Tuesday (Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#)’s sister [Mary Franklin](#) got married with Captain Robert Homes (Holmes).

June 5, Tuesday (Old Style): Judge [Samuel Sewall](#) recorded that “I went to our privat Meeting ... Mr. Franklin was not present, nor Cole” (this is the sole occasion on which Judge Sewall noted [Josiah Franklin](#) as absent).

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1717

It seems likely that it was early in this year that [Benjamin Franklin](#), age 11, was briefly indentured as a cutler: “My Uncle Benjamin’s Son Samuel who was bred to that Business in London being about that time establish’d in [Boston](#), I was sent to be with him some time on liking.” Evidently he lived with Samuel Franklin for a short time. Tradesmen supposedly kept the “secrets” of the craft from public knowledge, and often demanded a premium, usually £10, from the apprentice (or his parents) to learn the craft. Samuel wanted the premium, but Josiah did not expect his nephew to demand the charge. “But his Expectations of a Fee with me displeasing my Father, I was taken home again.”

January 6, Sunday (1716, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#) turned 11.

January 8, Tuesday (1716, Old Style): The New South Church had been doing business since July 14, 1716 ([Benjamin Franklin](#) would reminisce about the New North and New South churches of [Boston](#) in a letter on August 23, 1750), but on this day its congregation and minister staged an “Inauguration” ceremony fit to attract a “Great Assembly.” Judge [Samuel Sewall](#) recorded in his diary the “pasquinade” on the doors of this new meetinghouse (read it and weep!):

To all True-Hearted Christians.

**Good people, within this House, this very day,
A Canting Crew will meet to fast, and pray.
Just as the miser fasts with greedy mind, to spare;
So the glutton fasts, to eat a greater share.
But the sower-headed Presbyterians fast to seem more holy,
And their Canting Ministers to punish sinfull foley.**

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL

February 18, Monday (1716, Old Style): In [Boston](#), according to the diary of Judge [Samuel Sewall](#), the Reverend Ebenezer Pemberton was buried between 4 and 5 in the afternoon. The judge recorded a “Great Storm of Snow; yet good going under foot,” because “a broad path” had been prepared for the funeral procession. There is no question but that the family of [Josiah Franklin](#), including son [Benjamin](#), were present for their minister’s funeral.

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

March: Wrote Isaiah Thomas: “I have been informed that [James Franklin](#) served an apprenticeship with a printer in England, where his father was born, and had connections. In March 1716/1717, J. Franklin came from London with a [press](#) and types, and began business in [Boston](#).” This may have been inferred by Thomas on the basis of [Benjamin Franklin](#)’s personal memoir (now known as his “Autobiography”), in which James “return’d from England with a Press and Letters to set up his Business in Boston.” However, it seems that James actually did not serve his apprenticeship in London itself, for his name is not to be found in D.F. McKenzie’s authoritative STATIONERS’ COMPANY APPRENTICES, 1701-1800 (Oxford: Bibliographical Society, 1978), and in addition there are no surviving James Franklin imprints to be found, from 1717. It has been the suggestion of Lawrence C. Wroth that “he could well have been employed by Benjamin Eliot, the publisher, to make cuts for the books printed for Eliot by Bartholomew Green in 1717 and 1718, and later for those printed for Eliot by Franklin himself in 1719;” but such an employment would’t have amounted to a living. Instead, it seems likely that when James Franklin came back from England he initially engaged himself as a journeyman printer — probably for Bartholomew Green (1666-1732), then Boston’s most prolific printer and a member of the Old South Church. James had in fact known Bartholomew Green all his life. A cancelled reference in [Franklin](#)’s holograph suggests that James Franklin needed to borrow money from his father to start his Boston press, and presumably this would indicate that he borrowed this money after returning from England. James Franklin made the relief woodcut of Hugh Peter for A DYING FATHER’S LAST LEGACY TO AN ONLY CHILD: OR, MR. HUGH PETER’S ADVICE TO HIS DAUGHTER (Boston: B. Green for Benjamin Eliot, 1717). Wroth and Adams have written that “the Franklin cuts were made on metal with a graver and not on the long grain, or plank surface, of wood with a knife. Because of the difficulty of being absolutely sure of this fact, we have felt that whatever our own conviction might be, it was better to admit the uncertainty and describe productions of this sort entered in the Catalogue as ‘relief cuts’ rather than be dogmatic and call them ‘metal cuts.’” But in the imprint for A CATALOGUE OF CURIOUS AND VALUABLE BOOKS . . . REVEREND MR. GEORGE CURWIN (Boston: J. Franklin for S. Gerrish, 1718), James Franklin specifically advertised that he did “engraving on wood.” Lawrence C. Wroth also pointed out that the undated broadside DIVINE EXAMPLES OF GOD’S SEVERE JUDGMENTS UPON SABBATH BREAKERS ... COLLECTED OUT OF SEVERAL DIVINE SUBJECTS, MR. H.B. MR. BEARD, AND THE PRACTICE OF PIETY ... BOSTON IN NEW ENGLAND: RE-PRINTED [BY B. GREEN] AND SOLD IN NEWBURY-STREET, which Samuel Abbott Green dated at 1708 simply because that was the when Newbury Street received that name, could also have been printed anytime after 1708 (because in fact Bartholomew Green, printer, continued to be located in Newbury Street). Wroth suggested that James Franklin made the relief cuts and that the work should be dated “about 1718.”

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



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

June 21, Friday (Old Style): The Massachusetts House of Representatives voted £500 for Governor Shute. Between this date and July 3d, [Uncle Benjamin Franklin](#) wrote up a “Short Account of the Family of [Thomas Franklin of Ecton](#).” According to this telling, the primary motivation for the family’s emigration to the New World had been not religious but economic: “things not succeeding there [Banbury] according to his [Josiah’s] mind, with the leave of his friends and father he went to New England in the year 1683.”

August 28, Wednesday (Old Style): The diary of Judge [Samuel Sewall](#) indicates that he “Read an Excellent Sermon at [Mr. Franklin](#)’s about Communion with God; Sung the 4th part of the 73rd Psal. Pray’d.”

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL

December 17, Tuesday (Old Style): According to the diary of Judge [Samuel Sewall](#), “At the privat Meeting at Brother Manly’s I was so hoarse with my Cold, that I got [Brother Franklin](#) to set the Tune, which he did very well.”

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL



PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1718

In Pennsylvania, Adam Ramage fashioned the 1st printing [press](#) to be made in America.

The gazette of [Boston](#), known as the [News Letter](#), was being put out of course by that town's postmaster, John Campbell, for only the postmaster could read all the mail and thus know what the news was! –But in this year Campbell lost his postmastership and refused to turn over the gazette to this successor. William Brooker, the new postmaster, was thus forced to begin a separate publication. He titled this new 2d paper the [Boston Gazette](#), and arranged for it to be issued through the printshop of [James Franklin](#).

January 1, Wednesday (1717, Old Style): [Josiah Franklin](#) probably attended the private prayer meeting at Judge [Samuel Sewall](#)'s.

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL

January 6, Monday (1717, Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#) turned 12.

January 22, Wednesday (1717, Old Style): [Josiah Franklin](#) attended a “Family Sacrifice” at Judge [Samuel Sewall](#)'s.

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL

Though he invited a number of ministers and distinguished guests, the judge also invited the regular members of his private prayer meetings: “Our Fast was held though a cold day. Mr. Prince began with Prayer, Mr. Sewall, Blessed are they that Mourn. Mr. Colman pray'd. Dr. Cotton Mather preach'd, Psal. 79.8. Let thy tender Mercyes speedily prevent us. Mr. Wadsworth Concluded.” The judge recorded that the printer Bartholomew Green invited the guests (we may presume that Green printed invitations, that were delivered by messenger): “Bro Manly and wife, Mr. Samuel Adams, Widow Tully, Capt. Hill, Mr. John Walley, Madam Pemberton, Lt. Governor, Edward Bromfield esqr., Mr. Willoughby, Master Williams, Mr. Samuel Phillips, Mr. Jonathan Belcher, wifes Mother. Col. Fitch, Capt. Ephraim Savage, Madam Winthrop, Jeffries, Mr. Secretary Willard, Widow Belknap, Mr. Samuel Gerrish, Widow Hubbard, Simeon Stoddard esqr., Cousin Samuel Sewall, &c. Madam Eunice Willard, widow of Capt. Nathaniel Williams, Brother Cole, Franklin, Col. Checkley, Mr. John Coney, Major Hab. Savage, wido Thornton, Dr. John Clark, [Thomas Hutchinson](#) esqr., Edward Hutchinson esqr, Madam Usher.” Of these guests, the following were regular members of Sewall's private prayer group: The “Widow” Belknap (who was probably Mary, the widow of Joseph Belknap). Mary (Gedney) and Joseph Belknap made the baptismal covenant at the Old South Church on 30 April 1680. Evidently it was a different Mary and Joseph Belknap who became full members on 16 Nov 1735. Brother and Mrs. Cole were John and Mary Cole who joined the Old South Church as full members on 24 June 1694. According to Hill, they “Joined by letter of dismissal from the church in Stonington, Conn. John Cole married Mary, “daughter of the brave John Gallop, killed in the decisive battle of Philip's War.” A mainstay of the judge's private prayer group was Captain James Hill. He became a full member of the Old South Church on 12 June 1670 and a deacon on 24 Nov 1693. He had been recruited into the [Boston](#) military company in 1677, became 4th Sergeant of the company in 1678, and a lieutenant in 1685. Roberts' History 248 guessed that he was probably, “a cooper by trade, as the selectmen appointed him a culler of staves in 1669, 1670, and 1671.”



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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

A highway surveyor in 1680-81, he was captain of the military company in Boston from 1684 to 1692 inclusive, and a selectman of Boston 1688-1690 and 1693. He died 26 Feb 1720/1721. Another regular attendee was William Manly. He had become a full member of the Old South Church on 9 March 1689. Regular members of the private prayer meeting who did not attend this ceremony included Henry Bridgman, who joined the Old South Church as a full member on 3 Oct 1703. A member of Boston's militia, he was recruited in 1699. A Boston tanner, he was a tithing-man in 1703; clerk of the market in 1704; and constable in 1706. He became third sergeant of the Artillery Company in 1704; first sergeant in 1709; and clerk of the Company from 1707-1709. He died 10 April 1720. Also not in attendance was Grace Tilley Clark, the wife of Jonas Clark, brazier, and daughter of William Tilly and his first wife. She joined the Old South Church as a full member on 3 June 1711. She had been baptized on 6 Nov 1692, but apparently not at the Old South Church. Her stepmother was Abigail Tilly (1704), Samuel Sewall's second wife. Also absent was Mary Dafforne, wife of John Dafforne. She made her Baptismal Covenant at the Old South Church in 1677 (no specific dates are given for that year) and became a full member 15 Feb 1684. Sewall, on 20 June 1716, mentioned inviting the meeting to her house. Nor was Dorothy Weld Denison (24 Oct 1718) (wife of William Denison, H.C. 1681) present, though she outlived William Denison and married Samuel Williams in 1720. Of course, by 1718 a few former faithful members of the group had died. They included Mary Emmons, the wife of Benjamin Emmons. On 20 Jan 1713/14, Sewall mentioned that because of her illness the meeting had been postponed. Mary Frost (3 Feb 1720), the wife of John Frost, was absent. She had become a full Old South Church member on 19 Dec 1708. Samuel Phillips, a Boston bookseller, was also absent. He became a member of the Old South on 26 Oct 1707 and a deacon in 1714. He was recruited for the Artillery company in 1693 and made first sergeant in 1699. He kept his shop "At the Brick-shop at the West end of the Town House." He was baptized 2 Nov 1662 and died Oct 1720, age 58. Not in attendance was Martha Ruggles, widow of Captain Samuel Ruggles, who made her baptismal covenant at the Old South 7 Feb 1696 and became a full member 15 June 1701. Peter Sergeant (Sewall 11 April 1712), "a prominent merchant and citizen," became a full member of the Old South on 28 July 1689. He was a freeman in 1690 and an overseer of seats in 1699. Also missing was Captain Ephraim Savage, born 20 July 1645, who graduated Harvard College in 1662 and became a full member of the Old South Church on 3 May 1672. In 1674, he was recruited to the Artillery Company and in 1677 was made an ensign of his father's company, succeeding his father (Thomas) as captain of that company 17 March 1681. Meanwhile, he had made fourth sergeant of the Artillery Company in 1677, ensign in 1678, and Lieutenant in 1680. He was a selectman of Boston 1693-96 inclusive, 1709 and 1710, and a representative 1703-08 inclusive and 1710. The great fire of 1711 started in one of his outhouses. Ephraim's third wife, Elizabeth Norton Symmes, had apparently attended meetings with her husband until her death 13 April 1710, for Sewall mentioned on the day of her death that she had come to a meeting at Captain Hill's. Elizabeth Brown Butler Savage, Ephraim's fourth wife, attended meetings with her husband. He died Feb 1730/1. Habijah Savage, "prominent in both civil and military affairs," was also a member of Sewall's private meeting group. He joined as a full member of the Old South on 16 Jan 1708. Recruited for the Artillery Company in 1699, he was third sergeant in 1701, Lieutenant in 1709, and Captain in 1711, 1721, and 1727. He was major of a Boston regiment in 1717 and Lieutenant-Colonel in 1727. A [Boston](#) selectman 1715-18, he was a representative to the General Court in 1717, 1718, and 1732; a special justice to the Court of Common pleas 15 Dec 1732; and a Justice of the Peace on 19 Dec 1728, reappointed 6 July 1732. He died 16 Sept 1746. Stephens (or Stevens) was possibly Thomas, who made his Baptismal Covenant on 5 June 1698. Another regular not at the ceremony was Simeon Stoddard, who joined the Old South Church as a full member on 25 Jan 1701/2. He was recruited to the Artillery Company in 1675, made ensign of Captain Penn Townsend's foot company on 11 May 1681, became ensign of the Artillery Company in 1702, and died 15 Oct 1730. Brother Thornton and Sister Thornton may have been Thomas (joined the Old South on 31 Oct 1725) and Mary Greenwood Thornton, (joined on 16 Dec, 1670). There is also a Sarah Thornton who made the Baptismal Covenant on 1 March 1702, so perhaps the correct combination is Thomas and Sarah. Abigail Melyen Woodmansee Tilley, wife of William Tilley, was Sewall's second wife. She joined the Old South Church on 3



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Sept 1704. She married Sewall on 29 Oct 1719, but died only seven months later on 26 May 1720. William Tilley, Abigail's second husband, joined the Old South Church in 1674. Colonel Jonathan Tyng occasionally attended Sewall's meetings. A member of the Royal Council in 1686 and 1687, he opposed Governor Andros. He was magistrate and representative in 1692. Recruited to the Boston Militia in 1670, he became a major in 1697, a Lieutenant Colonel in 1702, and a Colonel of the Upper Middlesex regiment in 1703. Tyng was born 15 Dec 1642 and died 19 Jan 1724. Madam Bridget Lisle Hoar Usher was another Sewall regular. Wife of Hezekiah Usher, she was the daughter of Lady Alice Lisle, "one of the victims of the infamous Judge Jeffreys, after the battle of Sedgmoor." Eunice Tyng Willard, second wife of Samuel Willard, also attended Sewall's group. Katherine Brattle Eyre Winthrop, second wife of Wait Still Winthrop, was a regular attendee. She joined the Old South Church as a full member on 23 March 1683. Sewall wooed her unsuccessfully. She died 2 August 1725. Since the group met at different members' houses, these members of Sewall's private prayer group must occasionally have met for their services at Josiah Franklin's home. [Benjamin Franklin](#), like the other Franklin children, must have known them.

February 14, Friday (1717, Old Style). [Josiah Franklin](#) provided a receipt to Madam Shrimpton.

The Massachusetts legislature voted £200 to Governor Shute, "in consideration of the extraordinary dearness of all necessaries for House keeping." This brought his salary for 1717 to £1,200.

Elisha Cooke presented a memorial to the House of Representatives complaining that John Bridger, Surveyor-General, was "strenuously endeavouring by wrong Insinuations and Threats, to compel the Inhabitants of Kittery and Berwick, and the neighbouring Townns, to Pay him Forty Shillings per Team for each Team they send to Log, and get Timber."

February 23, Sunday (1717, Old Style): Judge [Samuel Sewall](#) suggested that either John White or [Josiah Franklin](#) should take his place as praecentor for the congregation (leading the congregation in its singing of hymns), his voice having become enfeebled. "The Return of the Gallery where Mr. Franklin sat was a place very Convenient for it" (John White, Harvard Class of 1685, would on Sunday, the 2d of March succeed Sewall as praecentor, and do this "very sweetly.")

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL

Late Spring or Early Summer: Sometime in the late spring or early summer of 1718, [James Franklin](#) opened his shop and set up his press and laid out his boxes of type from England at the corner of Queen (now Court) Street and Dasset Alley (now Franklin Avenue) in [Boston](#). [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s was probably apprenticed to his elder half-brother James about the time that shop was being opened, "when I was yet but 12 years old." At this shop they would not only print words on paper, but would also impress calico designs upon cloth.

Early June: Anonymous publication of A SATYRICAL DESCRIPTION OF COMMENCEMENT, CALCULATED TO THE MERIDIAN OF CAMBRIDGE IN NEW ENGLAND. This broadside poem, prepared evidently to be sold incident to the commencement ceremonies at Harvard College in June, possibly was printed at their new printing shop in [Boston](#) by [James Franklin](#) with the assistance of his apprentice [Benjamin Franklin](#).



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Before Summer: Probably before the summer, [James Franklin](#) had made the allegorical relief cut for the title page of Lewis Bayly's THE PRACTICE OF PIETY ([Boston](#): B. Green for Benj. Eliot and Daniel Henchman).

Before August 28, Thursday (Old Style): [James Franklin](#) printed A CATALOGUE OF CURIOUS AND VALUABLE BOOKS, (WHICH MOSTLY BELONGED TO THE REVEREND MR. GEORGE CURWIN) ... TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION ... ON TUESDAY THE SECOND DAY OF SEPT, 1718 ... THE BOOKS WILL BE SHEWN BY SAMUEL GERRISH BOOKSELLER, NEAR THE OLD MEETING HOUSE IN [BOSTON](#), FROM THURSDAY THE 28TH DAY OF AUG (BOSTON: PRINTED BY J. FRANKLIN, AT HIS PRINTING-HOUSE IN QUEEN STREET, OVER AGAINST MR. SHEAF'S SCHOOL; WHERE ALL SORTS OF PRINTING WORK AND ENGRAVING ON WOOD, IS DONE AT REASONABLE PRICES).

October 1, Wednesday (Old Style): Thomas Prince was ordained as an assistant minister at the Old South Church in [Boston](#). [Samuel Sewall](#) made an ample record of these proceedings in his diary:

Mr. Wadsworth began with Prayer, very well, about 1/2 past Ten. Mr. Prince preached from Hebr 13-17. Mr. Sewall pray'd. Dr. Incr. Mather ask'd if any had to object: ask'd the Church Vote who were in the Gallery fronting the Pulpit. Ask'd Mr. Prince's Acceptance of the Call. Dr. Increase Mather, Dr. Cotton Mather, Mr. Wadsworth, Colman, Sewall lay their Hands on his head. Dr. Increase Mather Prays; Gives the Charge, Prays agen. Dr. Cotton Mather Gives the Right Hand of Fellowship. Dr. Incr. Mather, when he declared whom the elders and Messengers had appointed to do it, [said] that it was a good Practice. Sung Psal. 68. 17-20. Mr. Prince gave the Blessing. Govr. Dudley and his Lady came in about the beginning of Sermon. Entertainment was at Mr. Sewall's, which was very plentiful and splendid.

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL

The sermon on this day would be printed by [James Franklin](#) as THOMAS PRINCE, SERMON DELIVERED ON WEDNESDAY, OCT 1, 1718 ... [WITH] EBENEZER PEMBERTON, A DISCOURSE OF THE VALIDITY OF ORDINATION BY THE HANDS OF PRESBYTERS.

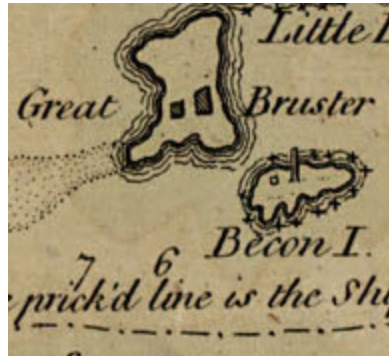
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THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

November 3, Monday (Old Style): Five people drowned near Great Brewster Island.

[TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS](#)

George Worthylake (or Worthilake), who had been brought up on George's Island in Boston Harbor, lived in the lighthouse on Little Brewster Island with his wife Ann and their daughters Ruth and Ann. They had a black slave there named Shadwell. On this day George Worthylake sailed to Boston to collect his pay, and on his way back sailed to Lovell's Island, where he and his wife Ann and their daughter Ruth boarded a sloop heading for Boston Light. A friend, John Edge, and a servant, George Cutler, were accompanying them. Just after noon, this sloop came to anchor and Worthylake's black slave Shadwell paddled out in a canoe to fetch them from the sloop to their island home. The daughter Ann Worthylake and a friend of hers, Mary Thompson, watched from shore as all six of them seated themselves in this canoe. Suddenly, the two girls on shore saw them "swimming or floating on the water, with their boat Oversett." The body of George Cutler would not be recovered. The bodies of the Worthylakes would be buried beneath a triple headstone in Copp's Hill Burying Ground in Boston's North End while the body of John Edge would be placed elsewhere. Perhaps the body of the slave Shadwell was buried also—somewhere or other—since it was in fact recovered from the water of the harbor, although of course nothing has been said of this.



It would be reported in the Boston News Letter that "On Monday last the 3d Currant an awful and Lamentable Providence fell out here, Mr. George Worthylake, (Master of the Light-House upon the Great Brewster [called Beacon-Island] at the Entrance of the Harbour of Boston) Anne his Wife, Ruth their Daughter, George Cutler, a Servant, Shadwell their Negro Slave, and Mr. John Edge a Passenger; being on the Lord's Day here at Sermon, and going home in a Sloop, dropt Anchor near the Landing place, and all got into a little Boat or Cannoo, designing to go on Shoar, but by Accident it overwhelmed, so that they were Drowned, and all found and Interred except George Cutler."



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[Benjamin Franklin](#), 12 at the time and newly apprenticed by his father Josiah to his elder brother [James Franklin](#) in the printing business in Boston, wrote a broadside ballad “A Lighthouse Tragedy” which was duly published.¹¹ Franklin’s father’s response to his younger son’s printed ballad would be a caution: “...verse-makers were generally beggars. So I escaped being a poet...” The poem sometimes attributed to young Franklin on the drowning, however, the one beginning, “Oh! George, This wild November” is nothing more than a 19th-Century forgery, or perhaps charitably we might offer that it is someone’s belated imitation of what young Franklin might have dashed off in the 18th Century.

The “very solemn” funeral sermon was delivered by the Reverend [Cotton Mather](#) before the father, wife, and daughter were “carried all together to the grave.” (“I entertain the flock with as pungent and useful a discourse as I can.”)

11. The gazette of Boston, known as the [News Letter](#), was being put out of course by its postmaster, John Campbell, for only the postmaster could read all the mail, and thus know what the news was(!), but in this year Campbell had lost his postmastership to William Brooker and yet had refused to turn over the gazette to this successor — who had thus been forced to begin a separate publication. Brooker had titled this new 2d paper the Boston [Gazette](#) and had arranged for it to be issued through the printshop of [James Franklin](#).

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1719

August 7, Friday (Old Style): The publication situation in [Boston](#) got even stickier. There were two local gazettes, the [News Letter](#) put out by the replaced postmaster and the [Gazette](#) put out by the current postmaster, and then the current postmaster got replaced by a third postmaster, Philip Musgrave, and Musgrave took the contract for the Boston [Gazette](#) away from the printing shop of [James Franklin](#). Whereupon [Benjamin Franklin](#) himself began to put out a local gazette, which he named the [New England Courant](#). The particular opportunity for this was that there had just been an episode of the small pox, and there was a great scandal about inoculation, a practice which was being sponsored by such members of the clergy as the Reverend Cotton Mather. The [Courant](#) dedicated itself to undermining this “doubtful and dangerous practice” of inoculation and the clergy who were supporting it. To this end they secured the writerly services of Dr. William Douglass, a Scottish physician who had studied in Edinburgh, Leyden, and Paris. Dr. Douglass was the first physician in America to hold a medical degree and he saw in this unscientific practice of inoculation¹² nothing more than the overactive imaginations of “Greek old women.”

Actually what we are talking about here in the year 1719 was not happening merely in Boston, this [Gazette](#) being matched in this same year in Philadelphia by the [American Weekly Mercury](#). —Where Franklin says in his memoirs that his brother’s paper in Boston “was the second,” actually it was like the 5th.¹³



12. “Unscientific” in such an early context merely meaning untheoretical — one may be forgiven for supposing that the basis for this was that it was something that hadn’t been taught to him in Med School.

13. Bragging was soooooo uncharacteristic of Ben!



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THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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1721

[Benjamin Franklin](#) wrote ballads and peddled them, in printed form, in the streets. He contributed, anonymously, to the New England Courant, and then temporarily edited that paper. He decided to become a free-thinker and a vegetarian.

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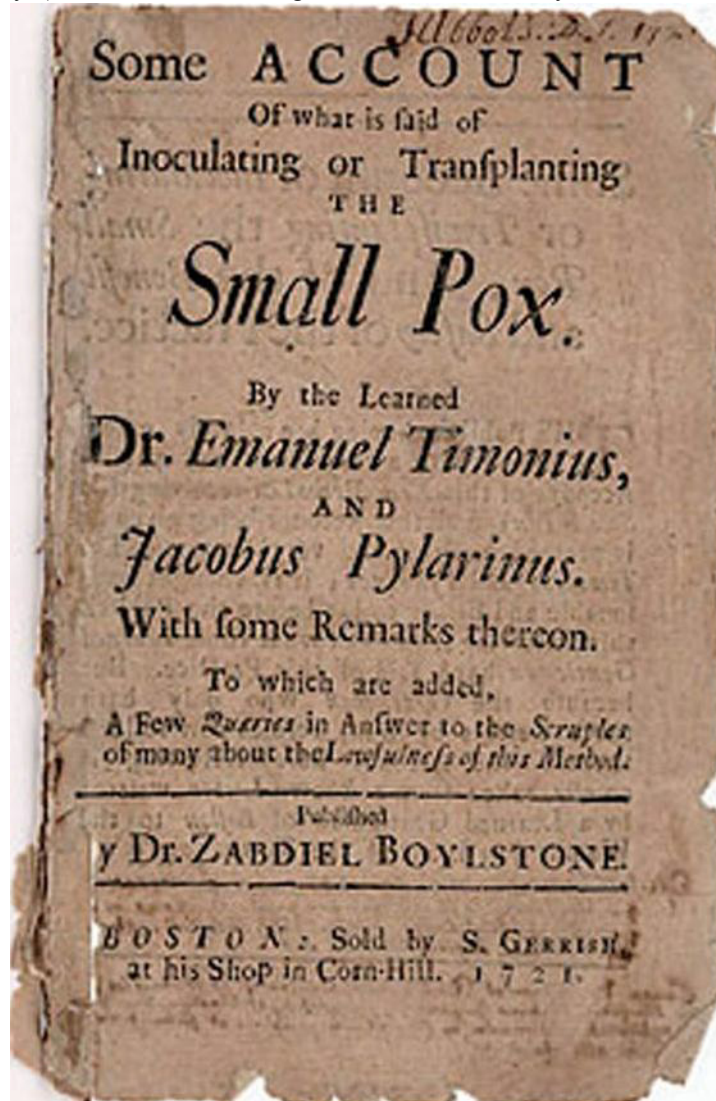
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June 26, Monday (Old Style): Inoculation was being introduced to [Boston](#) by Dr. Zabdiel Boylston.



His home besieged by a Boston mob, he would spend the following two weeks hiding in a secret compartment



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in the structure.¹⁴



The Reverend [Cotton Mather](#) had heard of inoculation from his slave Onesimus or Onesimes, who had been procured for his use by parishioners. Onesimus or Onesimes had been inoculated while still in Africa. The Reverend Mather inoculated two of his other black slaves, as well as his young son Thomas. Although the Reverend Mather had written to Dr. William Douglass, a Scottish physician practicing in Boston who had studied in Edinburgh, Leyden, and Paris, in advance, Dr. Douglass protested in the Franklin paper, the [New England Courant](#), that Dr. Boylston had no physician's license but was merely "a certain cutter for the stone," and that in order to prevent qualified physicians from being able effectively to register their objections, this procedure had been undertaken in haste without allowing them an opportunity to consult.¹⁵ The Reverend Mather spoke out from the pulpit in favor of such experimentation, referring to this inoculation procedure as "transplantation." A "grenado" was then pitched into the Reverend Mather's parsonage with a note tied to it which read:

COTTON MATHER, YOU DOG. DAM YOU! I'LL INOCULATE YOU WITH THIS, WITH A POX TO YOU.

The bomb was a dud and the General Court would offer a reward of £50 for information leading to the conviction of the person who had heaved it.

14. We may note that his home was firebombed by white people not because he was advocating that native Americans be inoculated against the [small pox](#), but because he was advocating that white people be inoculated. (Refer to letter by Jeffrey Amherst in 1732, recommending that native Americans be deliberately inoculated with the small pox. Dr. Douglass also suggested this.) Also, I don't know whether either the Reverend's firebombed home, or the home of Dr. Boylston, was on the street that would eventually be named in the doctor's honor, Boylston Street.

15. Inoculation was being determinedly opposed by [Benjamin Franklin](#) and his elder half-brother [James Franklin](#).

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Judge Samuel Sewall would be inoculated, and with him his family, whereupon the selectmen, fearing



[infection](#), would require them to relocate to Spectacle Island in Boston Harbor, where there was being maintained in those times a quarantine station referred to as “Province Hospital.”

VARIOLA

DIARY OF SAMUEL SEWALL

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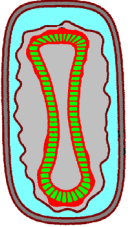
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August 7-14: The first printed proposal that we have currently been able to locate, for deliberately spreading the [small pox](#) among the Indians, was written by Dr. William Douglass, a Scottish physician practicing in Boston who had studied in Edinburgh, Leyden, and Paris, and printed in the [New England Courant](#), for which [Benjamin Franklin](#) worked, in its 2d issue. This was a tongue-in-cheek piece in which Douglass alleged that he had gone to bed the night before with two unrelated items from the journal on his mind –one about the war with the Eastern Indians, the other about the inoculation controversy– and in his sleep they had combined themselves into a new proposal for dealing with the Indian problem. He outlined a dream plan for sending biological warriors among the Indians, paying bounties, etc.



Physician, heal thyself!



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1722

[Benjamin Franklin](#)'s THE DOGOOD PAPERS were published before he was 17 years of age, in [James Franklin](#)'s [New England Courant](#):

WALDEN: But all this is very selfish, I have heard some of my townsmen say. I confess that I have hitherto indulged very little in philanthropic enterprises. I have made some sacrifices to a sense of duty, and among others have sacrificed this pleasure also. There are those who have used all their arts to persuade me to undertake the support of some poor family in town; and if I had nothing to do, -for the devil finds employment for the idle,- I might try my hand at some such pastime as that. However, when I have thought to indulge myself in this respect, and lay their Heaven under an obligation by maintaining certain poor persons in all respects as comfortably as I maintain myself, and have even ventured so far as to make them the offer, they have one and all unhesitatingly preferred to remain poor. While my townsmen and women are devoted in so many ways to the good of their fellows, I trust that one at least may be spared to other and less humane pursuits. You must have a genius for charity as well as for any thing else. As for Doing-good, that is one of the professions which are full. Moreover, I have tried it fairly, and, strange as it may seem, am satisfied that it does not agree with my constitution. Probably I should not consciously and deliberately forsake my particular calling to do the good which society demands of me, to save the universe from annihilation; and I believe that a like but infinitely greater steadfastness elsewhere is all that now preserves it. But I would not stand between any man and his genius; and to him who does this work, which I decline, with his whole heart and soul and life, I would say, Persevere, even if the world call it doing evil, as it is most likely they will.

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THE New-England Courant.

[Henry Thoreau](#) would take issue not only with Franklin's prudentialism here but also with the Reverend [Cotton Mather](#)'s ESSAYS TO DO GOOD. He would be saying that their prudential attitude, which they had put forward as an expression of one's personal ethical responsibility, amounted instead to a direct and deliberate **evasion** of such ethical responsibility. —Strong stuff! Thoreau would don moral blinders. He would recognize that the Franklineque personality, because so desirous of gain, would become *ipso facto* foolishly fearful of loss. His agenda in "Economy" would be to directly confront such fearfulness of loss, and such nostalgia for past losses, and reduce these to the absurdity which they are. In life, unlike on Franklin's ledger sheet, there is no



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possibility of red ink. Consider Franklin's prudentialism and its blinders:



Franklin never wrote the definitive handbook he projected on "the art of virtue." Instead, he left his (incomplete) AUTOBIOGRAPHY, in which his own life story is related as a sequence of parables, each with its moral lesson. The book shows how to shape one's personality through fostering some impulses and restraining others. The rhetorical posture of the detached, self-controlled observer, like the postulated model of human faculties, is quintessential eighteenth-century moral philosophy and can be traced back to The Spectator. Overall, the lesson is that by shaping and controlling one's self, one can shape and control one's destiny, even in an uncaring world. Self-discipline is the key to success. The author Franklin is necessarily detached from the character Franklin in the book, since the character is meant to stand for Everyman, to be a model for universal imitation. (The postulated universal desire for success is part of the security for the system. A person who has constructed himself in accordance with Franklin's maxims will be of use to society because he will want a good reputation, and the way to gain that is by being useful to others.) Franklin would have found the opposition between public and private virtue, supposedly characteristic of eighteenth-century American republicans, quite incomprehensible. For him, there was no conflict between virtue and commerce, or between the individual and the collective welfare. The prudential virtues that made one a good tradesman or a good housewife also characterized the good citizen. Indeed, his AUTOBIOGRAPHY points out, the good reputation that one earns by private virtue can be put to use in politics. Far from there being a conflict between virtue and self-interest, self-interest should be a motive to virtue and virtue should be practically useful. It is a cliché, though not less true for being such, that Franklin was more interested in means than ends, in practice than theory. This does not mean he was unsophisticated; the choice was quite deliberate on his part. He accepted the prevailing model of the human faculties and addressed himself with shrewdness to the practical problems that model posed. He assumed that the autonomous, rational self would be socially useful and that society would appropriately reward, with fame, those who served it. He devoted little thought to the nature of virtue in and of itself. Once, when Franklin was planning the agenda for coming Junto meetings, he considered discussing "whether men ought to be denominated good or ill men from their actions or their inclinations." But then he crossed it off the list. Very likely the question seemed too abstract to be interesting. It seemed quite otherwise to Jonathan Edwards.

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June 11, Monday (Old Style): The Reverend James McSparran wrote in English to [Gabriel Bernon](#). (On the reverse of this letter is a response from Bernon, undated.)

[James Franklin](#)'s [New England Courant](#) published an article that would be considered offensive by the [Boston](#) powers that be. The printer would be summoned before the council but would refuse to provide the name of the author of the article, and would be jailed for a month for contempt.



THE New-England Courant.



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1723

January (1722, Old Style): The New England Courant began to appear under the name of the youth [Benjamin Franklin](#) rather than under the name of his elder half-brother in trouble with the law, [James Franklin](#).






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 October: The indentured apprentice [Benjamin Franklin](#), beginning a lifetime of free thinking and of thinly disguised or quite blatant opportunism, walked away from his obligations to his elder half-brother [James Franklin](#) in [Boston](#), moving to the city where brothers love one another, called Philadelphia. (In this year he also abandoned his vegetarian principles.)

Thus it was that in the pages of the [New England Courant](#) there appeared the following famous advertisement:

James Franklin, printer in Queen's Street,
wants a likely lad for an apprentice.



Along the way, the ship stopped off in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) and picked up more passengers, some of whom were [Quakers](#) who would proffer to young Ben some gratis but valuable counsel.

Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

At Newport we took in a number of passengers for New York, among which were two young women, companions, and a grave, sensible, matron-like Quaker woman, with her attendants. I had shown an obliging readiness to do her some little services, which impress'd her I suppose with a degree of good will toward me; therefore, when she saw a daily growing familiarity between me and the two young women, which they appear'd to encourage, she took me aside, and said: "Young man, I am concern'd for thee, as thou has no friend with thee, and seems not to know much of the world, or of the snares youth is expos'd to; depend upon it, those are very bad women; I can see it in all their actions; and if thee art not upon thy guard, they will draw thee into some danger; they are strangers to thee, and I advise thee, in a friendly concern for thy welfare, to have no acquaintance with them." As I seem'd at first not to think so ill of them as she did, she mentioned some things she had observ'd and heard that had escap'd my notice, but now convinc'd me she was right. I thank'd her for her kind advice, and promis'd to follow it. When we arriv'd at New York, they told me where they liv'd, and invited me to come and see them; but I avoided it, and it was well I did; for the next day the captain miss'd a silver spoon and some other things, that had been taken out of his cabin, and, knowing that these were a couple of strumpets, he got a warrant to search their lodgings, found the stolen goods, and had the thieves punish'd. So, tho' we had escap'd a sunken rock, which we scrap'd upon in the passage, I thought this escape of rather more importance to me.

Since Ben was only dealing with women during this period of his life for the purposes known as health and hygiene (otherwise known as purposes of venery), he confessed, of course this was the sort of advice he was prepared to pay attention to. Just use them, Ben, don't let them use you!

In Philadelphia he obtaining remunerative employment in a Mr. Keimer's printing-office, after encountering



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some local [Quakers](#) whom, he noticed, also behaved considerably toward him:

Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

Then I walked up the street, gazing about till near the market-house I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal on bread, and, inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second-street, and ask'd for bisket, intending such as we had in Boston; but they, it seems, were not made in Philadelphia. Then I asked for a three-penny loaf, and was told they had none such. So not considering or knowing the difference of money, and the greater cheapness nor the names of his bread, I made him give me three-penny worth of any sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surpriz'd at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walk'd off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market-street as far as Fourth-street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut-street and part of Walnut-street, eating my roll all the way, and, corning round, found myself again at Market-street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and, being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go farther.

Thus refreshed, I walked again up the street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round awhile and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy thro' labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me. This was, therefore, the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia.

Walking down again toward the river, and, looking in the faces of people, I met a young Quaker man, whose countenance I lik'd, and, accosting him, requested he would tell me where a stranger could get lodging. We were then near the sign of the Three Mariners. "Here," says he, "is one place that entertains strangers, but it is not a reputable house; if thee wilt walk with me, I'll show thee a better." He brought me to the Crooked Billet in Water-street. Here I got a dinner; and, while I was eating it, several sly questions were asked me, as it seemed to be suspected from my youth and appearance, that I might be some runaway.

Yeah, Quaker, don't try to out-sly young Ben the runaway, you're playing that game with an expert here!

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1724

November: [Benjamin Franklin](#) was persuaded by Governor Keith to establish himself independently, and sailed on the *London Hope* for London to buy type. Abandoned by his supporter, who proved inadequate to do anything more than scheme and sound good, he would find instead that he had to work at his trade there in order to earn his passage back home.



PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1725

Joseph Ward, a footpad, was [hanged](#) on the Tyburn gallows outside London.¹⁶

There are some persons who are unhappy, even from their cradles, and though every man is said to be born to a mixture of good and evil fortune, yet these seem to reap nothing from their birth but an entry into woe, and a passage to misery.

This unhappy man we are now speaking of, Joseph Ward, is a strong instance of this, for being the son of travelling people, he scarce knew either the persons to whom he owed his birth, or the place where he was born. However, they found a way to instruct him well enough to read, and that so well that it was afterwards of great use to him, in the most miserable state of his life. He rambled about with his father and mother until the age of fourteen, when they dying, he was left to the wide world, with nothing to provide for himself but his wits; so that he was almost under necessity of going into a gang of gipsies that passed by that part of the country where he was. These gipsies taught him all their arts of living, and it happened that the crew he got into were not of the worst sort either, for they maintained themselves rather by the credulity of the country folks, than by the ordinary practices of those sort of people, stealing of poultry and robbing hedges of what linen people are careless enough to leave there. I shall have another and more proper occasion to give my readers the history of this sort of people, who were anciently formidable enough to deserve an especial Act of Parliament¹⁷ altered and amended in several reigns for banishing them from the Kingdom.

But to go on with the story of Ward; disliking this employment, he took occasion, when they came into Buckinghamshire, to leave them at a common by Gerrard's Cross, and come up to London. When he came here, he was still in the same state, not knowing what to do to get bread. At last he bethought himself of the sea, and prevailed on a captain to take with him a pretty long voyage. He behaved himself so well in his passage, that his master took him with him again, and used him very kindly; but he dying, Ward was again put to his shifts, though on his arrival in England he brought with him near 30 guineas to London.

He look up lodgings near the Iron Gate at St. Catherine's, and taking a walk one evening on Tower Wharf, he there met with a young woman, who after much shyness suffered him to talk to her. They met there a second and a third time. She said she was niece to a pewterer of considerable circumstances, not far from Tower Hill, who had promised, and was able to give her five hundred

16. LIVES OF THE MOST REMARKABLE CRIMINALS WHO HAVE BEEN CONDEMNED AND EXECUTED FOR MURDER, THE HIGHWAY, HOUSEBREAKING, STREET ROBBERIES, COINING OR OTHER OFFENCES / COLLECTED FROM ORIGINAL PAPERS AND AUTHENTIC MEMOIRS, AND PUBLISHED IN 1735 / Edited by Arthur L. Hayward

17. This was the statute of 1530 (22 Hen. VIII, c. 10) directed against "outlandish people calling themselves Egyptians." It was amended 1 & 2 Ph. & Mary, c. 4 and 5 Eliz., c. 10 and sundry other legislation was of a similar tenour.



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pounds; but the fear of disoblighing him by marriage, hindered her from thinking of becoming a wife without his approbation of her spouse.

These difficulties made poor Ward imagine that if he could once persuade the woman to marriage, he should soon mollify the heart of her relation, and so become happy at once. With a great deal to do, Madam was prevailed upon to consent, and going to the Fleet they were there married, and soon returned to St. Catherine's, to new lodgings which Ward had taken, where he had proposed to continue a day or two and then wait upon the uncle. Never man was in his own opinion more happy than Joseph Ward in his new wife, but alas! all human happiness is fleeting and uncertain, especially when it depends in any degree upon a woman. The very next morning after their wedding, Madam prevailed on him to slip on an old coat and take a walk by the house which she had shown him for her uncle's. He was no sooner out of doors, but she gave the sign to some of her accomplices, who in a quarter of an hour's time helped her to strip the lodging not only of all which belonged to Ward, but of some things of value that belonged to the people of the house. They were scarce out of doors before Ward returned, who finding his wife gone and the room stripped, set up such an outcry as alarmed all the people in the house.

Instead of being concerned at Joseph's loss they clamoured at their own, and told him in so many words that if he did not find the woman, or make them reparation for their goods, they would send him to Newgate. But alas! it was neither in Ward's power to do one, nor the other. Upon which the people were as good as their word, for they sent for a constable and had him before a Justice. There the whole act appearing, the justice discharged him and told them they must take their remedy against him at the Common Law. Upon this Ward took the advantage and made off, but taking to drinking to drive away the sorrows that encompassed him, he at last fell into ill-company, and by them was prevailed on to join in doing evil actions to get money. He had been but a short time at this trade, before he committed the fact for which he died.

Islington was the road where he generally took a purse, and therefore endeavoured to make himself perfectly acquainted with many ways that lead to that little town, which he effected so well, that he escaped several times from the strictest pursuits. At last it came into his head that the safest way would be to rob women, which accordingly he put into practice, and committed abundance of thefts that way for the space of six weeks, particularly on one Mrs. Jane Vickary, of a gold ring value twenty shillings, and soon after of Mrs. Elizabeth Barker, of a gold ring set with garnets. Being apprehended for these two facts, he was committed to New Prison, where either refusing or not being able to make discoveries, he remained in custody till the sessions at the Old Bailey. There the persons swearing positively to his face, he was after a trivial defence convicted, and received sentence of death accordingly.



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As he had no relations that he knew of, nor so much as one friend in the world, the thoughts of a pardon never distracted his mind a moment. He applied himself from the day of his sentence to a new preparation for death, and having in the midst of all his troubles accustomed himself to reading, he was of great use to his unhappy companions in reading the Scripture, and assisting them in their private devotions. He made a just use of that space which the mercy of the English Law allows to persons who are to suffer death for their crimes to make their peace with their Creator.

There was but one person who visited this offender while under the sentence of the Law, and he, thinking that the only method by which he could do him service was to save his life, proposed to him a very probable method of escaping, which for reasons not hard to be guessed at, I shall forbear describing. He pressed him so often and made the practicability of the thing so plain that the criminal at last condescended to make the experiment, and his friend promised the next day to bring him the materials for his escape.

That night Ward, who began then to be weak in his limbs with the sickness which had lain upon him ever since he had been in the prison, fell into a deep sleep, a comfort he had not felt since the coming on of his misfortunes. In this space he dreamed that he was in a very barren, sandy place, which was bounded before him by a large deep river, which in the middle of the plain parted itself into two streams that, after having run a considerable space, united again, having formed an island within the branches. On the other side of the main river, there appeared one of the most beautiful countries that could be thought of, covered with trees, full of ripe fruit, and adorned with flowers. On the other side, in the island which was enclosed, having a large arm of water running behind it and another smaller before, the soil appeared sandy and barren, like that whereon he stood.

While he was musing at this sight, he beheld a person of a grave and venerable aspect, in garb and appearance like a shepherd, who asked him twice or thrice, if he knew the meaning of what he there saw, to which he answered, *No. Well, then, says the stranger, I will inform you. This sight which you see is just your present case. You have nothing to resolve with yourself but whether you will prepare by swimming across this river immediately, forever to possess that beautiful country that lies before you; or by attempting the passage over the narrow board which crosses the first arm of the river and leads into the island, where you will be again amidst briars and thorns, and must at last pass that deep water, before you can enter the pleasant country you behold on the other side.*

This vision made so strong an impression on the poor man's spirits that when his friend came he refused absolutely to make his escape, but suffered with great marks of calmness and true

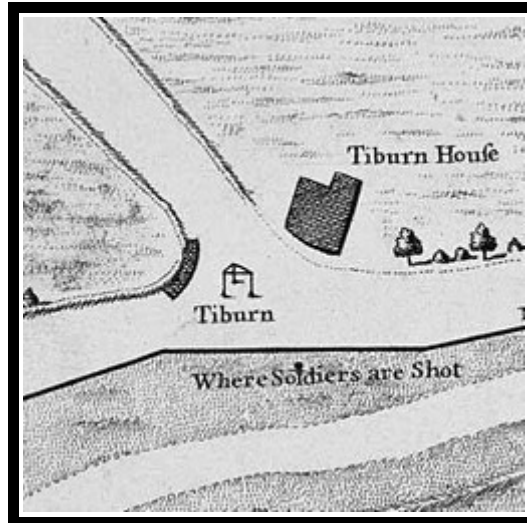


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repentance, at Tyburn, in the twenty-seventh year of his age.



While in England, [Benjamin Franklin](#) was publishing at his own expense a little tract he titled “Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain.” The burden of the piece was that since human behavior must be entirely within the sphere of the possible, the appearance of choice is a mere appearance, and therefore there really cannot be any such thing as our being morally responsible for our behavior. The young man’s free-thinking philosophy was: Anything goes, and one can do shamelessly anything one can get away with. Even when he began to doubt this philosophy, he doubted it for the wrong reasons, which is to say, he doubted it because it was not producing very many good times, in fact was proving useless for anything other than getting him into trouble:

Ben Franklin’s “Autobiography”

I began to suspect that this doctrine, tho’ it might be true, was not very useful. My London pamphlet, which had for its motto these lines of Dryden:

Whatever is, is right. Though purblind man
Sees but a part o’ the chain, the nearest link:
His eyes not carrying to the equal beam,
That poises all above;

and from the attributes of God, his infinite wisdom, goodness and power, concluded that nothing could possibly be wrong in the world, and that vice and virtue were empty distinctions, no such things existing, appear’d now not so clever a performance as I once thought it; and I doubted whether some error had not insinuated itself unperceiv’d into my argument, so as to infect all that follow’d, as is common in metaphysical reasonings.

JOHN DRYDEN

(We can see now, with the benefit of hindsight, that “Time’s noblest offspring” was on its civilizing way, the US of A was on its way aborning, on its way toward becoming what it would become, “the most lawless country in the civilized world,” the land where anything goes.)

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1726

Offered by a young companion a promising clerkship in a dry goods store, [Benjamin Franklin](#) returned from London to Philadelphia. Later in the year, he became manager of Mr. Keimer's printing-office.



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1727

[Benjamin Franklin](#) founded the “Junto,” or Leathern Apron Club. Among other attitudes, this club was opposed to [slavery](#).¹⁸



18. [Franklin](#) was well aware that there was such a thing as [slavery](#), since 1.) he owned slaves himself, and since 2.) he had a slave pen behind his print shop and sold slaves placed on consignment with him out of this pen, to other Philadelphians who had the ready cash to purchase them, and received a negotiated portion of their purchase price as his compensation.



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1728

The initial series of [James Franklin](#)'s [almanacs](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) –up to James Senior's death in 1735 and the assumption of control of the shop by the Widow Franklin and Joseph Stafford's relocation from Newport to Boston– would be being written by Stafford.

These early [almanacs](#) competed with each other on the basis of the accuracy of their calendrical calculations, but Franklin, and then a number of years later Nathaniel Ames, in [Newport](#), would change the name of the game when they began to include short paragraphs on current events and on morality, and when Franklin coined a character "Poor Robin" who might offer to his readership various humorous comments (nowadays we find this sort of added material used as brief column-filler paragraphs by the [Reader's Digest](#) and [The New Yorker](#) magazines). [Benjamin Franklin](#) would then go one better on his elder half-brother, when he would alter "Poor Robin" into "Poor Richard" and in addition predicted the death of his prime competitor, Philadelphia almanac maker Titan Leeds.¹⁹

MDCCXXVIII. THE RHODE-ISLAND ALMANACK, FOR THE YEAR, 1728. By "Poor Robin."

In 1911 a facsimile reprint of this almanac would be issued at Providence by George Parker Winship on the basis of the only copy known still to be extant. There would be 2 editions of this fac-simile with notes and additions, the one "without the Sensible Alteration," being limited to sixty copies. The only items of local interest that are given are the Baptist and Quaker meetings.

[John Bartram](#) purchased the property outside Philadelphia that would become the Bartram Garden.

In Philadelphia, [Benjamin Franklin](#) and Hugh Meredith opened a printing-office.

19. [Franklin](#), in doing this, was repeating a jokish trick that Jonathan Swift had played at the expense of his chief competitor in almanac-making in London, John Partridge, in 1708.

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The 22-year-old Franklin wrote his own epitaph (which we all suppose to have been placed on his gravestone at his death although actually, at his own instruction, it was not):

Epitaph written 1728.

The Body of
B. Franklin Printer,
(Like the Cover of an old Book
Its Contents torn out
And strip of its Lettering & Gilding)
Lies here, Food for Worms.
But the Work shall not be lost;
For it will, (as he believ'd) appear once more,
In a new and more elegant Edition
Revised and corrected,
By the Author.

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1729

THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1729. By "Poor Robin." [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

A copy recently sold by Dodd, Mead & Co. has not been located.
A statement in the almanac of 1730 seems to show that this one
was not by Poor Robin.

[Benjamin Franklin](#) published the Reverend Isaac Watts's psalm paraphrases in an American edition.

Lord, in the morning thou shalt hear
My voice ascending high.
— PSALM 5

From all who dwell below the skies
Let the Creator's praise arise;
Let the Redeemer's name be sung
Through every land, by every tongue.
— PSALM 117

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In Philadelphia, [Benjamin Franklin](#) became proprietor and editor of the [Pennsylvania Gazette](#). He printed, anonymously, “Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency,” and got the contract to print Pennsylvania’s currency.²⁰ He opened a stationer’s shop.



January 2, Thursday (1728, Old Style): In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

A likely young **Negro** Man, fit for Plantation Work, to be sold very reasonable. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof,

20. He would soon obtain also the contracts of New Jersey, Maryland, and Delaware.

[SLAVERY](#)[FRANKLIN](#)



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and know further.





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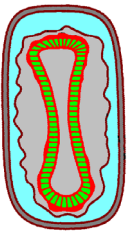
PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1730

MDCCLXXX. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1730. By “Poor Robin.” [Newport, Rhode Island: James Franklin.](#)


In Philadelphia this would be known as the year of the “great mortality from the [small pox.](#)” George Claypole, who had married Cromwell’s daughter Deborah, died of it. (Deborah Cromwell Claypole herself would live to be upwards of 90 years of age.) On borrowed money [Benjamin Franklin](#) bought out the other participants in his enterprise, to become sole proprietor.

In the [Cherokee](#) Nation one person out of every four died during this outbreak of the [small pox.](#) Nancy Ward was born.



September 1, Tuesday (Old Style): Discovering that he was somehow getting himself with a bastard baby whom he would need to rear, [Benjamin Franklin](#) and a young widow Deborah Read whom he had known ever since he had initially arrived in Philadelphia went public in a common-law marriage without the involvement of clergy.

In a hurricane near the island of Jamaica, a man-of-war conveying an ex-president of Panama was lost.

 Winter: [Benjamin Franklin](#)’s bastard was born. He brought the infant into the household he had established with Deborah Read and gave it the name William Temple Franklin.²¹

21. William’s mother has never been identified, but the father was clearly what Franklin referred to in later life as “that hard-to-be-govern’d Passion of Youth.” And although Franklin would live with Deborah Read for the rest of his life, and although in the end his and her bones would lie beneath the same block of stone — he would never have the grace to grant her the safety of being a married woman.

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1731

AN [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD, 1731. By Samuel Maxwell, [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

This is the first Rhode Island almanac to add the court sessions to its local items.

This Samuel Maxwell was 22 years of age, something we know by virtue of an entry he made in the almanack under the date of May 30, 1731: "The Author's Birthday 1708." In the preface he wrote "Although I be young in Years, yet I give not my Pen a Latitude beyond my Beard; for I always keep one parallel with the other: And my Almanack is in such an easy plain Form, and regular Method, that I hope there will be no Fault found by any of my Antagonists."

July 1, Thursday (Old Style): The Philadelphia Library was founded by [Benjamin Franklin](#). This lending library would, for the first century of its existence, until 1830, refuse to stock any books authored by any persons suspected to have been irreligious — even the writings of President [Thomas Jefferson](#) would until then be proscribed.





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

November 27, Saturday (Old Style): Per The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A Likely **Negro** Wench, about Fifteen Years old, has had the Small pox, been in the Country above a Year, and talks English. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1732

MDCCXXXII. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1732. By Poor Robin. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

May 10, Wednesday (Old Style): In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

THERE is to be sold a very likely **Negro** Woman aged about Thirty Years who has lived in this City, from her Childhood, and can wash and iron very well, cook Victuals, sew, spin on the Linen Wheel, milk Cows, and do all Sorts of House work very well. She has a Boy of about Two Years old, which is to go with her. The Price as reasonable as you can agree. And also another very likely Boy aged about Six Years, who is Son of the abovesaid Woman. He will be sold with his Mother, or by himself, as the Buyer pleases. Enquire of the **Printer**.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

May 18, Thursday (Old Style): Per [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

A Likely young **Negro** Fellow, about 19 or 20 Years of Age, to be disposed of: he is very fit for Labour, being us'd to Plantation Work, and has had the Small Pox. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

June 8, Thursday (Old Style): Per [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

There is a Pond and Brook from it, nigh Plymouth in N.E. (as I am informed²²) where never Herring had been seen, while other Brooks were full; but a certain Man²³ carried a Tub full of Water with a Number of them newly taken, and emptied 'em into that Pond; and ever after

22. The informant was [Benjamin Franklin](#). He also passed this information along to [Peter Kalm](#).

23. The certain man was [Franklin's](#) father [Josiah Franklin](#). The experiment happened in about 1706.



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they went up that Brook.



June 26, Monday (Old Style): Per The Pennsylvania Gazette:

A Very likely young **Negro** Man to be sold; He has been twelve Months in the Country, and speaks English. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

August 7, Monday (Old Style): Per The Pennsylvania Gazette:

A likely New **Negro** Boy to be disposed of; He is about eighteen Years of Age. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

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September 27, Wednesday (Old Style): [James Franklin](#) had brought a Ramage press and a small quantity of type over from England and had established himself in [Boston](#), with as apprentice his younger half-brother [Benjamin Franklin](#). He had, however, made some criticisms of the conduct of public affairs that had brought him into disfavor with the Massachusetts authorities, and young Ben had run away to Philadelphia. Finally, in constant fear of arrest, James had allowed himself to be persuaded by another Franklin brother, John, a resident of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), to remove thither. He had been publishing books and pamphlets. On this day the first issue of his new newspaper appeared, the [Rhode Island Gazette](#), 4th newspaper in New England but the 1st in Rhode Island. It was on 8 1/2 by 12 inch sheets and the logo stated that it was "Newport, Rhode-Island: Printed and sold by James Franklin at his Printing-House under the Town-School-House, where Advertisements and Letters to the Author are taken in." The last issue would be dated May 24, 1733, and there would be interruptions within that seven months.



[READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT](#)



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December 19, Tuesday (Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#), AKA “Richard Saunders,” AKA “Poor Richard,” began publication of POOR RICHARD’S [ALMANACK](#). This continued the [Rural Wit](#) tradition of New England, with annual publication to the year 1757. Continuing for twenty-five years to contain these supposedly anonymous witty, worldly-wise sayings, the almanac would play a considerable part in bringing together and molding a white American character out of what had been at that time merely a collection of diverse immigrant European types. At about this time, presuming all of morality to consist of mere selfish prudence (a move most typical of this man, characterizable by his marginal jotting of 1741 “*Nothing so likely to make a man's fortune as virtue*”), Franklin undertook a characteristically simplistic plan for “self-improvement”:

Ben Franklin’s “Autobiography”

In this piece it was my design to explain and enforce this doctrine, that vicious actions are not hurtful because they are forbidden, but forbidden because they are hurtful, the nature of man alone considered; that it was, therefore, every one's interest to be virtuous who wish'd to be happy even in this world; and I should, from this circumstance (there being always in the world a number of rich merchants, nobility, states, and princes, who have need of honest instruments for the management of their affairs, and such being so rare), have endeavored to convince young persons that no qualities were so likely to make a poor man's fortune as those of probity and integrity.

Indeed Franklin determined in this to imitate the humility not only of Jesus but also of [Socrates](#):

Ben Franklin’s “Autobiography”

My list of virtues contain'd at first but twelve; but a Quaker friend having kindly informed me that I was generally thought proud; that my pride show'd itself frequently in conversation; that I was not content with being in the right when discussing any point, but was overbearing, and rather insolent, of which he convinc'd me by mentioning several instances; I determined endeavouring to cure myself, if I could, of this vice or folly among the rest, and I added Humility to my list) giving an extensive meaning to the word.



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Of course, in Franklin's book there was no great difference to be noted between humility and the appearance of humility, since either could produce the desired rewards, true humility being only slightly more bothersome to produce than its ersatz. How utterly different this mere prudence is from any real morality!

PROTOTRACTATUS (1921) 6.422

Die Ethik ist transzendental.

Ethics is transcendental.

**TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS,
6.421**

*Es ist klar, daß sich die Ethik
nicht aussprechen läßt.
Die Ethik ist transzendental.
(Ethik und Ästhetik sind Eins.)*

It is clear that ethics
cannot be put into words.
Ethics is transcendental.
(Ethics and aesthetics are
one and the same.)

— Ludwig Wittgenstein

TRANSCENDENTALISM

The most pertinent of the recycled worldly-wise proverbs Franklin had put in the mouth of Saunders would be re-collected in 1758 as "The Way to Wealth," in which the literary persona would be a "Father Abraham" — an elderly person who was induced, in order to kill some time for some people who were waiting for the





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commencement of a public auction, to make a speech.

WALDEN: I am not sure that I ever heard the sound of cock-crowing from my clearing, and I thought that it might be worth the while to keep a cockerel for his music merely, as a singing bird. The note of this once wild Indian pheasant is certainly the most remarkable of any bird's, and if they could be naturalized without being domesticated, it would soon become the most famous sound in our woods, surpassing the clangor of the goose and the hooting of the owl; and then imagine the cackling of the hens to fill the pauses when their lords' clarions rested! No wonder that man added this bird to his tame stock, -to say nothing of the eggs and drumsticks. To walk in a winter morning in a wood where these birds abounded, their native woods, and hear the wild cockerels crow on the trees, clear and shrill for miles over the resounding earth, drowning the feebler notes of other birds, -think of it! It would put nations on the alert. Who would not be early to rise, and rise earlier and earlier every successive day of his life, till he became unspeakably healthy, wealthy, and wise? This foreign bird's note is celebrated by the poets of all countries along with the notes of their native songsters. All climates agree with brave Chanticleer. He is more indigenous even than the natives. His health is ever good, his lungs are sound, his spirits never flag.

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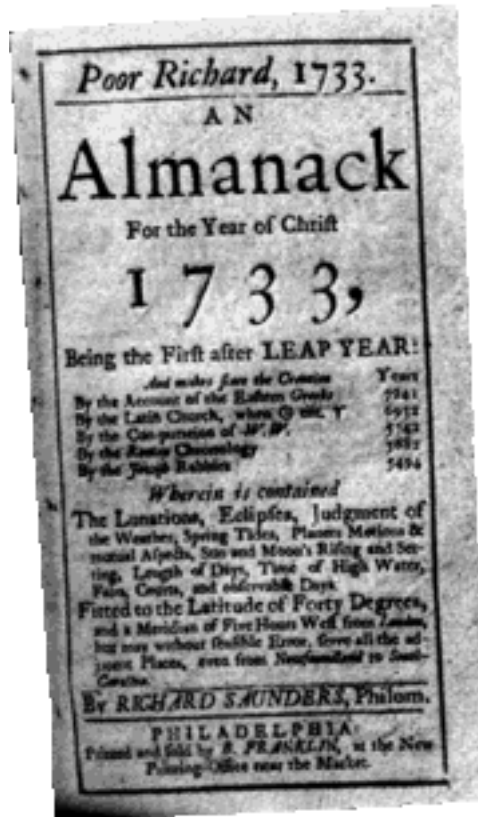
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1733

MDCCLXXXIII. THE RHODE ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1733. By "Poor Robin." [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#). Sold also by T. Fleet, Boston.

[Benjamin Franklin](#) put out his [almanac](#):





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1734

MDCCXXXIV. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1734. By Poor Robin. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

February 2, Saturday (1733, Old Style): After the death of its initial editor, The [South Carolina Gazette](#) resumed publication under Lewis Timothy (who was backed by [Benjamin Franklin](#)).

CHARLESTON



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1735

February 4, Monday (1734, Old Style): James [Franklin](#), elder half-brother of [Benjamin Franklin](#), died. No almanac would be issued for the year 1736. The printing business in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) would be carried on by Ann Smith Franklin as “Widow Franklin,” aided by two daughters and her son [James Franklin](#). For 1737 and 1738 she would rely on Joseph Stafford to prepare the [almanacs](#), but then he would move to Boston to put out his own almanac and she would herself prepare the materials from 1737 to 1741.

MDCCLXXXV. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1735. By Poor Robin. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#). Sold also by T. Fleet, Boston.

The copy in the Library of Congress is interleaved with manuscript notes. It belonged to Daniel Rogers, a tutor at Harvard in 1732.

November 13, Thursday (Old Style): In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

A likely young **Negro** Wench, who is a good Cook and can wash well, to be disposed of. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN




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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1736

English philologists began a practice of periodizing historical time into the categories Ancient, Medieval, and Modern. Horace Walpole would exclaim in 1773: “What a cartload of bricks and rubbish and Roman ruins they have piled together!”

[Benjamin Franklin](#) was involved at the beginning of a Fire Department for Philadelphia, in forming the Union Fire Company. They used the Boston Fire Society as their model. (This unfortunate and unseemly  would not be brought to an end in Philadelphia until 1871.)



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[Benjamin Franklin](#) was chosen clerk of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. He formed the Union Fire Company of Philadelphia. Franklin perceived clearly that the contrariness of the [Quaker](#) pacifists had rendered “Pennsylvania” defenseless against its external enemies. The City of Brotherly Love needed to raise an army and had not so much as a two militiamen to rub together:



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Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

With respect to defense, Spain having been several years at war against Great Britain, and being at length join'd by France, which brought us into great danger; and the laboured and long-continued endeavour of our governor, Thomas, to prevail with our Quaker Assembly to pass a militia law, and make other provisions for the security of the province, having proved abortive, I determined to try what might be done by a voluntary association of the people. To promote this, I first wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled PLAIN TRUTH, in which I stated our defenceless situation in strong lights, with the necessity of union and discipline for our defense, and promis'd to propose in a few days an association, to be generally signed for that purpose. The pamphlet had a sudden and surprising effect. I was call'd upon for the instrument of association, and having settled the draft of it with a few friends, I appointed a meeting of the citizens in the large building before mentioned. The house was pretty full; I had prepared a number of printed copies, and provided pens and ink dispers'd all over the room. I harangued them a little on the subject, read the paper, and explained it, and then distributed the copies, which were eagerly signed, not the least objection being made.

When the company separated, and the papers were collected, we found above twelve hundred hands; and, other copies being dispersed in the country, the subscribers amounted at length to upward of ten thousand. These all furnished themselves as soon as they could with arms, formed themselves into companies and regiments, chose their own officers, and met every week to be instructed in the manual exercise, and other parts of military discipline. The women, by subscriptions among themselves, provided silk colors, which they presented to the companies, painted with different devices and mottos, which I supplied. The officers of the companies composing the Philadelphia regiment, being met, chose me for their colonel; but, conceiving myself unfit, I declin'd that station, and recommended Mr. Lawrence, a fine person, and man of influence, who was accordingly appointed. I then propos'd a lottery to defray the expense of building a battery below the town, and furnishing it with cannon. It filled expeditiously, and the battery was soon erected, the merlons being fram'd of logs and fill'd with earth. We bought some old cannon from Boston, but, these not being sufficient, we wrote to England for more, soliciting, at the same time, our proprietaries for some assistance, tho' without much expectation of obtaining it.

Meanwhile, Colonel Lawrence, William Allen, Abram Taylor, Esqr., and myself were sent to New York by the associators, commission'd to borrow some cannon of Governor Clinton. He at first refus'd us peremptorily; but at dinner with his council, where there was great drinking of Madeira wine, as the custom of that place then was, he softened by degrees, and said he would lend us six. After a few more bumpers he advanc'd to ten; and at length he very good-naturedly conceded eighteen. They were fine cannon, eighteen-pounders, with their carriages, which we soon transported and mounted on our battery, where the associators kept a nightly guard while the war lasted, and among the rest I regularly took my turn of duty there as a common soldier.

My activity in these operations was agreeable to the governor and council; they took me into confidence, and I was consulted by them in every measure wherein their concurrence was thought useful to the association. Calling in the aid of religion, I propos'd to them the proclaiming a fast, to promote reformation, and implore the blessing of Heaven on our undertaking. They embrac'd the motion; but, as it was the first fast ever thought of in the province, the secretary had no precedent from which to draw the proclamation. My education in New England, where a fast is proclaimed every year, was here of some advantage: I drew it in the accustomed stile, it was translated into German, printed in both languages, and divulg'd thro' the province. This gave the clergy of the different sects an opportunity of influencing their congregations to join in the association, and it would probably have been general among all but Quakers if the peace had not soon interven'd.

It was thought by some of my friends that, by my activity in these affairs, I should offend that sect, and thereby lose my interest in the Assembly of the province, where they formed a great majority. A young gentleman who had likewise some friends in the House, and wished to succeed me as their clerk, acquainted me that it was decided to displace me at the next election; and he, therefore, in good will, advis'd me to resign, as more consistent with my honour than being turn'd out.

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Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

My answer to him was, that I had read or heard of some public man who made it a rule never to ask for an office, and never to refuse one when offer'd to him. "I approve," says I, "of his rule, and will practice it with a small addition; I shall never ask, never refuse, nor ever resign an office. If they will have my office of clerk to dispose of to another, they shall take it from me. I will not, by giving it up, lose my right of some time or other making reprisals on my adversaries." I heard, however, no more of this; I was chosen again unanimously as usual at the next election. Possibly, as they dislik'd my late intimacy with the members of council, who had join'd the governors in all the disputes about military preparations, with which the House had long been harass'd, they might have been pleas'd if I would voluntarily have left them; but they did not care to displace me on account merely of my zeal for the association, and they could not well give another reason.

Indeed I had some cause to believe that the defense of the country was not disagreeable to any of them, provided they were not requir'd to assist in it. And I found that a much greater number of them than I could have imagined, tho' against offensive war; were clearly for the defensive. Many pamphlets pro and con were publish'd on the subject, and some by good Quakers, in favour of defense, which I believe convinc'd most of their younger people.

A transaction in our fire company gave me some insight into their prevailing sentiments. It had been propos'd that we should encourage the scheme for building a battery by laying out the present stock, then about sixty pounds, in tickets of the lottery. By our rules, no money could be dispos'd of till the next meeting after the proposal. The company consisted of thirty members, of which twenty-two were Quakers, and eight only of other persuasions. We eight punctually attended the meeting; but, tho' we thought that some of the Quakers would join us, we were by no means sure of a majority. Only one Quaker, Mr. James Morris, appear'd to oppose the measure. He expressed much sorrow that it had ever been propos'd, as he said Friends were all against it, and it would create such discord as might break up the company. We told him that we saw no reason for that; we were the minority, and if Friends were against the measure, and outvoted us, we must and should, agreeably to the usage of all societies, submit. When the hour for business arriv'd it was mov'd to put the vote; he allow'd we might then do it by the rules, but, as he could assure us that a number of members intended to be present for the purpose of opposing it, it would be but candid to allow a little time for their appearing.

While we were disputing this, a waiter came to tell me two gentlemen below desir'd to speak with me. I went down, and found they were two of our Quaker members. They told me there were eight of them assembled at a tavern just by; that they were determin'd to come and vote with us if there should be occasion, which they hop'd would not be the case, and desir'd we would not call for their assistance if we could do without it, as their voting for such a measure might embroil them with their elders and friends. Being thus secure of a majority, I went up, and after a little seeming hesitation, agreed to a delay of another hour. This Mr. Morris allow'd to be extremly fair. Not one of his opposing friends appear'd, at which he express'd great surprize; and, at the expiration of the hour, we carry'd the resolution eight to one; and as, of the twenty-two Quakers, eight were ready to vote with us, and thirteen, by their absence, manifested that they were not inclin'd to oppose the measure, I afterward estimated the proportion of Quakers sincerely against defense as one to twenty-one only; for these were all regular members of that society, and in good reputation among them, and had due notice of what was propos'd at that meeting.

The honorable and learned Mr. Logan, who had always been of that sect, was one who wrote an address to them, declaring his approbation of defensive war, and supporting his opinion by many strong arguments. He put into my hands sixty pounds to be laid out in lottery tickets for the battery, with directions to apply what prizes might be drawn wholly to that service. He told me the following anecdote of his old master, William Penn, respecting defense. He came over from England, when a young man, with that proprietary, and as his secretary. It was war-time, and their ship was chas'd by an armed vessel, suppos'd to be an enemy. Their captain prepar'd for defense; but told William Penn and his company of Quakers, that he did not expect their assistance, and they might retire into the cabin, which they did, except James Logan, who chose to stay upon deck, and was quarter'd to a gun. The suppos'd enemy prov'd a friend, so there was no fighting; but when the secretary went down to communicate the intelligence, William Penn rebuk'd him severely for staying upon deck, and undertaking to assist in defending the vessel, contrary to the principles of Friends, especially as it had not been required by the captain. This reproof, being before all the company, piqu'd the secretary, who answer'd, "I being thy servant, why did thee not order me to come down? But thee was willing enough that I should stay and help to fight the ship when thee thought there was danger."



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Sure, Ben, you're a good ol' boy, I'm ready to believe that the [Quakers](#) of your period, who were influential and whom you needed therefore to oppose and think ill of, were hypocritical about their established nonviolent creed and credo, whereas these Dunkers, who were uninfluential and whom you didn't need therefore to oppose and think ill of, were self-reflective and modest about their doubts and their beliefs in regard to the cleansing function of violence. Sure, Ben, I'm ready to accept that this is them and not you. Hey, meanwhile, guy, I've got this sandy ocean beachfront property in Arizona that I'm willing to pass on for real cheap!

September: A "little hunchback" named [Benjamin Lay](#), 59 years old, who had relocated his family from the Barbadoes to Pennsylvania because of his fear of "the Evil and the Danger" of the institution of [human enslavement](#), sat in the quarterly meeting for business of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), in Concord PA near Philadelphia:

9th Month, 1736, as I sat in Concord Meeting House, it was their Quarterly Meeting; I may say it was a sweet and comfortable time to me; it came into and arose in my mind, in Love of Truth, that if our Slave Keepers had been, or now would be faithful to God, the Truth, and would bring up their Negroes to some Learning, Reading and Writing, and endeavour to the utmost of their power in the sweet Love of Truth to instruct and teach 'em the principles of truth and righteousness, and learn them some Honest Trade or Employment and then set them free; and all the time Friends are teaching them let them know that they intend to let them go free in a very reasonable time: and that our Religious Principle will not allow of such Severity, as to keep them in everlasting Bondage and Slavery.

Friend Benjamin found that the response from other [Quakers](#) was to accuse that

I loved the Negroes better than I did my Friends.

However, Friend Benjamin was able to persuade the local printer [Benjamin Franklin](#) to run his material opposed to [human enslavement](#) through the presses. Franklin, you see, although he bought and sold negroes, and owned them himself for his personal use, was a believer in freedom of the printer, and had no objections to running any sort of materials through his printing presses, as long as this met with the stipulations of his personal religion (that is to say, that it was **paid for in full and in advance**).

September 30, Thursday (Old Style): In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

A **Negro** Boy about 18 Years of Age; also a young Servant Mans Time for 4 Years, a Weaver by Trade, to be disposed of. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

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THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

My being many years in the Assembly, the majority of which were constantly Quakers, gave me frequent opportunities of seeing the embarrassment given them by their principle against war; whenever application was made to them, by order of the crown, to grant aids for military purposes. They were unwilling to offend government, on the one hand, by a direct refusal; and their friends, the body of the Quakers, on the other, by a compliance contrary to their principles; hence a variety of evasions to avoid complying, and modes of disguising the compliance when it became unavoidable. The common mode at last was, to grant money under the phrase of its being "for the king's use," and never to inquire how it was applied.

But, if the demand was not directly from the crown, that phrase was found not so proper, and some other was to be invented. As, when powder was wanting (I think it was for the garrison at Louisburg), and the government of New England solicited a grant of some from Pennsylvania, which was much urg'd on the House by Governor Thomas, they could not grant money to buy powder, because that was an ingredient of war; but they voted an aid to New England of three thousand pounds, to be put into the hands of the governor; and appropriated it for the purchasing of bread, flour, wheat, or other grain. Some of the council, desirous of giving the House still further embarrassment, advis'd the governor not to accept provision, as not being the thing he had demanded; but he reply'd, "I shall take the money, for I understand very well their meaning; other grain is gunpowder," which he accordingly bought, and they never objected to it.

It was in allusion to this fact that, when in our fire company we feared the success of our proposal in favour of the lottery, and I had said to my friend Mr. Syng, one of our members, "If we fail, let us move the purchase of a fire-engine with the money; the Quakers can have no objection to that; and then, if you nominate me and I you as a committee for that purpose, we will buy a great gun, which is certainly a fire-engine." "I see," says he, "you have improv'd by being so long in the Assembly; your equivocal project would be just a match for their wheat or other grain."

These embarrassments that the Quakers suffer'd from having establish'd and published it as one of their principles that no kind of war was lawful, and which, being once published, they could not afterwards, however they might change their minds, easily get rid of, reminds me of what I think a more prudent conduct in another sect among us, that of the Dunkers. I was acquainted with one of its founders, Michael Welfare, soon after it appear'd. He complain'd to me that they were grievously calumniated by the zealots of other persuasions, and charg'd with abominable principles and practices, to which they were utter strangers. I told him this had always been the case with new sects, and that, to put a stop to such abuse, I imagin'd it might be well to publish the articles of their belief, and the rules of their discipline. He said that it had been propos'd among them, but not agreed to, for this reason: "When we were first drawn together as a society," says he, "it had pleased God to enlighten our minds so far as to see that some doctrines, which we once esteemed truths, were errors; and that others, which we had esteemed errors, were real truths. From time to time He has been pleased to afford us farther light, and our principles have been improving, and our errors diminishing. Now we are not sure that we are arrived at the end of this progression, and at the perfection of spiritual or theological knowledge; and we fear that, if we should once print our confession of faith, we should feel ourselves as if bound and confin'd by it, and perhaps be unwilling to receive farther improvement, and our successors still more so, as conceiving what we their elders and founders had done, to be something sacred, never to be departed from."

This modesty in a sect is perhaps a singular instance in the history of mankind, every other sect supposing itself in possession of all truth, and that those who differ are so far in the wrong; like a man traveling in foggy weather, those at some distance before him on the road he sees wrapped up in the fog, as well as those behind him, and also the people in the fields on each side, but near him all appears clear, tho' in truth he is as much in the fog as any of them. To avoid this kind of embarrassment, the Quakers have of late years been gradually declining the public service in the Assembly and in the magistracy, choosing rather to quit their power than their principle.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1737

MDCCLXXXVII. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1737, BY POOR ROBIN. By Joseph Stafford, [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [Widow Franklin](#).

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[Benjamin Franklin](#) was elected to the Assembly. He was appointed Deputy Postmaster-General for of Philadelphia. He planned a city police.



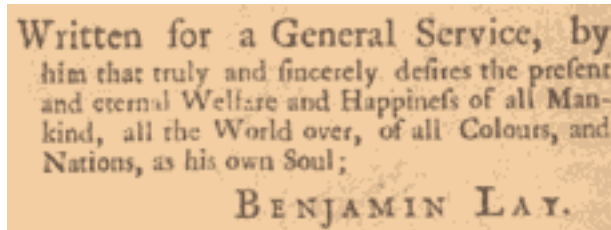


THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

The press of [Benjamin Franklin](#) in Philadelphia printed ALL [SLAVE](#) KEEPERS THAT KEEP THE INNOCENT IN BONDAGE... for the author, [Friend Benjamin Lay](#).



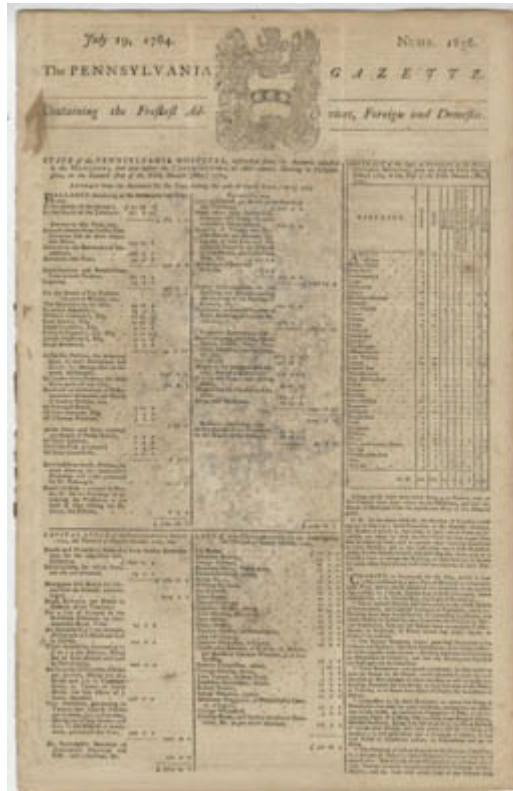
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

October 13, Thursday (Old Style) In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

TO BE SOLD, A VERY good **Negro** of 20 Years of Age, that has had the Small Pox, and can handle a broad Ax and narrow Ax well, and handles a Mallet and Chizzel very well; also handles an Oar very well, and will be a good Hand for a Ferry. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

ALL
SLAVE-KEEPERS
That keep the Innocent in Bondage,
APOSTATES

Pretending to lay Claim to the Pure
& Holy Christian Religion ; of what Congregation
so ever ; but especially in their Ministers, by whose
example the filthy Leprosy and Apostacy is
spread far and near ; it is a notorious Sin, which
many of the true Friends of Christ, and his pure
Truth, called *Quakers*, has been for many Years,
and still are concern'd to write and bear Testimo-
ny against ; as a Practice so gross & hurtful to Re-
ligion, and destructive to Government, beyond
what Words can set forth, or can be declared of
by Men or Angels, and yet lived in by Ministers
and Magistrates in *America*.

The Leaders of the People cause them to Err.

Written for a General Service, by
him that truly and sincerely desires the present
and eternal Welfare and Happiness of all Man-
kind, all the World over, of all Colours, and
Nations, as his own Soul ;

BENJAMIN LAY.

PHILADELPHIA:
Printed for the AUTHOR. 1737.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1738

MDCCXXXVIII. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1738, BY POOR ROBIN. By Joseph Stafford. [Newport](#), [Rhode Island](#): [Widow Franklin](#).

[Benjamin Franklin](#) began to study French, Italian, Spanish, and Latin.

June 22, Thursday (Old Style): In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

To be SOLD for her Passage, A LIKELY young Woman, well cloathed, can sew and do Household Work. Term of Time as you can agree with her. N.B. Her Passage is 8 l. Also a Breeding **Negro** Woman about 20 Years of Age, can do any Houshold Work. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof. VIRGINIA, JUNE 2, 1738

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December 28, Thursday (Old Style): In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

RUN from the Subscriber, in Northumberland County, Virginia, on Sunday the 12th of Nov. Inst. two English Convict Servants; one named Robert Shiels, a Gardner; is a lusty well set Fellow, about 26 Years of Age, with long black Hair, but it's suppos'd may cut it off. His wearing Apparel was a coarse Felt Hat, two oznabrigs Shirts, a Virginia Cloth Jacket and Breeches, and a large blue Jacket, old Virginia Stockings, and a Pair or more of **Negro** Shoes. The other named William Roberts, a Shoemaker, who also goes by the Name of William Simmons, is a middle siz'd Man, about 23 Years of Age, much pitted with the Small Pox; He has Letters on one Hand mark'd with Gun powder, and on one of his Arms a darted Heart, and on the other Arm this Name, MARY ROBERTS. His wearing Apparel was an old fine Hat, a small Wigg, one fine Shirt and an oznabrigs one, a Swan skin Jacket, an old Coat tarr'd and patch'd, old fine Cloth Breeches, blue worsted Stockings, handsome square toe'd Shoes, and large brass Buckles. They went away in an old great Canoe. Whoever secures the said Servants, and brings or causes them to be brought to my House, in Northumberland County aforesaid, or B. **Franklin**, Printer in Philadelphia, shall have three Pistoles Reward fore each, besides what the Law allows, paid by Peter Presly. N.B. They are bold stout Fellows and will make Resistance; and if taken, must be well guarded, or they will escape.

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1739

The Finnish/Swedish [Peter Kalm](#) (Pietari Kalm) was one of Linné's students, particularly involved with medicinal and dye-yielding plants. In this year he landed in Philadelphia, visiting [Benjamin Franklin](#) and Friend [John Bartram](#). At Raccoon (now Swedesboro), New Jersey, Kalm would preach when no regular clergyman was available, and he would marry this town's pastor's widow. In 1757 he would receive a doctor's degree in theology from the University of Lund and in 1777 would be elected a member of the Swedish Academy of Sciences.

[BOTANIZING](#)

[Franklin](#) would advise this visitor from Finland that his father [Josiah Franklin](#) had introduced herring into a river where they had never before propagated themselves.





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

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[Franklin](#) evidently also related this story to the Reverend Joseph Morgan, for we find the reverend passing it along it in an essay on fish ladders and other ways of making fish more plentiful in rivers and streams, in [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#) for June 8, 1732: “There is a Pond and Brook from it, nigh Plymouth in N.E. (as I am informed) where never Herring had been seen, while other Brooks were full; but a certain Man carried a Tub full of Water with a Number of them newly taken, and emptied ’em into that Pond; and ever after they went up that Brook.”



MDCCXXXIX. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1739. By “Poor Robin.” [Newport, Rhode Island: Widow Franklin](#)

James Franklin having died in 1735, and Stafford having moved to Boston, Widow Franklin issued the almanac this year and subsequently, under the pseudonym formerly used by her husband.

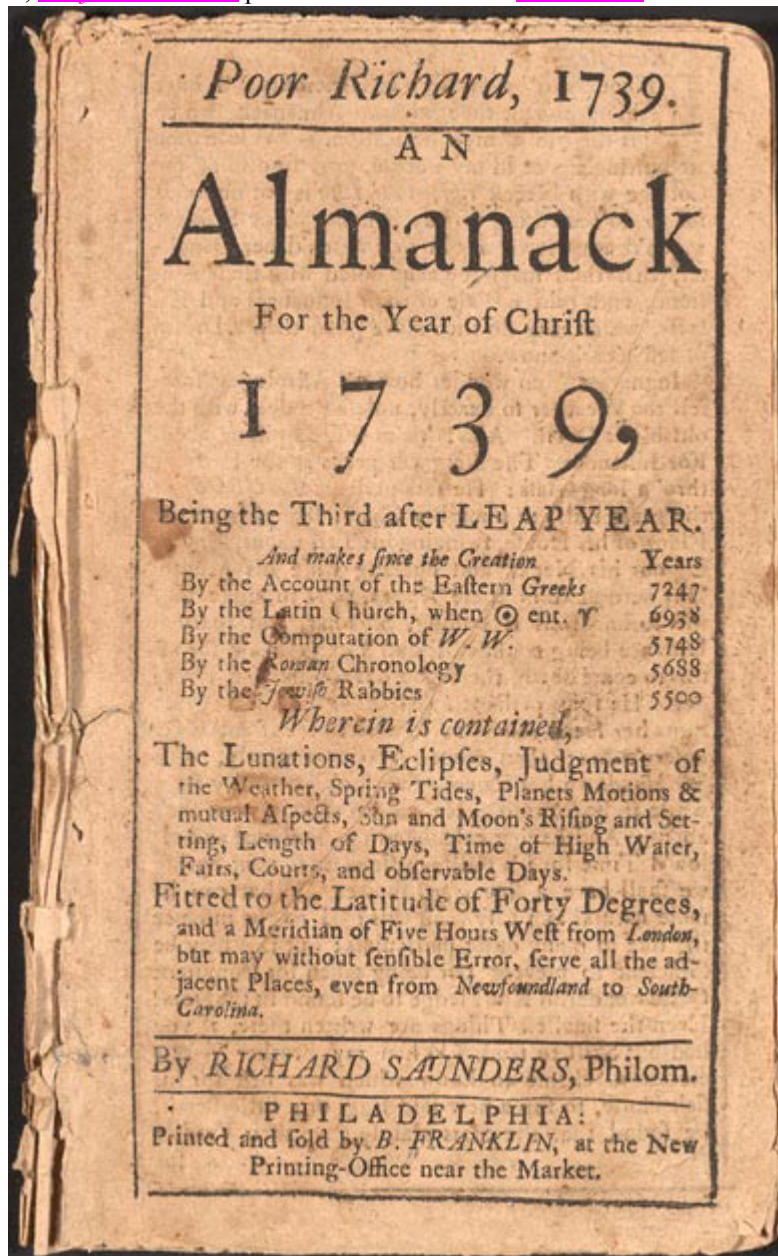


THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

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In Philadelphia, [Benjamin Franklin](#) put out a “Poor Richard” [ALMANACK](#):





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

In this year about 500,000 people would die in [Ireland](#) due to a widespread failure of the [potato](#) crop. Per the memoirs of [Benjamin Franklin](#), the itinerant preacher [George Whitefield](#) came from [Ireland](#) to Philadelphia:



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THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

In 1739 arrived among us from Ireland the Reverend Mr. Whitefield, who had made himself remarkable there as an itinerant preacher. He was at first permitted to preach in some of our churches; but the clergy, taking a dislike to him, soon refus'd him their pulpits, and he was oblig'd to preach in the fields. The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous, and it was matter of speculation to me, who was one of the number, to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admir'd and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them that they were naturally half beasts and half devils. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seem'd as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk thro' the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street.

And it being found inconvenient to assemble in the open air, subject to its inclemencies, the building of a house to meet in was no sooner propos'd, and persons appointed to receive contributions, but sufficient sums were soon receiv'd to procure the ground and erect the building, which was one hundred feet long and seventy broad, about the size of Westminster Hall; and the work was carried on with such spirit as to be finished in a much shorter time than could have been expected. Both house and ground were vested in trustees, expressly for the use of any preacher of any religious persuasion who might desire to say something to the people at Philadelphia; the design in building not being to accommodate any particular sect, but the inhabitants in general; so that even if the Mufti of Constantinople were to send a missionary to preach Mohammedanism to us, he would find a pulpit at his service.

Mr. Whitefield, in leaving us, went preaching all the way thro' the colonies to Georgia. The settlement of that province had lately been begun, but, instead of being made with hardy, industrious husbandmen, accustomed to labor, the only people fit for such an enterprise, it was with families of broken shop-keepers and other insolvent debtors, many of indolent and idle habits, taken out of the jails, who, being set down in the woods, unqualified for clearing land, and unable to endure the hardships of a new settlement, perished in numbers, leaving many helpless children unprovided for. The sight of their miserable situation inspir'd the benevolent heart of Mr. Whitefield with the idea of building an Orphan House there, in which they might be supported and educated. Returning northward, he preach'd up this charity, and made large collections, for his eloquence had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers, of which I myself was an instance.

I did not disapprove of the design, but, as Georgia was then destitute of materials and workmen, and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia at a great expense, I thought it would have been better to have built the house here, and brought the children to it. This I advis'd; but he was resolute in his first project, rejected my counsel, and I therefore refus'd to contribute. I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolv'd he should get nothing from me, I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the coppers. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determin'd me to give the silver; and he finish'd so admirably, that I empty'd my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, had, by precaution, emptied his pockets before he came from home. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong desire to give, and apply'd to a neighbour, who stood near him, to borrow some money for the purpose. The application was unfortunately [made] to perhaps the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was, "At any other time, Friend Hopkinson, I would lend to thee freely; but not now, for thee seems to be out of thy right senses."



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Some of Mr. Whitefield's enemies affected to suppose that he would apply these collections to his own private emolument; but I who was intimately acquainted with him (being employed in printing his Sermons and Journals, etc.), never had the least suspicion of his integrity, but am to this day decidedly of opinion that he was in all his conduct a perfectly honest man, and methinks my testimony in his favour ought to have the more weight, as we had no religious connection. He us'd, indeed, sometimes to pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Ours was a mere civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death.

The following instance will show something of the terms on which we stood. Upon one of his arrivals from England at Boston, he wrote to me that he should come soon to Philadelphia, but knew not where he could lodge when there, as he understood his old friend and host, Mr. Benezet, was removed to Germantown. My answer was, "You know my house; if you can make shift with its scanty accommodations, you will be most heartily welcome." He reply'd, that if I made that kind offer for Christ's sake, I should not miss of a reward. And I returned, "Don't let me be mistaken; it was not for Christ's sake, but for your sake." One of our common acquaintance jocosely remark'd, that, knowing it to be the custom of the saints, when they received any favour, to shift the burden of the obligation from off their own shoulders, and place it in heaven, I had contriv'd to fix it on earth.

The last time I saw Mr. Whitefield was in London, when he consulted me about his Orphan House concern, and his purpose of appropriating it to the establishment of a college.

He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words and sentences so perfectly, that he might be heard and understood at a great distance, especially as his auditories, however numerous, observ'd the most exact silence. He preach'd one evening from the top of the Court-house steps, which are in the middle of Market-street, and on the west side of Second-street, which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were fill'd with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market-street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river; and I found his voice distinct till I came near Front-street, when some noise in that street obscur'd it. Imagining then a semi-circle, of which my distance should be the radius, and that it were fill'd with auditors, to each of whom I allow'd two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconcil'd me to the newspaper accounts of his having preach'd to twenty-five thousand people in the fields, and to the antient histories of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted. By hearing him often, I came to distinguish easily between sermons newly compos'd, and those which he had often preach'd in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improv'd by frequent repetitions that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice, was so perfectly well turn'd and well plac'd, that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleas'd with the discourse; a pleasure of much the same kind with that receiv'd from an excellent piece of musick. This is an advantage itinerant preachers have over those who are stationary, as the latter can not well improve their delivery of a sermon by so many rehearsals.

*His writing and printing from time to time gave great advantage to his enemies; unguarded expressions, and even erroneous opinions, delivered in preaching, might have been afterwards explain'd or qualify'd by supposing others that might have accompani'd them, or they might have been deny'd; but *litera scripta monet*. Critics attack'd his writings violently, and with so much appearance of reason as to diminish the number of his votaries and prevent their increase; so that I am of opinion if he had never written any thing, he would have left behind him a much more numerous and important sect, and his reputation might in that case have been still growing, even after his death, as there being nothing of his writing on which to found a censure and give him a lower character, his proselytes would be left at liberty to feign for him as great a variety of excellence as their enthusiastic admiration might wish him to have possessed.*



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

...I turn'd my thoughts again to the affair of establishing an academy. The first step I took was to associate in the design a number of active friends, of whom the Junto furnished a good part; the next was to write and publish a pamphlet, entitled Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania. This I distributed among the principal inhabitants gratis; and as soon as I could suppose their minds a little prepared by the perusal of it, I set on foot a subscription for opening and supporting an academy; it was to be paid in quotas yearly for five years; by so dividing it, I judg'd the subscription might be larger, and I believe it was so, amounting to no less, if I remember right, than five thousand pounds. In the introduction to these proposals, I stated their publication, not as an act of mine, but of some publick-spirited gentlemen, avoiding as much as I could, according to my usual rule, the presenting myself to the publick as the author of any scheme for their benefit. The subscribers, to carry the project into immediate execution, chose out of their number twenty-four trustees, and appointed Mr. Francis, then attorney-general, and myself to draw up constitutions for the government of the academy; which being done and signed, a house was hired, masters engag'd, and the schools opened, I think, in the same year, 1749. The scholars increasing fast, the house was soon found too small, and we were looking out for a piece of ground, properly situated, with intention to build, when Providence threw into our way a large house ready built, which, with a few alterations, might well serve our purpose. This was the building before mentioned, erected by the hearers of Mr. Whitefield, and was obtained for us in the following manner. It is to be noted that the contributions to this building being made by people of different sects, care was taken in the nomination of trustees, in whom the building and ground was to be vested, that a predominancy should not be given to any sect, lest in time that predominancy might be a means of appropriating the whole to the use of such sect, contrary to the original intention. It was therefore that one of each sect was appointed, viz., one Church-of-England man, one Presbyterian, one Baptist, one Moravian, etc., those, in case of vacancy by death, were to fill it by election from among the contributors. The Moravian happen'd not to please his colleagues, and on his death they resolved to have no other of that sect. The difficulty then was, how to avoid having two of some other sect, by means of the new choice. Several persons were named, and for that reason not agreed to. At length one mention'd me, with the observation that I was merely an honest man, and of no sect at all, which prevail'd with them to chuse me. The enthusiasm which existed when the house was built had long since abated, and its trustees had not been able to procure fresh contributions for paying the ground-rent, and discharging some other debts the building had occasion'd, which embarrass'd them greatly. Being now a member of both setts of trustees, that for the building and that for the Academy, I had a good opportunity of negotiating with both, and brought them finally to an agreement, by which the trustees for the building were to cede it to those of the academy, the latter undertaking to discharge the debt, to keep for ever open in the building a large hall for occasional preachers, according to the original intention, and maintain a free-school for the instruction of poor children. Writings were accordingly drawn, and on paying the debts the trustees of the academy were put in possession of the premises; and by dividing the great and lofty hall into stories, and different rooms above and below for the several schools, and purchasing some additional ground, the whole was soon made fit for our purpose, and the scholars remov'd into the building. The care and trouble of agreeing with the workmen, purchasing materials, and superintending the work, fell upon me; and I went thro' it the more cheerfully, as it did not then interfere with my private business, having the year before taken a very able, industrious, and honest partner, Mr. David Hall, with whose character I was well acquainted, as he had work'd for me four years. He took off my hands all care of the printing-office, paying me punctually my share of the profits. This partnership continued eighteen years, successfully for us both.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

The trustees of the academy, after a while, were incorporated by a charter from the governor; their funds were increas'd by contributions in Britain and grants of land from the proprietaries, to which the Assembly has since made considerable addition; and thus was established the present University of Philadelphia. I have been continued one of its trustees from the beginning, now near forty years, and have had the very great pleasure of seeing a number of the youth who have receiv'd their education in it, distinguish'd by their improv'd abilities, serviceable in public stations and ornaments to their country.

...another projector, the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, came to me with a request that I would assist him in procuring a subscription for erecting a new meeting-house. It was to be for the use of a congregation he had gathered among the Presbyterians, who were originally disciples of Mr. Whitefield. Unwilling to make myself disagreeable to my fellow-citizens by too frequently soliciting their contributions, I absolutely refus'd. He then desired I would furnish him with a list of the names of persons I knew by experience to be generous and public-spirited. I thought it would be unbecoming in me, after their kind compliance with my solicitations, to mark them out to be worried by other beggars, and therefore refus'd also to give such a list. He then desir'd I would at least give him my advice. "That I will readily do," said I; "and, in the first place, I advise you to apply to all those whom you know will give something; next, to those whom you are uncertain whether they will give any thing or not, and show them the list of those who have given; and, lastly, do not neglect those who you are sure will give nothing, for in some of them you may be mistaken." He laugh'd and thank'd me, and said he would take my advice. He did so, for he ask'd of everybody, and he obtained a much larger sum than he expected, with which he erected the capacious and very elegant meeting-house that stands in Arch-street.

February 22, Thursday (1738, Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

TO BE LET A HOUSE at the upper End of Walnut Street at the Corner of Fifth Street, with Three 50 Foot Lots fronting Walnut Street, being very fit for a Butcher or Carter. Enquire of Susanna Yeldhall living in the said House, or of B. **Franklin**, and know further. Also to be SOLD A **Negro** Woman, fit for Household Work: Enquire as above.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

November 15, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

A **Negro** Man to be sold, who has been used to the House Carpenter's Trade: Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1740

MDCCXL. 1740. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, BY POOR ROBIN. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [Widow Franklin](#).

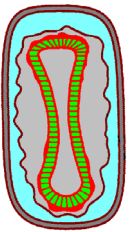
January 29, Tuesday (1739, Old Style): According to the [Concord](#) Town Record, “Jonas Wheeler ye son of Benjamin Wheeler and Rebekah his Wife died January.29:1739/40”

In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#) we find an advertisement that indicates that black slaves who had survived the smallpox were worth more money on the open market than those who had not yet had this often-fatal disease:

TO BE SOLD, A Likely young **Negro** Fellow, by Trade a Bricklayer and Plaisterer, has had the [Small Pox](#). Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN



December 4, Thursday (Old Style): In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

TO BE SOLD A Likely young **Negro** Woman, can Wash or Iron, or do any kind of household Work, and is fit for either Town or Country; with two Children. Enquire of George Harding, Skinner, or the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1741

MDCCXLI. THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR, 1741. By "Poor Robin." [Newport](#): [Widow Franklin](#).

There would be a gap in the issuance of [Rhode Island](#) almanacs until 1750 when [James Franklin](#)'s son [James Franklin](#), rejoining his mother after serving an apprenticeship in Philadelphia with his uncle [Benjamin Franklin](#), would begin to publish "Poor Job's almanac."

January 15, Thursday (1740, Old Style): In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

TO BE SOLD, A Likely young **Negro** Woman, can Wash or Iron, or do any kind of household Work, and is fit for either Town or Country; with Two Children. Enquire of George Harding, Skinner, of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY
FRANKLIN

July 30, Thursday (Old Style): In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#):

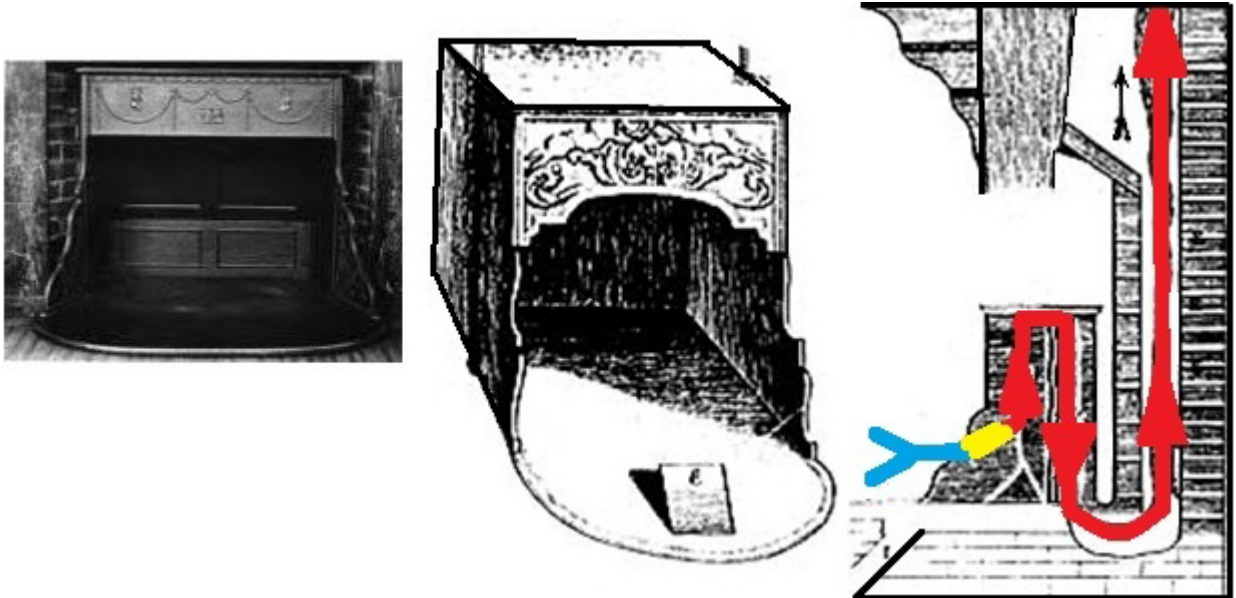
TO BE SOLD, A Likely young **Negro** Woman, fit for either Town or Country Business. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY
FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1742

Benjamin Franklin invented the “open stove,” or as he termed it back then, “Pennsylvania Fireplace”:



It didn't work. Even after David Rittenhouse, three decades later, added an L-shaped chimney, it wouldn't work well enough to use. It wouldn't be until 1795, more than half a century later, when Benjamin Thompson redesigned it using a slanted fireback and an adjustable flue damper, that this sort of thing would really begin to function. Then in the early 1800s, various cast-iron manufacturers began to tinker with the design — and it was at that point that this sort of thing began to really win people over. This “Franklin Stove” was pretty similar, it would seem, to the “Jefferson plow” for which Thomas Jefferson won at a French agricultural academy a *prix d'honneur* (I suppose that translates as “Honorary Mention”?) — despite the fact that his submission didn't turn sod all that well.

Ah, the power of a famous name! Celebrity where is thy sting?

April 15, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A Likely Irish Servant Girl, about 19 years of Age, fit for Country Work, has about 3 years and half to serve. Also, a likely stout young **Negro** Fellow about 20 years of Age. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY
FRANKLIN

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THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1743

The American Philosophical Society (“philosophical,” at this point, meant precisely what we now mean by “scientific”) was founded by [Benjamin Franklin](#), [John Bartram](#), and others, who also were proposing a plan for an Academy which would be adopted in 1749, and eventually would develop into the University of Pennsylvania.



Dr. Cadwalader Colden, another of the founding members of the Society, would be responsible for introducing the Linnaean system of plant and animal species classification to America — he would never, however, be fully happy with that system, preferring one that would be more natural.

[BOTANIZING](#)

Printed in Philadelphia, by Benjamin Franklin, CATO MAJOR. This was prepared in the types of John Caslon, which have proved perhaps the most durable of all typefaces (Caslon had issued his first specimen sheet in



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1734).



Printed in Germantown, Pennsylvania, by Christopher Sauer (1693-1758), the First Germantown BIBLE. Sauer had left his native Germany at the age of 31 to settle in the New World. Sauer at the time was classed as an “arch separatist.” In the year 1740, no one had the right or could obtain the necessary royal license to print a Bible, and Sauer was risking prosecution and bankruptcy. He met with the most bitter opposition from the Reverend Henry Muhlenberg, strong leader of the German Lutheran Church, and the Reverend Casper School of the German Reformed Church. To please all factions of the German population, Sauer made his Bible a composite of Luther’s Bible with Berleberg’s Bible, himself preparing an appendix to the new Testament. It would require three years to print this edition and then it would require twenty years before all of the 1,200 copies had been sold. “The price,” as Sauer wrote, “of our early finished Bible in plain binding with clasp will be eighteen shillings, but to poor and needy we have no price.”

HISTORY OF
THE PRESS

January 13, Thursday (1742, Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A Likely **Negro** Boy, about 14 Years of Age, fit for Town of Country. Enquire of the **Printer**.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

February 10, Thursday (1742, Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

TO BE SOLD, A Likely **Negro** Lad, about 17 Years of Age, who can talk English, Spanish and Dutch, and is fit for either Town or Country Business. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

February 17, Thursday (1742, Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

TO BE SOLD, A Likely strong **Negro** Woman about 19 Years of Age, fit for either Town or Country Business. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

To be SOLD, A **Negro** Man Twenty two Years of Age, of uncommon Strength and Activity, very fit for a Farmer, or a laborious Trade, he understands the best Methods of managing Horses, and is very faithful in the Employment: Any Person that wants such a one may see him by enquiring of the **Printer** hereof.

March 31, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A **Negro** Woman, fit for any Sort of household Work and can use her Needle. Also, very reasonably, a new Fishing Net, thirty Feet long, and tanned. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

July 14, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

A Strong likely lusty **Negro** Man, that has been very much used to Plantation work, to be sold, Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

July 28, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

TO BE SOLD, A Likely able **Negro** Man about 30 Years of Age, who has long been employ'd in the Painter's Trade. Enquire of the **Printer**.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

September 29, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A Likely young **Negro** Woman fit for Town or Country Business. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

October 21, Friday (Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#) was setting up to observe an eclipse of the [moon](#) in Philadelphia when clouds began to stream in from the northeast, blotting out the night sky. Franklin's brother in Boston, however, some 300 miles to the northeast, was able to observe the eclipse before these clouds streamed in from the northeast. What was this, a nor'easter that hits a city to the northeast four hours later than it hits a city to the southwest? How to account for such a counterintuitive phenomenon? Franklin hypothesized that what was actually happening was that the weather system was swirling counterclockwise, while traveling in a general northeasterly direction, thus giving the false impression to those along its eastern rim that it was coming from the northeast — when actually it was coming from the southwest.

Let's give full credit where credit is due: this was a real toughie to figure out and Ben is the guy who figured it all out and he was exactly right.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1744

[Benjamin Franklin](#) produced the 1st American catalog, one of scientific and academic books.

He also produced an edition of M.T. CICERO'S CATO MAJOR, OR HIS DISCOURSE OF OLD-AGE: WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES.



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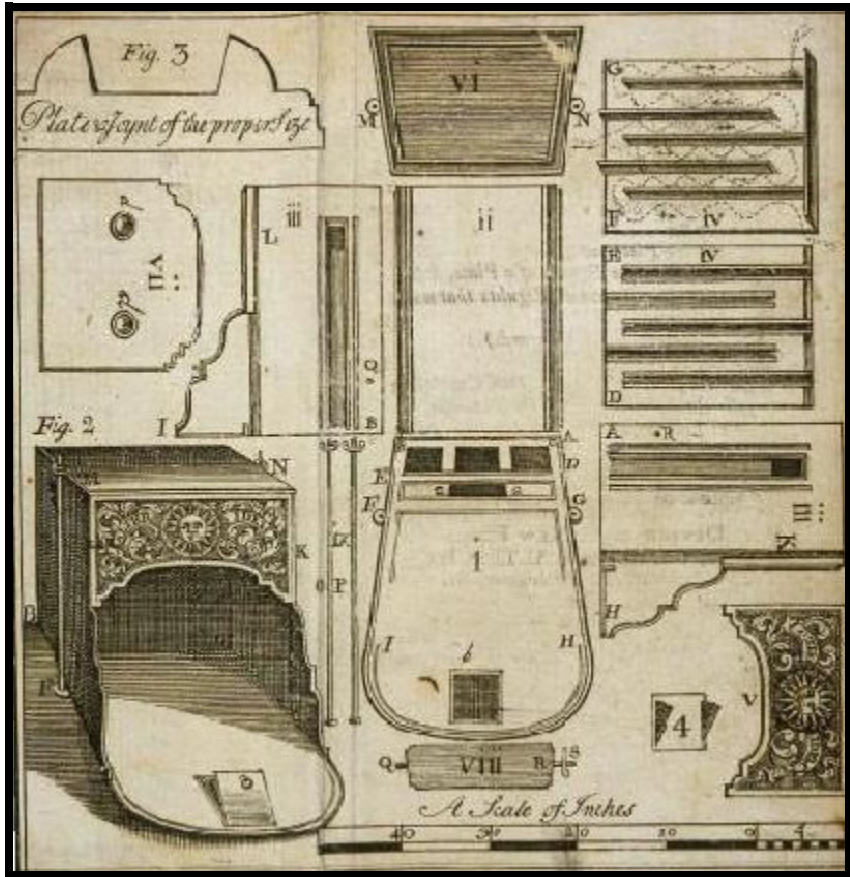
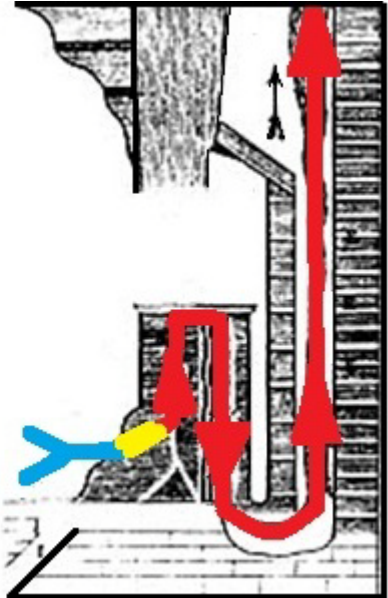
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Benjamin Franklin's AN ACCOUNT OF THE NEWLY INVENTED PENNSYLVANIAN FIREPLACES.





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

March 1, Thursday (1743, Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

TO BE SOLD, A Likely **Negro** Girl, fit for Town or Country Business. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

August 2, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

TO BE SOLD, A Likely **Negro** Man, fit for Town or Country Business. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

August 16, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A **NEGRO** Woman, that has had the Small-Pox, strong and able to do all Manner of Household Work. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

TO BE SOLD, A LIKELY **Negro** Boy, fit for Town or Country Business. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

FRANKLIN

September 27, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

TO BE SOLD, A LIKELY **NEGRO** MAN, fit for Town or Country Business. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

November 1, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A likely **Negro** Woman, than can do all Manner of Houshold Work; also a likely **Negro** Man, by Trade a Distiller, but fit for any Business, either in Town or Country. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

December 6, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A Likely **Negro** Woman, fit for Town or Country Business, and had been a good deal used to House work. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1745

January 16, Wednesday (1744, Old Style): Levi Allen was born in Cornwall, Connecticut, and would be “by his own acknowledgement a very obstinate and wayward boy.” He would be the only Tory Loyalist in the family, and his large landed estate in Vermont would be confiscated and sold on complaint of his brothers Ethan Allen and Ira Allen. He would reside afterward in Canada and England and consider himself a citizen of the world, but would return to Burlington, Vermont to die in 1801.

In [Boston](#), [Josiah Franklin](#) died at the age of 87. He would be buried in the Granary Burial Ground.





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1746

[Ezra Stiles](#) graduated from [Yale College](#). (While at Yale, Stiles had become involved in electrical experiments after a parlor apparatus was sent there, by [Benjamin Franklin](#).)





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

His bachelor's sheepskin is still on deposit at Yale Library:



April 3, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

A LIKELY lusty **Negro** Fellow to be dispos'd of, fit for either Town or Country Business. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY
FRANKLIN



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

August 14, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A Likely young **Negro** Woman and Child (Bermuda born) has had the Small Pox and Measles; can Wash, Iron, Cook, and do all manner of House Work well. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN



Winter: Sent a popular parlor apparatus of the day by a contact in England, [Benjamin Franklin](#) began to investigate electrical phenomena.²⁴

24. Thank God nuclear fission can't be done as a parlor trick, huh?



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1747

It was in about this year that [Benjamin Franklin](#) installed the 1st lightning rod (there would need to be a period of waiting and watching, and so he wouldn't begin to popularize his new structure-saving device until 1752; the first evidence I have been able to uncover of a "religious" or "superstitious" or "ignorant" or "Tea-Party" bad reaction to his new device would come after an earthquake in Boston in 1755, at which point some would venture that their city was being punished by the all-powerful Deity for its lightning rods, since these devices had been exhibiting an unwillingness to rely upon the Deity's overarching benevolence).

February 17, Tuesday (1746, Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A Likely **Negro** woman, with a man child, fit for town or country business. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

March 24, Tuesday (1746, Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, A Prime able young **Negro** man, fit for laborious work, in town or country, that has had the small pox: As also a middle aged **Negro** man, that has likewise had the smallpox. Enquire of the printer hereof. Or otherwise they will be exposed to **sale** by publick vendue, on Saturday the 11th of April next, at 12 o'clock, at the Indian king, in Market street.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

April 23, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be Sold, A Likely young **Negro** Wench, fit for town or country, and is a good cook. Enquire of the **Printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

June 25, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

A Likely **negro** man to be sold, about 24 years of age, and is acquainted with Country business. Enquire of the **printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

November 17, Tuesday (Old Style): [Benjamin Franklin](#) was forming a military company, and attempted to justify this with 2,000 copies of a pamphlet in favor of preparation for war, entitled PLAIN TRUTH; OR, SERIOUS CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA AND PROVINCE OF PENNSYLVANIA. This contained the 1st political cartoon to be published in America.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

December 3, Thursday (Old Style): A second edition of [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s pamphlet in favor of preparation for war, PLAIN TRUTH; OR, SERIOUS CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA AND PROVINCE OF PENNSYLVANIA. (If you want peace prepare for war, yada yada yada. Soon he would issue an edition in the German language.)

December 30, Wednesday (Old Style), evening: Reading from [Friend](#) Samuel Smith's (1720-1776) NECESSARY TRUTH &C response to his pamphlet PLAIN TRUTH; OR, SERIOUS CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA AND PROVINCE OF PENNSYLVANIA, in which Friend Samuel took the position that no war, whether aggressive or whether limited to purposes of national defense, was legitimate, [Benjamin Franklin](#) was so pleased that he took this response to William Bradford and struck a deal with him for 500 copies to be printed for £3.10.0 and handed out gratis — except that 50 copies were to be retained for Franklin to hand out on his own.

Clearly, Franklin was of the opinion that such a writing, when read by non-Quakers, would only serve to convince them of the validity of his own warlike attitudes, and persuade them that for the good of the entire colony the qualms of the Quakers needed to be disregarded.

[THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY](#)

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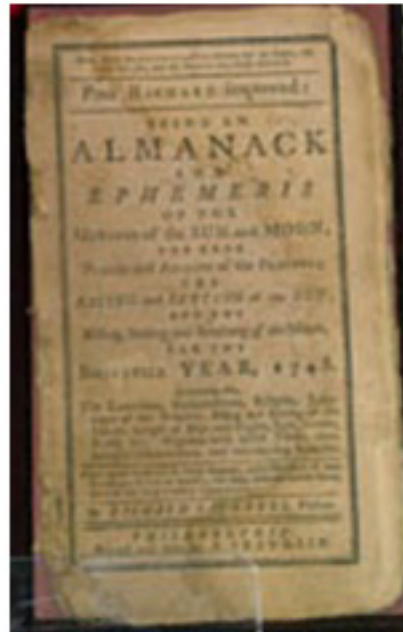
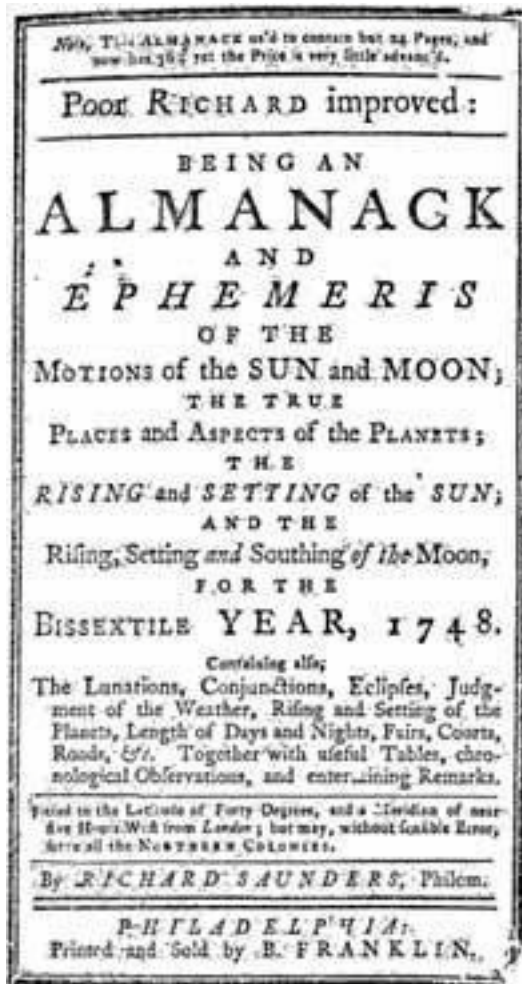
THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1748

[Benjamin Franklin](#) sold out his printing business, becoming the “silent partner” in the firm “Franklin and Hall.”²⁵



“Note, This Almanack us'd to contain but 24 Pages, and now has 36; yet the price is very little advanc'd. Poor Richard improved: Being an Almanack and Ephemeris of the Motions of the Sun and Moon; the true Places and Aspects of the Planets; the Rising and Setting of the Sun; and the Rising, Setting and Southing of the Moon, for the Bissextile Year, 1748. Containing also, The Lunations, Conjunctions, Eclipses, Judgment of the Weather, Rising and Setting of the Planets, Length of Days and Nights, Fairs, Courts, Roads, &c. Together with useful Tables, Chronological Observations, and Entertaining Remarks. Fitted to the Latitude of Forty Degrees, and a Meridian of near five Hours West form London; but may, without sensible Error, serve all the Northern Colonies. By Richard Saunders, Philom. Philadelphia: Printed and Sold by B. Franklin.”

25. For the next 18 years his return from this silent partnership would yield him not-shabby living expenses of about £500 per year.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Printed at the Ephrata Press in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, Trelinan Van Braght's *DER BLUTIGE SCHAU PLATZ* (The Bloody Arena), an account in the Dutch language of martyrdom from the time of Christ to the middle of the 17th century. This manuscript had been completed in 1660; it was prepared for printing by Peter Miller. "After the building of the mill was complete of the Book of Martyrs was taken in hand, to which important work fifteen Brothers were detailed, nine of whom had their work assigned in the printing department ... the rest in the paper mills. Three years were spent on the book....The household of the brethren got deeply into debt, which, was soon liquidated by the heavy sales of the book....The book was printed in folio form (1,512 pages) and the edition consisted of 1,300 copies ... the price of one copy was Fixed at twenty shillings. Those three years, during which said book was in press, proved an excellent preparation for spiritual Martyrdom, although during that time six failed and joined the world again ... moderation and vigilance were observed ... each had to submit to discipline at least once a day." Although [Benjamin Franklin](#) sold some type founding equipment to the brotherhood, the Ephrata Brothers would assert at the end of one of their books that they had employed type of their own casting.

**HISTORY OF
THE PRESS**



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1749

[Benjamin Franklin](#) was appointed a Commissioner to trade with the Indians. He was appointed on the Commission of the Peace, chosen to the Common Council, and to the Assembly.

August 17, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

To be SOLD, TO be sold cheap, a very likely young **Negro** wench, about 18 years of age: Also fine Palm oyl, by the half dozen pound, or lesser quantity. Enquire of the **printer** hereof.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1750

November 15, Thursday (Old Style): In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

TO BE SOLD, A Likely **Negro** woman, fit for towns or
country business. Enquire of the **printer**.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1751

Reports of [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s experiments with electricity were printed in England. He suggested some ways by which lightning might be demonstrated to be an immense discharge of electricity, similar in type if not in scale to the sort of sparks which one can produce in a glass jar, and some experiments to confirm this were performed by gentlemen in France. In this year he also aided in founding a hospital in Philadelphia, which would become the 1st American general hospital.

[Benjamin Franklin](#), and eight other Commissioners, were appointed to examine the River Schuylkill from Peters' Island to [John Bartram's](#) botanical garden, for the most suitable place for a bridge, and they reported in favour of Market Street.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1752

Protestant England had until this year refused to accept Pope Gregory's 1582 corrections to the [calendar](#) — but during this year in accordance with the legislation known as “[Chesterfield's Act](#)” they omitted 11 days in order to bring themselves into synchronization with the rest of Europe. London property owners, hurt in the pocketbook by the fact that their tenants' leases were expiring 11 days early and their tenants were thus able to skip out of leased premises without paying 11 days rent that had been hoped for, staged protests. In Philadelphia, however, [Benjamin Franklin](#) calmly advised his readers to be grateful they could lie down in peace on the 2nd of the month of September and not wake up until the morning of the 14th.

May 8, Monday: [Abigail Folger Franklin](#) died in [Boston](#) at the age of 85. Since her son [Benjamin Franklin](#) had become an advocate of variolation and this practice was generally reducing the death rate from 1 in 7 to 1 in 68, it seems unlikely that she was one of the victims of the ongoing smallpox epidemic. Her body would be interred near that of her husband [Josiah Franklin](#) at the Granary Burial Ground.



May 11, Thursday: The 1st US fire [insurance](#) policy was issued, in Philadelphia, by [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s “Philadelphia Contributionship,” a fire insurance collective.





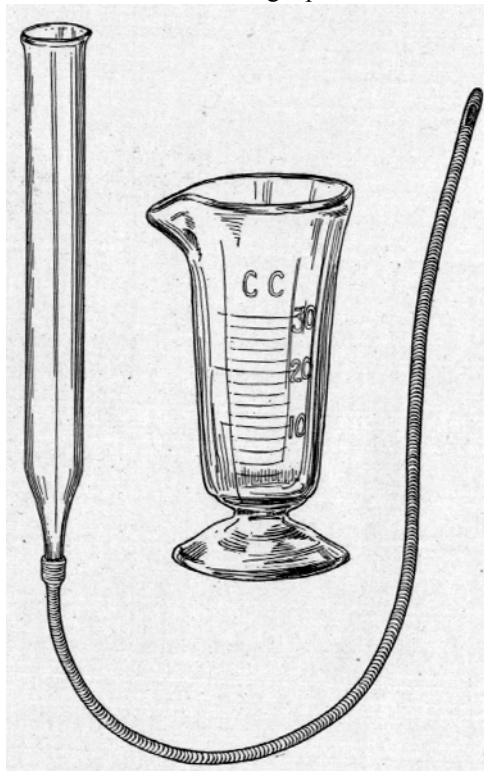
THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

December 8, Friday: [Vicesimus Knox II](#) was born at Newington Green, Middlesex.²⁶ He was the son of the Reverend Vicesimus Knox, LL.B., a fellow of St. John's College, Oxford²⁷ who was a Master²⁸ of Merchant Tailors' School. He would receive an excellent education until the age of 14 at home with his father, and then in a high class at a grammar school run by Livery Companies, known as Merchant Tailors' School.

[Benjamin Franklin](#) had designed a flexible catheter and had one constructed by a Philadelphia silversmith, out of a coil of silver wire covered with gut, with joints to allow flexibility. On this day he posted the device to Boston because his brother John Franklin was having a problem of urine retention due to bladder stones.



26. "Vicesimus" is Latin for 20th. Vicesimus or Vicesima would be the name given to the 20th child in a Roman family, depending on whether the infant was male or female. Although the Reverend Vicesimus Knox was not the 20th child of his father, his father's name was Vicesimus.

27. St John's, a well endowed school, had been founded in 1555 by a merchant, Sir Thomas White, in the buildings of an old Cisterian school, the College of St Bernard, shuttered since King Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries. The college was initially for the training of Anglican clergymen although it is now known for law and medicine.

28. Note: a Master, not the Headmaster — which was the Reverend James Townley, author of HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS.

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THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1753

[Benjamin Franklin](#) was awarded the Copley Medal for his discovery that lightning was an immense discharge of electricity, and elected a member of the Royal Society. He received the degree of M.A. from Yale and Harvard.

The French occupied the valley of the [Ohio River](#). [Benjamin Franklin](#), one of Pennsylvania's Indian representatives, met with natives of that region and representatives of the Iroquois Confederacy. The chiefs of the Confederacy told him of the history of the league. In later letters he would repeatedly make reference to the Confederacy and how it was formed. He chided a friend that "It would be strange ... if Six Nations of ignorant savages should be capable of forming a scheme for such a union, and be able to execute it in such a manner as that it has subsisted for ages and appears indissoluble; and yet, that a like union should be impracticable for ten or a dozen English colonies, to whom it is more necessary ... and who cannot be supposed to want an equal understanding of their interests."

July 26, Thursday: Winning a contract to distribute the mails of the northern colonies, [Benjamin Franklin](#) became in effect joint Postmaster-General.





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1754

Again conflict erupted in the Great Lake and [Ohio](#) Valley region between French and English — the French and Indian War (or Seven Years War, since it would not end formally until the Treaty of Paris in 1763).



Once again Major George Washington went to the region to defend English interests. At the Battle of Great Meadows (Fort Necessity) in Pennsylvania, his army of Virginians was defeated. The French renewed their

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assaults on Fort Number 4 in New Hampshire.



At a colonial congress in Albany attended by representatives of seven English colonies, [Benjamin Franklin](#), one of the Commissioners appointed from Pennsylvania to that Colonial Congress, presented “Short Hints towards a Scheme for a General Union of the British Colonies on the Continent,” and a motion passed that it would be “absolutely necessary for their security and defense” that there be “union of all the colonies.” The term “president” was also introduced for the first time, a “president” here being merely a person who “presides” over an assembly of delegates and then keeps the ball rolling until the next assembly of delegates. This first step toward American independence was not at all intended in the spirit of separation from the British crown, but was intended merely as preparation by the English settlers for race warfare against the red people of the continent and their too-intimate French allies. (It may come as a surprise, to some, that the American union originated as a necessity of race war, while, to others, this may come as a revelation and an explanation. For instance, [Thomas Hutchinson](#), always a friend of the white man and enemy of the colored man, and never an advocate of separation from the mother country, was a delegate from Massachusetts to the Albany Convention — and was, with [Franklin](#), a member of the committee appointed to draw up a plan of union.

READ THE FULL TEXT

June 19, Wednesday: 25 delegates from seven colonies, including Pennsylvania’s [Benjamin Franklin](#), held an Albany Congress to discuss confederation. Representatives came from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, [Rhode Island and Providence Plantations](#), Connecticut, New York, and [Maryland](#). Franklin advised the formation of a series of land companies as a barrier against the French. Presumably it was in this context that Franklin made his “Albany Plan of Union” remarks on the Iroquoian League.



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1755

Postmaster general [Benjamin Franklin](#) arranged to send the winter northern mail from Philadelphia to New England once a week year-round, rather than as previously, every other week, “whereby answers may be obtained in letters between Philadelphia and Boston, in three weeks, which used to require six weeks.”

Franklin’s OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE INCREASE OF MANKIND.



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[Benjamin Franklin](#) pledged his personal property in order that supplies may be raised for Braddock's army. He obtained a grant from the Assembly in aid of the Crown Point expedition. As a Pennsylvania legislator he became cognizant of the price that the Quaker legislators could be induced to pay for their own accommodation in their own liberty, and carried through a bill establishing a voluntary militia:

Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

War being in a manner commenced with France, the government of Massachusetts Bay projected an attack upon Crown Point, and sent Mr. Quincy to Pennsylvania, and Mr. Pownall, afterward Governor Pownall, to New York, to solicit assistance. As I was in the Assembly, knew its temper, and was Mr. Quincy's countryman, he appli'd to me for my influence and assistance. I dictated his address to them, which was well receiv'd. They voted an aid of ten thousand pounds, to be laid out in provisions. ... I had been active in modelling the bill and procuring its passage, and had, at the same time, drawn a bill for establishing and disciplining of a voluntary militia, which I carried thro' the House without much difficulty, as care was taken in it to leave the Quakers at their liberty. To promote the association necessary to form the militia, I wrote a dialogue, stating and answering all the objections I could think of to such a militia, which was printed, and had, as I thought, great effect.

As a military leader Franklin had occasion to appreciate that not all pacifists are fools or hypocrites, only some of them:

Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

[T]he governor prevail'd with me to take charge of our North-western frontier; which was infested by the enemy, and provide for the defense of the inhabitants by raising troops and building a line of forts. ... The Indians had burned Gnadenhut, a village settled by the Moravians, and massacred the inhabitants; but the place was thought a good situation for one of the forts.

In order to march thither, I assembled the companies at Bethlehem, the chief establishment of those people. I was surprised to find it in so good a posture of defense; the destruction of Gnadenhut had made them apprehend danger. The principal buildings were defended by a stockade; they had purchased a quantity of arms and ammunition from New York, and had even plac'd quantities of small paving stones between the windows of their high stone houses, for their women to throw down upon the heads of any Indians that should attempt to force into them. The armed brethren, too, kept watch, and reliev'd as methodically as in any garrison town. In conversation with the bishop, Spangenberg, I mention'd this my surprise; for, knowing they had obtained an act of Parliament exempting them from military duties in the colonies, I had suppos'd they were conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms. He answer'd me that it was not one of their established principles, but that, at the time of their obtaining that act, it was thought to be a principle with many of their people. On this occasion, however, they, to their surprise, found it adopted by but a few. It seems they were either deceiv'd in themselves, or deceiv'd the Parliament; but common sense, aided by present danger, will sometimes be too strong for whimsical opinions.

We may note above that the keyword is "infested." The bothersome Native American is in Franklin's eyes a vermin and to be exterminated as a difficult and unpleasant sanitary measure for the well-being of the body politic, just as the Jews have been more recently a bothersome infestation of vermin to the Nazis, to be exterminated as a difficult and unpleasant sanitary measure for the well-being of the body politic. In this, Acting Colonel Franklin also observed that his God in his Benevolent Providence was helping all and only



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those faithful who faithfully keep their powder dry:

Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

Just before we left Bethlehem, eleven farmers, who had been driven from their plantations by the Indians, came to me requesting a supply of firearms, that they might go back and fetch off their cattle. I gave them each a gun with suitable ammunition. We had not march'd many miles before it began to rain, and it continued raining all day; there were no habitations on the road to shelter us, till we arriv'd near night at the house of a German, where, and in his barn, we were all huddled together, as wet as water could make us. It was well we were not attack'd in our march, for our arms were of the most ordinary sort, and our men could not keep their gun locks dry. The Indians are dextrous in contrivances for that purpose, which we had not. They met that day the eleven poor farmers above mentioned, and killed ten of them. The one who escap'd inform'd that his and his companions' guns would not go off, the priming being wet with the rain.

Always the practical man, Acting Colonel Franklin found his own solution for the problem of rendering unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto God what is God's, a problem so much more serious in time of war when the stakes are higher and it is so very much more important not to let God feel She is being neglected:

Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

We had for our chaplain a zealous Presbyterian minister, Mr. Beatty, who complained to me that the men did not generally attend his prayers and exhortations. When they enlisted, they were promised, besides pay and provisions, a gill of rum a day, which was punctually serv'd out to them, half in the morning, and the other half in the evening; and I observ'd they were as punctual in attending to receive it; upon which I said to Mr. Beatty, "It is, perhaps, below the dignity of your profession to act as steward of the rum, but if you were to deal it out and only just after prayers, you would have them all about you." He liked the tho't, undertook the office, and, with the help of a few hands to measure out the liquor, executed it to satisfaction, and never were prayers more generally and more punctually attended; so that I thought this method preferable to the punishment inflicted by some military laws for non-attendance on divine service.

Spring: [John Bartram](#) decided while his son [Billie](#) was sixteen that he didn't want the boy to be turned into a gentleman through education, but wanted him to find some way "to get his living by." However, when he attempted to apprentice his son to a local physician, the teenager balked. He would also balk at the idea suggested by [Benjamin Franklin](#), that he become an engraver.

In this timeframe, when Franklin offered to take the son as a printer's apprentice, the father declined because he thought that trade was too often unprofitable. Also, when Dr. Alexander Garden offered to take the son as a physician's apprentice, the father declined because he suspected William was interested only in Garden's botanical knowledge.

William's drawings were sent to Peter Collinson and shown to his circle of friends.



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November 18, Tuesday: An earthquake that shook [Boston](#) was blamed, by some, on the installation there of lightning rods, a device for the exhibition of distrust in the overarching benevolence of an all-powerful Deity which had been being popularized by [Benjamin Franklin](#) since 1752.²⁹ The Reverend Thomas Prince of South Church in



Boston would soon preach, “God shakes the earth because He is wroth.” God had been offended by this human interference with His instrument of choice for reprimand—lightning strikes that punished particular offenders—and so He was now being obligated to conduct his terrorist hits against a broader target. The more lightning rods were put up in Boston to control the artillery of heaven, the more earthquakes there were going to be. Professor of Mathematics and Physics John Winthrop at [Harvard College](#) would attempt to explain the nature of this earthquake in his “A Lecture on Earthquakes.” The professor would not favor the prevailing

29. See, it was a bum rap. This guy was **not** guilty of **everything** of which he was suspected!



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explanation that the earthquake had been a manifestation of the divine wrath.³⁰



30. Actually this was two quakes, occurring at 9:12AM and at 10:29AM Greenwich Mean Time off Cape Ann. The first was of magnitude 6.0 and the second an aftershock. There would be additional aftershocks off that cape on November 23d and December 20th.



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As part of this, a tsunami hit Cape Ann.³¹

The earthquake table now lists the two quakes on this day as “1755NOV18 0912 42.70 70.30 8 6.0 MA OFF CAPE ANN” and “1755NOV18 1029 X 42.70 70.30 4 MA OFF CAPE ANN.” (Cape Ann is in fact hit more often than any other area in New England.)

The Reverend George Leslie of Ipswich reported that “Between the hours of four and five in the morning, there happened a most surprising shock of an earthquake, which was succeeded by several others; though none equal to the first. In the town of Ipswich much damage was done to many houses; yet, through the goodness of God, no hurt was done either to the lives or limbs of any persons.” (The reverend noted also that the evening prior to the earthquake had been uncommonly clear and calm.)

In Braintree, John Adams believed that it continued almost four minutes: “The house seemed to rock and reel and crack as if it would fall in ruins about us.”

Some 200 miles at sea, the sailors aboard a ship assumed they had run aground.

In Boston, walls and stone fences lay in rubble on the ground. Something like a hundred chimneys were knocked down. Some descriptions mentioned violent movement like the waves of the sea, making it necessary to cling to something to prevent being thrown down. At Pembroke and Scituate small chasms opened in the earth through which fine sand reached the surface. Large numbers of fish were killed and many people on vessels presumed they were striking bottom. This earthquake was felt from Montréal, and from Lake George, New York, to a point at sea 200 miles east of Cape Ann, and from the Chesapeake Bay to the Annapolis River in Nova Scotia, an area of about 300,000 square miles. (Nineteen earthquakes have centered in Massachusetts in historic times. A number of other earthquakes have been centered off the coast of Massachusetts but have affected the eastern portion of the State. This earthquake of November 18, 1755 has, however, been at least so far the most destructive to be recorded in the eastern United States.)

31. These temblors had occurred along a plate boundary on the ocean floor, between the mid-Atlantic ridge and the Azores. For a comparison event within our own timeframe: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/indonesia/aceh-andaman-tsunami-imagery.htm>

Note that this tsunami that hit Cape Ann was not related in any way to the three tsunami that had hit Lisbon, Portugal at the beginning of the month, despite the fact that all of this was occurring in the Atlantic basin. Those earlier tsunami had already long since subsided.



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1757

[Benjamin Franklin](#) introduced a bill in the Assembly for paving the streets of Philadelphia. He published his famous "Way to Wealth." He went to London for a 17-year mission as a lobbyist pleading the cause of the Assembly against the Proprietaries, and in particular representing the government of Pennsylvania in its attempt to seize lands the crown had granted to the [William Penn](#) family in 1681. (With the beginning of this lobbying activity, sensibly, his AUTOBIOGRAPHY breaks off.)

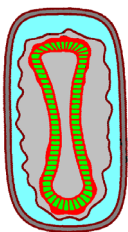
[Benjamin Franklin](#)'s POOR RICHARD'S [ALMANACK](#):

WALDEN: I am not sure that I ever heard the sound of cock-crowing from my clearing, and I thought that it might be worth the while to keep a cockerel for his music merely, as a singing bird. The note of this once wild Indian pheasant is certainly the most remarkable of any bird's, and if they could be naturalized without being domesticated, it would soon become the most famous sound in our woods, surpassing the clangor of the goose and the hooting of the owl; and then imagine the cackling of the hens to fill the pauses when their lords' clarions rested! No wonder that man added this bird to his tame stock, -to say nothing of the eggs and drumsticks. To walk in a winter morning in a wood where these birds abounded, their native woods, and hear the wild cockerels crow on the trees, clear and shrill for miles over the resounding earth, drowning the feebler notes of other birds, -think of it! It would put nations on the alert. Who would not be early to rise, and rise earlier and earlier every successive day of his life, till he became unspeakably healthy, wealthy, and wise? This foreign bird's note is celebrated by the poets of all countries along with the notes of their native songsters. All climates agree with brave Chanticleer. He is more indigenous even than the natives. His health is ever good, his lungs are sound, his spirits never flag.

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August 18, Thursday: In [The Pennsylvania Gazette](#) we find an advertisement that indicates that black slaves who had survived the smallpox were worth more money on the open market than those who had not yet had this often-fatal disease:



To be SOLD, A Likely **Negro** Girl, fourteen Years old, has had the [Smallpox](#), and is fit for Town or Country

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

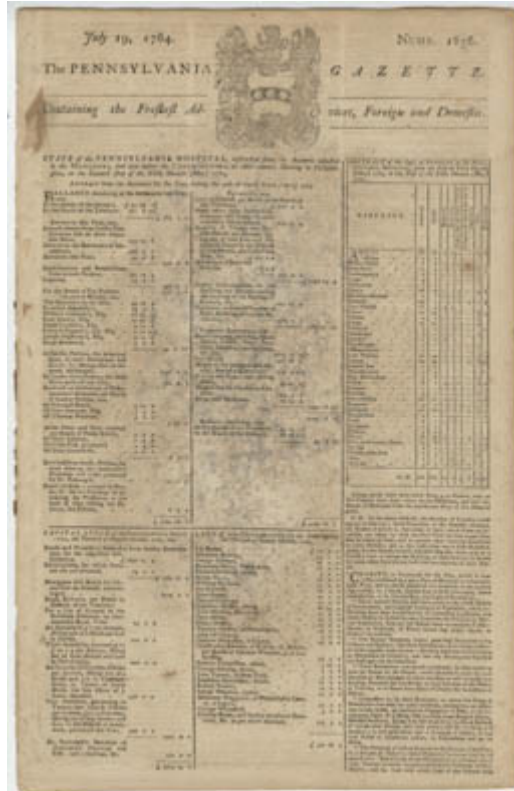


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Service. Enquire of the **Printer**.





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1758

POOR JOB'S COUNTRY AND TOWNSMAN'S [ALMANACK](#) FOR 1758. By Job Shepherd. [Newport, Rhode Island](#): [James Franklin](#).

[Benjamin Franklin](#) ceased printing the POOR RICHARD'S [ALMANACK](#) after inserting in its last issue what has become the most famous literary production of Colonial America, "Father Abraham's Sermon."³²

32. To create this he simply recycled the better of the proverbs he had put in his Almanack over the years, by making the literary persona not "Poor Richard" Saunders but a "Father Abraham," an elderly person who has been induced, in order to kill some time for some people who were waiting for a public auction to begin, to make a speech. [Henry Thoreau](#) would mock its crass, opportunistic, prudential attitude in the "Economy" chapter of [WALDEN](#).

[WALDEN](#): I am not sure that I ever heard the sound of cock-crowing from my clearing, and I thought that it might be worth the while to keep a cockerel for his music merely, as a singing bird. The note of this once wild Indian pheasant is certainly the most remarkable of any bird's, and if they could be naturalized without being domesticated, it would soon become the most famous sound in our woods, surpassing the clangor of the goose and the hooting of the owl; and then imagine the cackling of the hens to fill the pauses when their lords' clarions rested! No wonder that man added this bird to his tame stock, -to say nothing of the eggs and drumsticks. To walk in a winter morning in a wood where these birds abounded, their native woods, and hear the wild cockerels crow on the trees, clear and shrill for miles over the resounding earth, drowning the feebler notes of other birds, -think of it! It would put nations on the alert. Who would not be early to rise, and rise earlier and earlier every successive day of his life, till he became unspeakably healthy, wealthy, and wise? This foreign bird's note is celebrated by the poets of all countries along with the notes of their native songsters. All climates agree with brave Chanticleer. He is more indigenous even than the natives. His health is ever good, his lungs are sound, his spirits never flag.

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WALDEN**

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

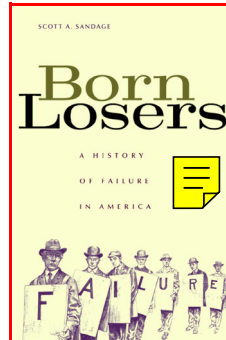


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POOR RICHARD'S ALMANACK FOR 1758 quoth, "The Borrower is a Slave to the Lender, and the Debtor to the Creditor" – not to mention the thief, since Ben Franklin cribbed from PROVERBS 22:7, "The borrower is servant to the lender."



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1759

Nathaniel Ames's AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY, OR, AN ALMANACK FOR...1759. Boston: Printed and Sold by Draper, Green & Russell, & Fleet. The title page featured a woodcut of the solar system, all six planets of it. A three-page explanation of this six-planet solar system was also provided. The path of a comet was shown with the notation: "N.B. At the writing this, it was not determined whether Comet would appear or not, as expected."

Here is an actual woodblock, cracked with age, that was used to print an astronomical cut in this year's edition of [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s POOR RICHARD'S ALMANACK:



[Franklin](#) reissued "The Way to Wealth," his collection of recycled proverbs, as "Father Abraham's Speech."

Franklin had, in 1738 in his POOR RICHARD'S [ALMANACK](#), offered the following proverb: "Sell not virtue to purchase wealth, nor Liberty to purchase power." The aphorism in its more developed form, "Those who would give up Essential Liberty to purchase a little Temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety," had 1st appeared in a letter dated November 11, 1755 from the Pennsylvania Assembly to the Governor of



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Pennsylvania. Then, in this year, this aphorism was recycled as a motto on the title page of AN HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA, an anonymous treatise published by Franklin's print shop. In a new edition in 1812, this treatise would be attributed in its entirety to Franklin; however, it is now clear because of a letter he sent to David Hume on September 27, 1760, that he was not himself the author of this treatise in its entirety, but merely its printer and a contributor of some of its materials. He had served in the Pennsylvania Assembly, and remarks he made while serving are portrayed passim in this treatise, but the entirety of the treatise is not his (the most likely actual author seems to be Richard Jackson). Regardless of this, however, the motto that appears on the book's title page is still presumed by scholars to have been contributed by Franklin.

The primary force of the proverb obviously is in regard to those free white people for whom freedom does not come first — those who sought to continue the affiliation with England, the mother country, and with the Crown. The proverb can be seen as a “flipped” version of sayings such as “I'd rather be a live dog than a dead lion,” or “Water wears away rock, but grass bends in the wind.”

My own contribution to the analysis of this proverb is to insist upon taking it out of this phony a-world-in-which-there-are-white-people-only context, the blinkered context in which it has customarily been analyzed, and insert it instead into its actual context, the context in which it had appeared. This world in which the saying appeared was not a world in which there were white people only, but instead was the actual world of Philadelphia, a location where there were people of color — people who typically did not have liberty, they being white people's slaves. In such a context such a remark was decidedly not innocent. My own contribution is to point up the fact that Benjamin Franklin was one of these Philadelphia white slavemasters, that is, he was an owner of non-white slaves, and that he was a Philadelphia slavetrader, that is, he was making a market in the buying and storage (at night in a locked slave pen in the back yard), and advertising and commercial vending of non-white human beings. My own contribution is that this proverb works quite well as a legitimization of his sort of activity: “Thofe black people who in order to stay alive have been willing to be alive as slaves, these people whom I am buying and owning and selling, deferve no better treatment than I as a slavemaster and slavetrader am providing. They deferve neither Liberty nor Safety — and I, I am without fin.”

What I am offering is that if we fully analyze his proverb, not only in its primary blinkered just-us-white-folks meaning but also in its secondary real-world-of-race-issues meaning, we can see why it was that Franklin, when he went off to the Constitutional Convention, was able to bow to the wishes of the southern slaveholding colonies and never even bring up for consideration the issue of freedom for Americans of color. They reason why he didn't make an issue of this was, he did not consider that these Americans of color, who were willing to be alive although enslaved, were entitled to any such consideration. To be entitled to consideration, they would have needed to have rejected slavery — and have been killed, and be dead. Since they were not dead, they were, at this Constitutional Convention of white people, entitled to jack squat.

Notice that Franklin's attitude is similar to the attitude that Japanese soldiers would exhibit toward American prisoners of war in WWII. The Americans in the POW camps in the Pacific Theatre were very badly abused, and basically the reason why their Japanese guards treated them so badly was, they had surrendered rather than dying honorably on the battlefield defiantly facing the enemy. Since they were still alive, they had given up their honor as warriors and were not entitled to any sort of decent treatment. Similarly, since these black people of Philadelphia were being held as slaves —since they had chosen to remain among the living— they were deserving neither of liberty nor of safety. To hell with them, let's us white people form a federal union!

—This is why I offer, as a first approximation, that the cause of the US Civil War was Benjamin Franklin.



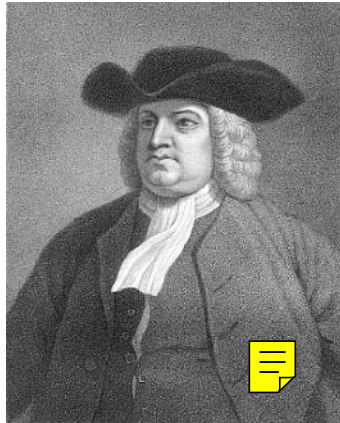
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1760

[Benjamin Franklin](#) secured from the Privy Council, by a compromise, a decision obliging the Proprietary estates (which is to say, the descendants of founder [William Penn](#)) to contribute to the public revenue.



[Samuel Johnson](#) reached 50 years of age. His series of “The Idler” essays came to an end. At a monthly meeting in London of a group formed by Thomas Bray, the Associates for Founding Classical Libraries and Supporting Negro Schools, he and [Benjamin Franklin](#) met.



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1761

[James Burgh](#)'s THE ART OF SPEAKING. During these early 1860s he would become involved with a [London](#) club called "Honest Whigs" that met on alternate Thursday evenings at a coffeehouse near St. Paul's Church and near the Queen's Arms tavern (this group also included the political pamphleteer Richard Price, the Unitarian minister and chemist [Reverend Joseph Priestley](#), the American diplomat [Benjamin Franklin](#), William Rose, the Reverend Jonathan Shipley, and the young student of law [James Boswell](#)).

The [Reverend Priestley](#) would go on to the dissenting Warrington Academy in Lancashire as a tutor of English, history, and anatomy. While in Lancashire, he began his life-long friendship with poet Anna Aikin, later Anna Barbauld. Though it would not be until about the 1770s that he would begin to receive public recognition for his work as a scientist, it would be at Warrington that he first developed his interest in the sciences: spending much time with his students in the field studying and collecting fossils and other botanical specimens, collecting instruments such as air pumps and globes for his later experiments, and beginning his work with and study of electricity. He would be perhaps the first to use large batteries in the course of experiments.



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1762

[Benjamin Franklin](#) redesigned the harmonica as a musical instrument and received the degree of LL.D. from [Oxford](#) and from Edinburgh (but not on account of the harmonica), whereupon he returned to America.



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1763

[Benjamin Franklin](#) made a 5-months' tour of the northern American colonies for the purpose of inspecting the post-offices.



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1764

[Benjamin Franklin](#) was defeated by the Penn faction for reelection to the Assembly. He was sent to London again, representing the government of Pennsylvania in its continuing attempts to seize the lands which the crown had granted to the Penn family.



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1765

When Grenville's parliament passed a Stamp Act and Quartering Act in an effort to pay for the war with France and to subsidize the administrative costs of the colonies, [Lord Chesterfield](#) wrote to his friend Lord Newcastle about the "absurdity" of such a piece of legislation. It could not be properly enforced, he pointed out — and even if it somehow could be made to be effective such a tax could not possibly produce revenues of more than £80,000 per year while the cost in reduced trade from the American colonies would be at least £1,000,000 per year (his estimate would turn out to have been on the low side, for the loss in trade volume would nearly double this).

The attempts by [Benjamin Franklin](#) to prevent the enactment of a Stamp Act by the British parliament now seem so utterly ineffective, that historians wonder what had actually been going on in Ben's mind.³³

The legislation would be so greatly resented in the colonies that it would lead to a Stamp Act Congress in New-York, and a declaration of colonial grievances delivered to Parliament.

March: Despite Soame Jenyns's THE OBJECTIONS TO THE TAXATION CONSIDER'D, despite [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s endeavor to prevent the passage of the Stamp Act, the act received the support of the House of Commons.

33. Would [Franklin](#) actually be spying for the British? He had an unusually strong sentimental attachment to Britain up to 1775, had a record going back to Stamp Act days of being out of touch with American Patriot positions, and gave indication of double or even triple dealings during his period in Paris up to the signing of the Treaty of Paris on August 8, 1763. (References: Cecil B. Currey, CODE NUMBER 72: BEN FRANKLIN: PATRIOT OR SPY? (Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972) and Richard B. Morris, THE PEACEMAKERS; THE GREAT POWERS AND AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE (NY: Harper & Row, 1965).



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1766

[Benjamin Franklin](#) was examined before the House of Commons relative to the passage of the Stamp Act. He was appointed agent of Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Georgia. He visited the University of Göttingen. Franklin qualifies as our 1st ink-maker on the basis of his going into partnership in this year with a David Hall to sell imported inks and inks of their own manufacture. (On the basis of the same evidence, of course, David Hall might qualify as our 1st ink-maker — but his is not a famous name and psychologically, as we all know, it is our famous names which serve as “sticky attractor surfaces” for such grandiose pronouncements.)

Summer: [Dr. Erasmus Darwin](#), who had already met [Benjamin Franklin](#) by 1760, met [Jean-Jacques Rousseau](#).



He met Rousseau by a subterfuge. Rousseau was living for a year in a hermit's lair on the terrace at Mr. Davenport's Wooton Hall in the Weaver Hills of north-east Staffordshire —it being all the rage at the time for a wealthy man to use some ornamental hermit to complete his garden— and Darwin strolled by the entrance to this cave and paused to minutely examine a plant growing in front of it. This drew out the Frenchman and they conversed. (Although after this he and Rousseau occasionally corresponded, we don't have a record of the correspondence.)



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1767

[Benjamin Franklin](#) crossed the channel to France and was presented at court. He wrote a thank-you note to a wealthy Irish trader, for a box of proboscidian “tusks and grinders” (he considered that these were the remains of elephants but made astute observations about how the climate in which they existed must have differed from that of the present).

THE SCIENCE OF 1767

PALEONTOLOGY



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1769

[Benjamin Franklin](#) provided a [telescope](#) to [Harvard College](#).

ASTRONOMY



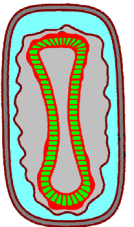
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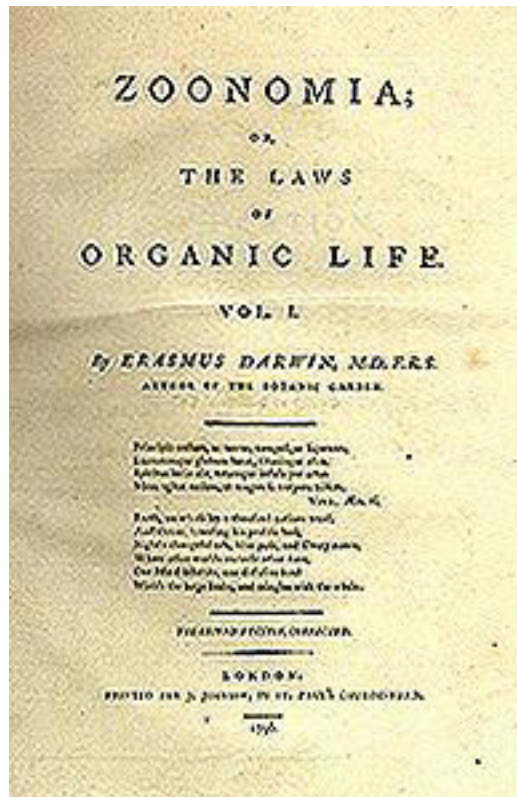
PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1770

[Dr. Erasmus Darwin](#) had his portrait done, by Joseph Wright, and began the writing of ZONOMIA.³⁴



His deep [small pox](#) pits were of course omitted from the painting.



THE SCIENCE OF 1770

His wife Mary (Polly) Howard Darwin died “after a long and suffering illness.” The grandson [Charles Robert](#)

34. Although [Dr. Darwin](#)’s grandson [Charles Robert](#) would read ZONOMIA at the age of 16 or 17, he would report later in life that the poem had been without effect on his mind. He hadn’t even retained a memory of what his family’s motto *E conchis omnia* was, or what it signified.

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would report that “judging from all that I have heard of her, [she] must have been a superior and charming woman.” “They seem to have lived together most happily during the thirteen years of their married life, and she was tenderly nursed by her husband during her last illness.”

In this year he had the new motto *E conchis omnia*, “Everything from shells,” added to the painting on his coach door of the Darwin family’s coat of arms (which had pictured three scallop shells). The image below is not what was painted on his coach door, but what he would have engraved for a bookplate in the following year:



Unfortunately, the Canon of Lichfield Cathedral, the Reverend Thomas Seward (father of the poet Anna Seward who would fall in love with Dr. Darwin, would be rejected for another, and, after her love’s death, would author a scathing and demonstrably false biography), would spot the reference, and –in satirical verse– would accuse his neighbor of renouncing his creator, and would exhort him to change that “foolish motto.”

Great wizard he! by magic spells
Can all things raise from cockle shells

Dr. Darwin would need to have his coach repainted to remove this offensive material.³⁵

[PALEONTOLOGY](#)

The biographer Desmond King-Hele acknowledges that it is [Charles Darwin](#), not his grandfather [Erasmus](#), who created the theory of evolution, but seems not to comprehend why this is so:

Charles Darwin read *ZOONOMIA* when he was sixteen or seventeen, and also listened to a panegyric in praise of evolution from his
35. Imagine parking in the parking lot of your local fundie church, nowadays, with one of those “Darwin” fish-with-legs logos on the trunk lid of your car! Why was such a motto so offensive? –Because the official story then, which would be the official story during [Charles Darwin](#)’s life as well, and would be the official story during [Henry Thoreau](#)’s life, and would be the official story at the Scopes monkey trial in Tennessee, and is still the official story, as for instance the official belief system of the Wubya administration of born-again Christians — is that our lives, to be of significance to us, to be meaningful to us, must have a divine purpose and legitimation. (That’s why we attacked Iraq — Wubya’s God told him he needed to “take Saddam out.” Wubya’s administration wasn’t mainly about stealing from the poor and giving to the rich. Wubya’s life, in fact, post-salvation, has divine purpose and legitimation. It is now a life as full of meaning, as once it was full of drunken revels.)



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friend Dr Robert Grant at Edinburgh University. "At this time I greatly admired the ZOOMOMIA," he says. But neither Grant nor ZOOMOMIA had "any effect on my mind." This is true: otherwise he would have become an evolutionist before going on the voyage of the *Beagle*, rather than after.

Therefore, perhaps, I should here explicate why it was that creating the theory of evolution was left for Charles, and why it was that the early reading of ZOOMOMIA, with its recognition of evolution, did nothing in this regard: it is one thing to regard evolution as a fact, and another thing entirely to create a theory which accounts for it by hypothesizing a plausible mechanism and demonstrating the inevitability of this mechanism. Lots of people regarded evolution as a fact, before Charles created his theory. Almost as many people were perfectly well aware of evolution as a fact in 1770, as had been perfectly well aware in 1491 that the earth was a globe — before Columbus obtained funding to sail west from Spain!

During the 1770s, [Erasmus](#) would be helping to found The Birmingham Lunar Society, a social club for the great scientists and industrialists of the day. The society would hold its monthly meetings at the Soho House on the Monday night nearest the full moon, and this supposedly was so that the attenders would afterwards be



able to find their way home. This society has been characterized as the think tank of the industrial revolution. Members of the society included the [Reverend Joseph Priestley](#), discoverer of oxygen, Friend Samuel Galton, a wealthy Quaker industrialist who eventually would be disowned due to his manufacture of firearms, William Small, the eccentrics Thomas Day and Richard Edgeworth, the [Matthew Boulton](#) who was known as "the creator of Birmingham," [James Watt](#), William Withering, James Keir, and [Josiah Wedgewood](#).



Other personages linked to this society include [Thomas Jefferson](#), [Benjamin Franklin](#), Rudolph Erich Raspe, and [William Murdock](#), developer of a self-propelled vehicle and the inventor of gas lighting. (Murdock would end his days living at the court of the Shah of Persia, where he would be credited with being an incarnation of Marduk, ancient god of light.)

THE LUNAR SOCIETY OF BIRMINGHAM

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1771

[Antoine Court de Gébelin](#), who had settled in Paris, opened an office in support of the sometimes persecuted [Huguenot](#) communities. He was appointed as a royal censor, something unusual for a non-Catholic. He was initiated into Freemasonry at the lodge “Les Amis Réunis” (The United Friends). He would move on to the lodge “Neuf Sœurs” where he would welcome [Benjamin Franklin](#) as a lodge-brother. He was a supporter of American Independence who contributed to the massive *AFFAIRES DE L’ANGLETERRE ET DE L’AMÉRIQUE*, of the new theories of economics, and of the “animal magnetism” of Franz Anton Mesmer (in an electrical experiment that brought about his death, apparently of an electrically induced heart attack).

THE NEW-ENGLAND [ALMANACK](#), OR LADY’S AND GENTLEMAN’S DIARY, FOR ... 1771. By [Benjamin West](#). [Providence](#): Printed and Sold, Wholesale and Retail, by John Carter. Three pages of this are devoted to distinguishing between “the folly and absurdity of astrology” and the “advantages and satisfaction derived from astronomy.”

WEST’S SHEET [ALMANACK](#), FOR THE YEAR 1771.

Broadside. No copy located. Advertised in [Providence Gazette](#).
The earliest sheet almanac for [Rhode Island](#).

Nathanael Low’s AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY; OR, [ALMANACK](#) FOR ... 1771. PRINTED AND SOLD BY KNEELAND AND ADAMS ... BOSTON. CREATED ABOUT SEVEN MONTHS AFTER THE BOSTON MASSACRE, THIS LEADS OFF WITH A FIERY 2-1/2 PAGE PATRIOTIC ESSAY ABOUT HOW WE “ESTEEM FREEDOM AS OUR NATIVE RIGHT; LIKE FREE-BORN SONS OF LIBERTY THEREFORE LET US ACT” AND THEN FOOTNOTES THE DATE MARCH 5, 1771 WITH “AN HORRID MASSACRE MOST INHUMANLY AND BARBAROUSLY COMMITTED BY BRITISH TROOPS ON THE INHABITANTS OF BOSTON, 5TH DAY, 1770.” CITING THE NON-IMPORTATION AGREEMENTS, THE PUBLICATION SUGGESTS “IN A PARTICULAR MANNER LET US ABSTAIN FROM THE USE OF FOREIGN TEA. THERE IS NO ONE ARTICLE IMPORTED SO FATAL TO THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY AS THIS....” THERE ARE ALSO “SOME NECESSARY RULES TO BE OBSERVED WITH REGARD TO HEALTH, CHIEFLY FROM DR. CHYNE.”

AN ASTRONOMICAL DIARY: OR, [ALMANACK](#) FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD CHRIST, 1771. By Nathaniel Ames. [Newport](#). Printed and Sold by the Printers and Booksellers.... Boston. This almanac contained the first appearance in print of [Benjamin Franklin](#)’s famous self-composed epitaph.

HDT

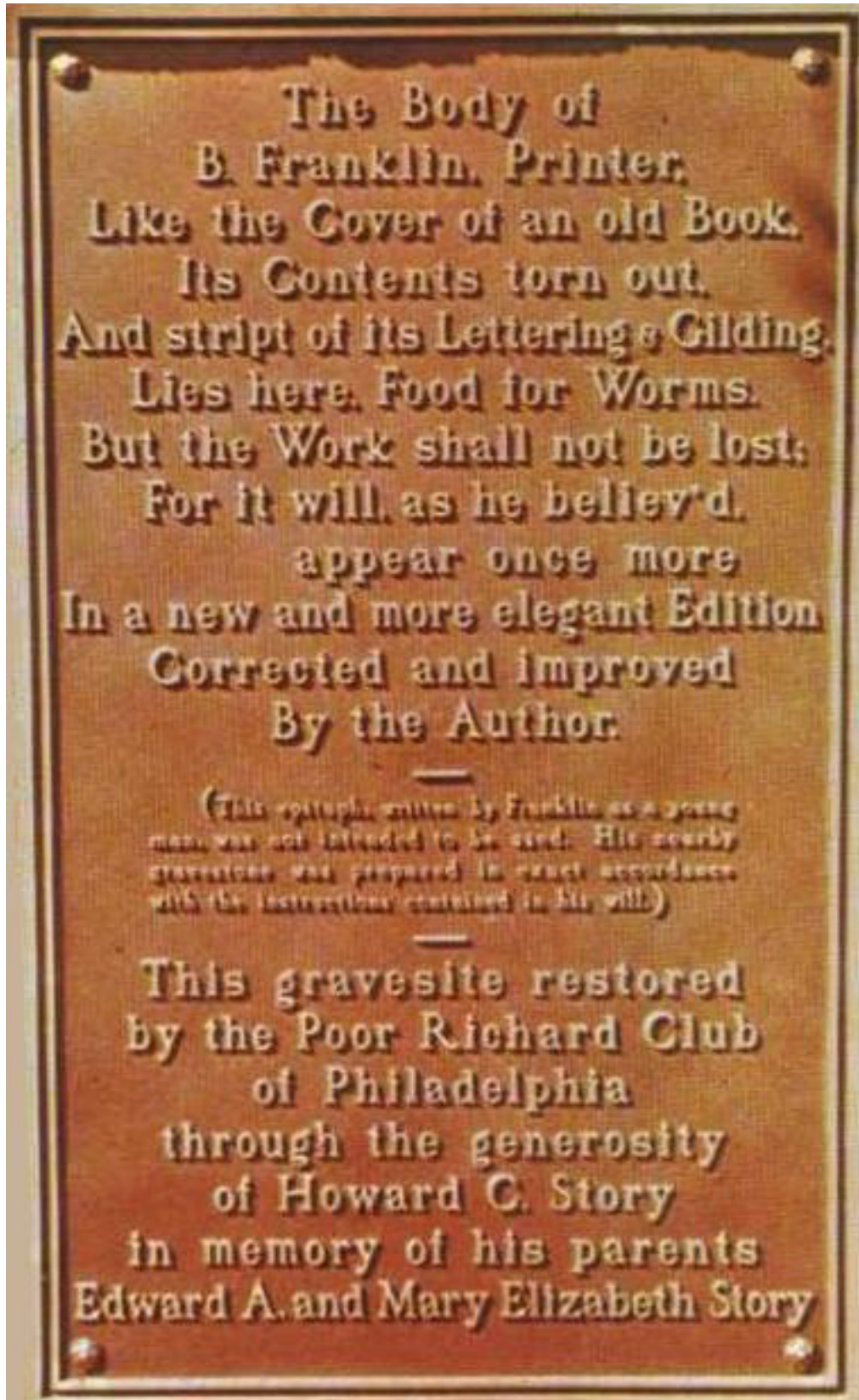
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The first portion of [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s AUTOBIOGRAPHY was published in Paris as *MÉMOIRS DE LA VIE PRIVÉE*.

*I shall indulge the Inclination so natural in old Men
... to thank God for his Vanity among the other
Comforts of Life.*

About this, in relation to the chapter on "Economy" in [Henry Thoreau](#)'s WALDEN, Richard A. Hocks has had the following observation to make:

Thoreau does not merely attack Franklin, but quite literally turns him inside out, an inversion which affirms his **own** deep and complex -in short his **polar**-relationship with his antagonist.

WALDEN: In most books, the **I**, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained; that, in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were any body else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience.

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WALDEN: But all this is very selfish, I have heard some of my townsmen say. I confess that I have hitherto indulged very little in philanthropic enterprises. I have made some sacrifices to a sense of duty, and among others have sacrificed this pleasure also. There are those who have used all their arts to persuade me to undertake the support of some poor family in town; and if I had nothing to do, -for the devil finds employment for the idle,- I might try my hand at some such pastime as that. However, when I have thought to indulge myself in this respect, and lay their Heaven under an obligation by maintaining certain poor persons in all respects as comfortably as I maintain myself, and have even ventured so far as to make them the offer, they have one and all unhesitatingly preferred to remain poor. While my townsmen and women are devoted in so many ways to the good of their fellows, I trust that one at least may be spared to other and less humane pursuits. You must have a genius for charity as well as for any thing else. As for Doing-good, that is one of the professions which are full. Moreover, I have tried it fairly, and, strange as it may seem, am satisfied that it does not agree with my constitution. Probably I should not consciously and deliberately forsake my particular calling to do the good which society demands of me, to save the universe from annihilation; and I believe that a like but infinitely greater steadfastness elsewhere is all that now preserves it. But I would not stand between any man and his genius; and to him who does this work, which I decline, with his whole heart and soul and life, I would say, Persevere, even if the world call it doing evil, as it is most likely they will.

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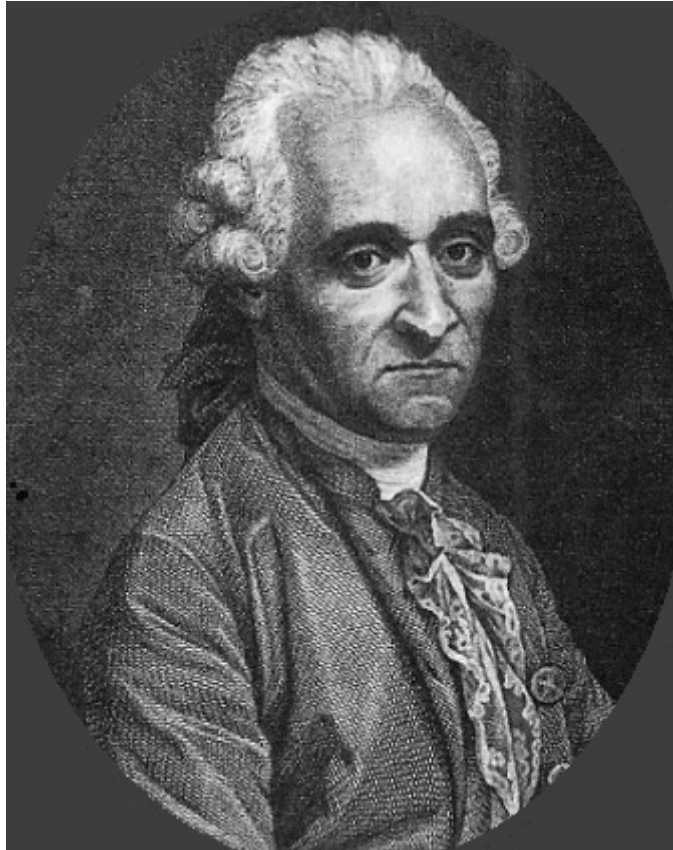
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

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1772

[Benjamin Franklin](#) was elected *Associe Etranger* (no, it doesn't mean "strange buddy") of the French Academy.

June 25, Thursday: Volume I of [Antoine Court de G belin](#)'s *LE MONDE PRIMITIF, ANALYS  ET COMPAR  AVEC LE MONDE MODERNE* (THE PRIMITIVE WORLD, ANALYZED AND COMPARED TO THE MODERN WORLD), which over the years would become a vast compendium of nine volumes, prepared for a distinguished list of subscribers. In this great project he would be attempting a reconstruction of the high primeval civilization:



LE MONDE PRIMITIF, I

This effort would attract more than 1,000 paid subscribers, inclusive of the order of the family of King Louis XVI for a round number of copies, 100. Diderot subscribed, and d'Alembert, and [Benjamin Franklin](#). Court de G belin would publish nine volumes by 1782 and only death, in 1784, would prevent the perpetration of an even larger catalog of such esoterica.



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1774

The publications of the [Reverend Joseph Priestley](#) brought him to the attention of the [Reverend Richard Price](#) and [Benjamin Franklin](#), who would encourage his work in science and politics. After long discussions with these two the Reverend Priestley would author THE STATE OF PUBLIC LIBERTY IN GENERAL AND OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS IN PARTICULAR, attacking the British government for depriving its American colonists of their rights and liberties.

January 29, Saturday: There was a hearing of the Privy Council to dismiss Massachusetts governor [Thomas Hutchinson](#). In the course of these proceedings [Benjamin Franklin](#) was humiliatingly accused of the misappropriation of the private correspondence of others in the presence of many peers, including such personages as the [Reverend Joseph Priestley](#), [Jeremy Bentham](#), and Edmund Burke, at Whitehall while wearing his brown-figured suit of Manchester velvet. An oblique literary suggestion was made that he was deserving of being branded upon the forehead with the symbol for thief. Turning away from a policy of seeking reconciliation with the mother country, Franklin informed Alexander Wedderburn that "I will make your master a little king for this." The next day, as might be expected, a notification arrived at his [London](#) lodging that he had been dismissed from his office of postmaster general in America. He would save this velvet suit in his closet and don it again, upon the event of his new nation's triumph over his lordly maligners.



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August 1, Monday: The [Reverend Joseph Priestley](#)'s EXPERIMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS ON DIFFERENT KINDS OF AIR disclosed that burning a candle in a closed container changes the quality of the atmosphere so the flame is extinguished. Animals placed in that environment quickly die. A living sprig of mint renews the air so a candle will once again burn. Today we know that the non-flammable air is carbon dioxide; growing a plant in such an environment replenishes the oxygen which is necessary to sustain life. On learning of his results, [Benjamin Franklin](#), a correspondent of Priestley's, would comment in a letter: "I hope this [rehabilitation of air by plants] will give some check to the rage of destroying trees that grow near houses, which has accompanied our late improvements in gardening from an opinion of their being unwholesome."³⁶ The Reverend's other experiments during this decade would have to do with the properties of vegetables growing in light, and the properties of water and air. Through such experiments he would conclude that water is the basis for all air. Priestley would exchange data and specimens with Claude Louis Berthollet, Joseph Banks, Richard Kirwan, Peter Woulfe, and Karl Scheele. He would discuss his work with, among others, Matthew Boulton, James Keir, [James Watt](#), William Withering, and [Dr. Erasmus Darwin](#), contemporaries with whom he was meeting monthly



at the Soho House in a group known as the Lunar Society. These people thought big: through their discussions of pure and applied sciences, the Society intended to transform the face of England materially, socially, and culturally.

THE LUNAR SOCIETY OF BIRMINGHAM

In [Boston](#), the mode of government was altering in response to pressure from Great Britain, and it was anticipated that the Americans were not going to take something like this lying down:

In July the "Act for the better regulation of the government of Massachusetts Bay" was received in [Boston](#); in conformity to which the Mandamus Council and many other officers were appointed. This produced great excitement in the community and evil consequences were anticipated. The people seemed determined not to submit to an act so unconstitutional and oppressive. During this commotion an individual went secretly to Cambridge on the 1st of August, contrary to the unanimous wish of his fellow citizens, to inform some of the members of the Council, of the state of public feeling, and to put them on their guard against an attack from the people, which he thought likely to take place.³⁷

36. This was a strange remark to be coming from [Franklin](#), since as a person responsible for city fire control he had expressed himself in opposition to the idea of people having any trees at all on their house lots and along the sidewalks in the city of Philadelphia — trees that might carry a house fire from one structure to another, trees that belonged out in the countryside.

37. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:....](#). Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)

(On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study.)



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Early October: Having obtained a letter of introduction from [Benjamin Franklin](#), [Thomas Paine](#) sailed for the New World.

November 30, Wednesday: At the age of 37, in London, [Thomas Paine](#) had met an American, [Benjamin Franklin](#), who had suggested that he try life in the colonies. On this day he landed at Philadelphia with letters of recommendation from Franklin.³⁸



38. At the time he was spelling his name "Pain."



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1775

March: With war imminent, [Benjamin Franklin](#) returned to Philadelphia and was chosen a delegate to the Second Continental Congress. He was placed on the committee of secret correspondence and was appointed one of the commissioners to secure the cooperation of Canada.

*Son of so-and-so and so-and-so, this
so-and-so helped us to gain our independence,
instructed us in economy,
and drew down lightning from the clouds.*

CONTINETAL CONGRESS

April 14, Friday: [Friend Anthony Benezet](#) called together a group of seven [Quakers](#), [Thomas Paine](#), Dr. Benjamin Rush, and, one source alleges, [Benjamin Franklin](#) (Franklin would indeed, in 1787 after the death of Benezet, become the president of a successor organization), at the Rising Sun tavern in Philadelphia, to form the Society for the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage. This would grow into a group of 24 of whom 17 were Quakers, before being disbanded in the following year.

SLAVERY

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July: The 2nd Continental Congress established [Benjamin Franklin](#) as postmaster general in Philadelphia at \$1,000 per annum, and a secretary at \$340 and comptroller at \$340, “to form a line of posts from Falmouth, New England, to Savannah, in Georgia, with cross posts where needful.” To carry the mails without stopover, relay riders, faithful men and true, were appointed for every 25 miles. Three advice boats were established, “one to ply between [North Carolina](#) and such ports as shall be most convenient to the place where Congress shall be sitting — one other between the State of Georgia and the same port. The boats to be armed, and to be freighted by individuals [presumably with such items as oysters, potatoes, apples, &c.] for the sake of diminishing the public expense.”



CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

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
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1776

 [Benjamin Franklin](#) was chosen president of the Constitutional Committee of Pennsylvania.



When [Franklin](#)'s friend Fleury Mesplet published the play JONATHAS ET DAVID, OR *LE TRIOMPHE DE L'AMITIE*, this was the first book to be published in the city of Montréal. The play was a three-act tragedy describing a thinly veiled homoerotic relationship between the Biblical characters David and Jonathan.



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March: Private Charles Miles, the son of Captain Charles Miles and himself later a militia captain, served as a private in a [Concord](#) company stationed at Roxbury, blocking the British army's access to the mainland across Boston Neck.

Dr. [John Cuming](#) of [Concord](#) had evidently overcome his Royalist scruples — as he at this point became a member of the local Committee of Correspondence, Inspection and Safety.

The committee of correspondence, etc., chosen March, 1776 [for [Concord](#)], were [John Cuming](#), Esq., Ephraim Wood, Jr., Esq., Capt. Jonas Heywood, Capt. Joseph Hosmer, James Barrett, Esq., Capt. David Brown, and Capt. George Minot. In 1777, Colonel John Buttrick, Josiah Merriam, Isaac Hubbard, Capt. Abishai Brown, Capt. David Wheeler, Mr. Ephraim Potter, and Lieut. Nathan Stow. In 1778, [John Cuming](#), Esq., Colonel John Buttrick, Ephraim Wood, Jr., Esq., Jonas Heywood, Esq., James Barrett, Esq., Capt. David Brown, and Mr. Josiah Merriam. These were re-elected in 1779, 1780, 1781 & 1782. In 1783, James Barrett, Esq., Jonas Heywood, Esq., Ephraim Wood, Jr., Esq., Capt. David Wood, and Lieut. Joseph Hayward. This committee was not chosen afterwards.³⁹

39. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:....](#) Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)
(On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study.)

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When Lord Howe's army evacuated Boston, the Rector of [King's Chapel](#), Henry Caner, a Loyalist, needed to flee with the British troops (after the departure of his assistant a few months later, the Chapel would be closed for about a year). In addition, both the Lovells, loyalist father teacher of the Boston Latin School and patriot



son assistant teacher, would sail with the fleet to Halifax, Nova Scotia (the father as Howe's guest but the son as his prisoner). The son, the patriot James Lovell, would be exchanged and would become a delegate to the Continental Congress. The father, the loyalist John Lovell, would live out his life in Canada, dying at Halifax in 1778. Schoolmastering responsibilities were picked up by Samuel Hunt, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody's uncle, who would be Master there, with some difficulty, for 36 years. Out of the 56 signers of the [Declaration of Independence](#), five would have attended this school:

- John Hancock
- Samuel Adams
- Robert Treat Paine
- [Benjamin Franklin](#)
- William Hooper of [North Carolina](#)



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June 7, Friday: Richard Henry Lee introduced, and John Adams seconded, a motion that “these United colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States,” and that a “plan of confederation” be prepared for the political union of these free and independent entities — a motion that would carry.

READ THE FULL TEXT

On this basis the Continental Congress would appoint a committee consisting of Adams of Massachusetts, [Benjamin Franklin](#) of Pennsylvania, [Thomas Jefferson](#) of Virginia, Robert R. Livingston of New York, and Roger Sherman of Connecticut to compose a public-propaganda broadside declaring the sentiment of the convention.

*Son of so-and-so and so-and-so, this
so-and-so helped us to gain our independence,
instructed us in economy,
and drew down lightning from the clouds.*

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

This would come to be known as the Committee of Five despite the fact that Franklin’s gout had at this point gotten so bad that he had stopped coming to the meetings of the Congress a week before he was stuck onto this drafting committee. We believe that he did not make his appearance again until after the drafting committee had completed its work. We have no reason to presume that he attended even a single one of its meetings.

Later on Jefferson would make apparently false claims as to his sole authorship of the document, through minimization of the contributions of other, deceased members of the committee.



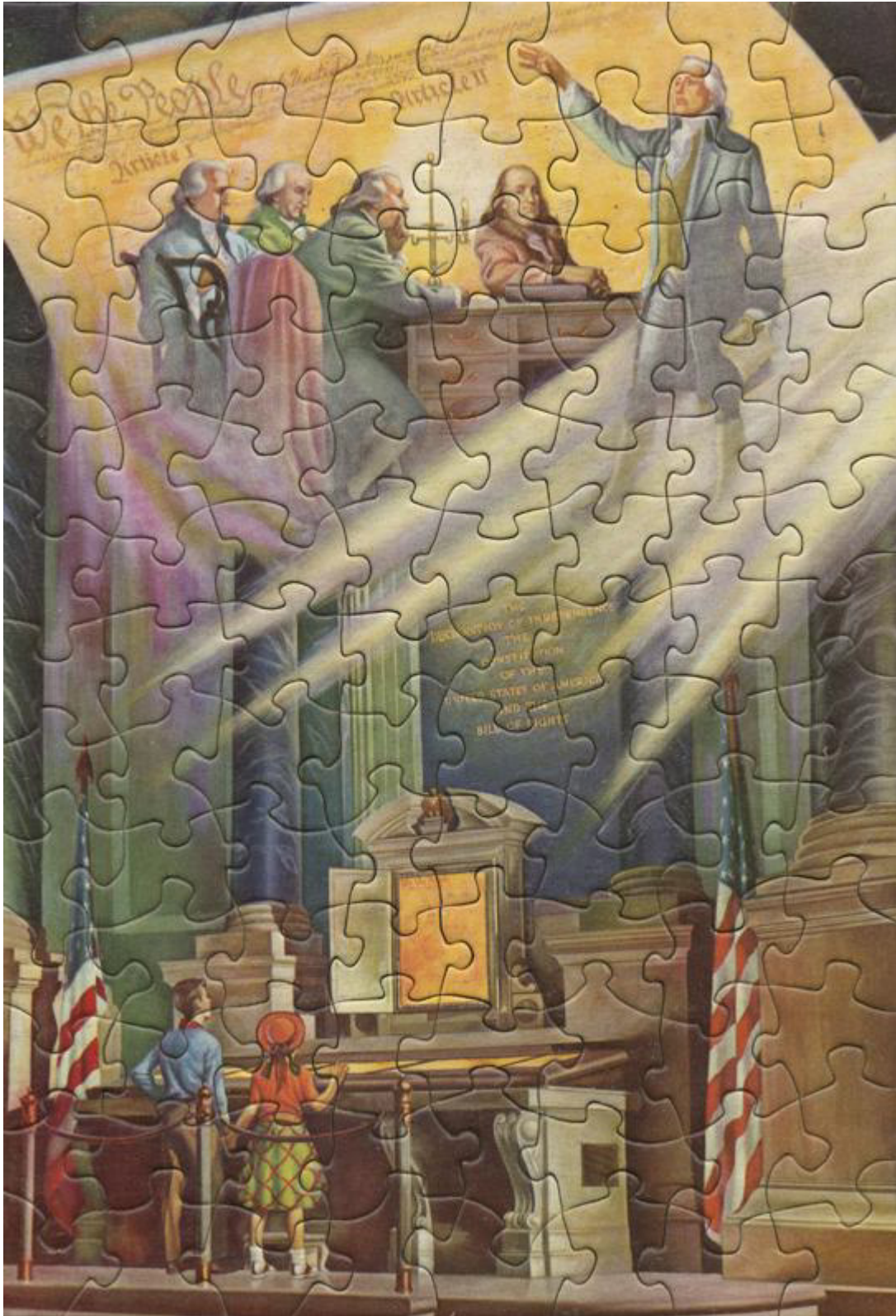
The committee Congress appointed to draft a declaration of Independence left no minutes of its proceedings, and the account of its work written nearest the event, Thomas Jefferson’s “Notes of Proceedings in the Continental Congress,” is succinct to a fault. Members of the committee, Jefferson said, “desired” or asked him to prepare it; “it was accordingly done, and being approved by them, I reported it to the house on Friday the 28th. of June when it was read and ordered to lie on the table.” Both Jefferson and John Adams later helped flesh out that bare-bones story. However, most of the testimony on the drafting process was written between a quarter and a half century later, which even at the time raised questions about its accuracy, and, it turns out, for good reason. What they said contains one mistake after another. Fortunately, Adams’s statements can be compared to Jefferson’s, and both can be measured against shards of evidence that have survived from the 1770s. Piecing together the story demands sifting through contradictory clues with the care of a shrewd detective; indeed, a good part of the story involves evaluating evidence. So do detective stories, but they at least reveal by their endings exactly who did what and when, which is not the case here. Learning how the [Declaration of Independence](#) was written is more like assembling an immensely complex jigsaw puzzle in which some pieces are “teases,” serving only to mislead, while others necessary to complete the picture have probably been lost forever. Whenever a new piece of the puzzle does appear, as



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still happens occasionally, it fills out the picture, adding or changing some details, which can affect interpretations of the document. Despite those problems, the picture's subject -or the story of how the Declaration was written- is reasonably clear. It includes not a single talented writer but a group of men working under tight time constraints to complete this one of many assignments the Continental Congress gave them. Adams and Jefferson dominate the scene in part because they lived long enough to tell the story to a generation of interested younger Americans, but also because they in fact played central roles in the Declaration's development.... In the end, considering its complex ancestry and the number of people who actively intervened in defining its text, the Declaration of Independence was the work not of one man, but of many.... [W]hat Jefferson later called "the original rough draft" of the document ... was in fact not an "original rough draft," but a copy Jefferson made from earlier compositional fragments to show members of the drafting committee.... [W]hen Jefferson sent the draft to Franklin ... he attached a note whose significance seems to have gone virtually unnoticed ... "The inclosed paper has been read and with some small alterations approved of by the committee," it began.... "The paper having been returned to me to change a particular sentiment or two, I propose laying it again before the committee tomorrow morning...." That description of the drafting procedure contradicts Jefferson's 1823 account, by which he showed the draft to Adams and Franklin before submitting it to the committee, and the committee did nothing between appointing him draftsman and approving the text he submitted with two or three "verbal" adjustments suggested by Adams and Franklin. In fact, the committee met not only at the beginning and end of the drafting process, but in between.



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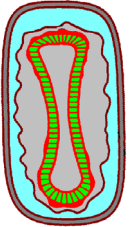
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June 10, Monday: The Declaration of Ipswich, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

On the recommendation of the Congress, a census of [Rhode Island](#) was initiated (the population would turn out to number 55,011).

Hospitals for inoculation for the [small pox](#) were ordered to be established in each county of [Rhode Island](#).

There was continued debate in the 2d Continental Congress at Philadelphia and a “committee of five” was appointed to draft a subdued declaration of war, to wit, a “statement of independence” for the colonies. Since there were a couple of northerners –John Adams of Massachusetts and Roger Sherman of Connecticut– plus a couple of men from the Middle Colonies –[Benjamin Franklin](#) of Philadelphia and Robert R. Livingston of New York (refer to the guy in the middle, on the back of the \$2 bill)– for political correctness they would need to incorporate one or another southerner — and so they picked out a junior delegate, redheaded [Thomas Jefferson](#) of Virginia.



DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

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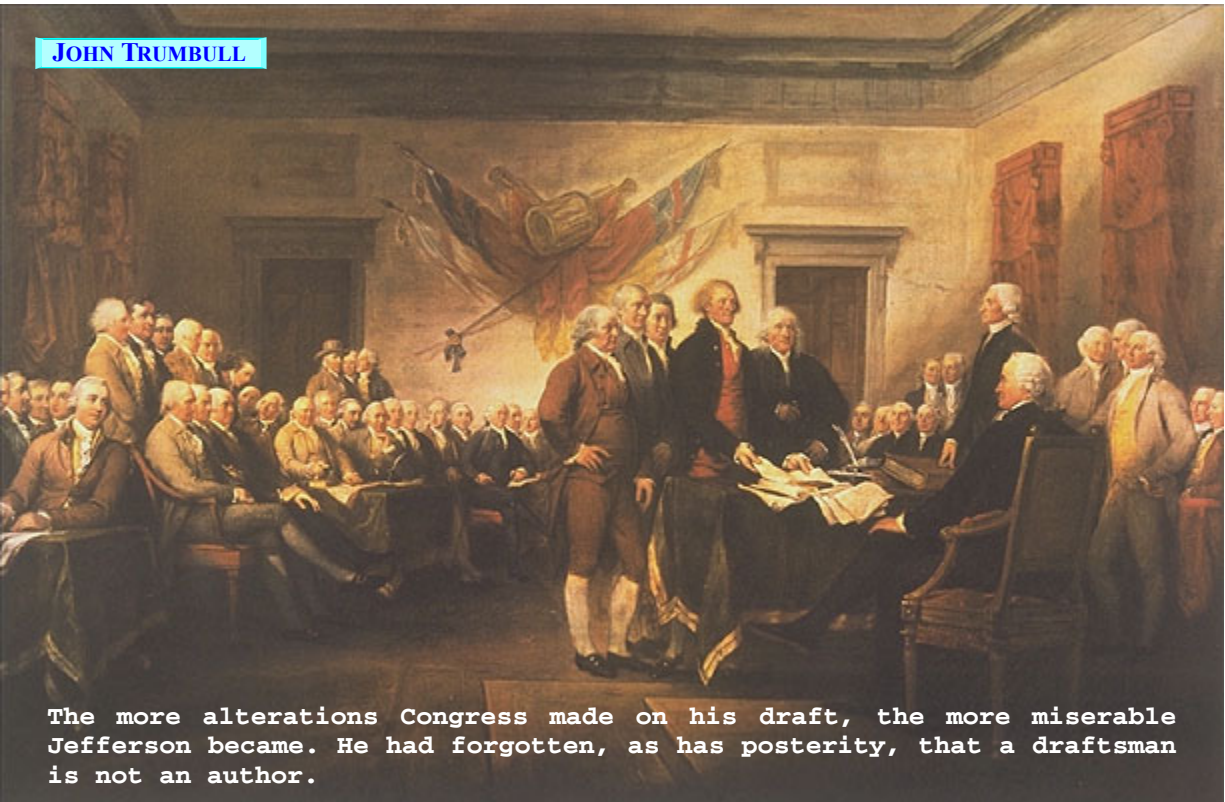
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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN



July 4, Thursday: It was a cloudy day, and the temperature was but 76 degrees Fahrenheit. In North America, the process that had begun when a crafty old politician named [Benjamin Franklin](#) had been placed on a Constitutional Committee of Pennsylvania to draft a declaration of the independence of the former North American seacoast colonies of Great Britain was brought to fruition, in that a broadside to that effect was on this date roughly printed off in Philadelphia.

JOHN TRUMBULL



The more alterations Congress made on his draft, the more miserable Jefferson became. He had forgotten, as has posterity, that a draftsman is not an author.

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

This date saw, also, the publication of [Adam Smith](#)'s AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS.



The point at which Professor Smith writes about pin-manufacture (Chapter 1, page 3), as the basis for division of labor and therefore for the wealth of nations, is displayed on a following screen.

An extract from its section "The cost of Empire" is on subsequent screens:

[see following]

Certain American business types would come to regard this latter document, possibly on account of its publication date and possibly for some other reason, as their real [Declaration of Independence](#), although by 1844 Friedrich Engels would be challenging such an attitude toward freedom in his THE CONDITION OF THE WORKING MAN IN ENGLAND and by 1855 [Herman Melville](#) would be challenging such an attitude toward freedom in his BENITO CERENO.

Only John Hancock, president of the assembly, and Charles Thomson, secretary of the assembly, signed the draft of "A Declaration by the representatives of the United states of America, in Congress assembled" accepted on this day, which was declaring itself as being issued "in the name and by the authority of the good people of these ... free and independent states." That draft incorporated markup of the changes made by the delegates, along with symbols inserted by Jefferson to indicate the points at which a person reading it orally ought to pause for rhetorical effect. The printer who typeset this document inserted quotation marks to

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ten be collected into the same workhouse, and placed at once under the view of the spectator. In those great manufactures, on the contrary, which are destined to supply the great wants of the great body of the people, every different branch of the work employs so great a number of workmen, that it is impossible to collect them all into the same workhouse. We can seldom see more, at one time, than those employed in one single branch. Though in such manufactures, therefore, the work may really be divided into a much greater number of parts, than in those of a more trifling nature, the division is not near so obvious, and has accordingly been much less observed.

To take an example, therefore, from a very trifling manufacture, but one in which the division of labour has been very often taken notice of, the trade of a pin-maker: a workman not educated to this business (which the division of labour has rendered a distinct trade), nor acquainted with the use of the machinery employed in it (to the invention of which the same division of labour has probably given occasion), could scarce, perhaps, with his utmost industry, make one pin in a day, and certainly could not make twenty. But in the way in which this business is now carried on, not only the whole work is a peculiar trade, but it is divided into a number of branches, of which the greater part are likewise peculiar trades. One man draws out the wire; another straightens it; a third cuts it; a fourth points it; a fifth grinds it at the top for receiving the head; to make the head requires two or three distinct operations; to put it on is a peculiar business; to whiten the pins is another; it is even a trade by itself to put them into the paper; and the important business of making a pin is, in this manner, divided into about eighteen distinct operations, which, in some manufactories, are all performed by distinct hands, though in others the same man will sometimes perform two or three of them. I have seen a small manufactory of this kind, where ten men only were employed, and where some of them consequently performed two or three distinct operations. But though they were very poor, and therefore but indifferently accommodated with the necessary machinery, they could, when they exerted themselves, make among them about twelve pounds of pins in a day. There are in a pound upwards of four thousand pins of a middling size. Those ten persons, therefore, could make among them upwards of forty-eight thousand pins in a day. Each person, therefore, making a tenth part of forty-eight thousand pins, might be considered as making four thousand eight hundred pins in a day. But if they had all wrought separately and independently, and without any of them having been educated to this peculiar business, they certainly could not each of them have made twenty, perhaps not one pin in a day; that is, certainly, not the

two hundred and fortieth, perhaps not the four thousand eight hundredth, part of what they are at present capable of performing, in consequence of a proper division and combination of their different operations.

In every other art and manufacture, the effects of the division of labour are similar to what they are in this very trifling one, though, in many of them, the labour can neither be so much subdivided, nor reduced to so great a simplicity of operation. The division of labour, however, so far as it can be introduced, occasions, in every art, a proportionable increase of the productive powers of labour. The separation of different trades and employments from one another, seems to have taken place in consequence of this advantage. This separation, too, is generally carried furthest in those countries which enjoy the highest degree of industry and improvement; what is the work of one man, in a rude state of society, being generally that of several in an improved one. In every improved society, the farmer is generally nothing but a farmer; the manufacturer, nothing but a manufacturer. The labour, too, which is necessary to produce any one complete manufacture, is almost always divided among a great number of hands. How many different trades are employed in each branch of the linen and woollen manufactures, from the growers of the flax and the wool, to the bleachers and smoothers of the linen, or to the dyers and dressers of the cloth! The nature of agriculture, indeed, does not admit of so many subdivisions of labour, nor of so complete a separation of one business from another, as manufactures. It is impossible to separate so entirely the business of the grazer from that of the corn-farmer, as the trade of the carpenter is commonly separated from that of the smith. The spinner is almost always a distinct person from the weaver; but the ploughman, the harrower, the sower of the seed, and the reaper of the corn, are often the same. The occasions for those different sorts of labour returning with the different seasons of the year, it is impossible that one man should be constantly employed in any one of them. This impossibility of making so complete and entire a separation of all the different branches of labour employed in agriculture, is perhaps the reason why the improvement of the productive powers of labour, in this art, does not always keep pace with their improvement in manufactures. The most opulent nations, indeed, generally excel all their neighbours in agriculture as well as in manufactures; but they are commonly more distinguished by their superiority in the latter than in the former. Their lands are in general better cultivated, and having more labour and expense bestowed upon them, produce more in proportion to the extent and natural fertility of the ground. But this superiority of produce is seldom much more than in pro-

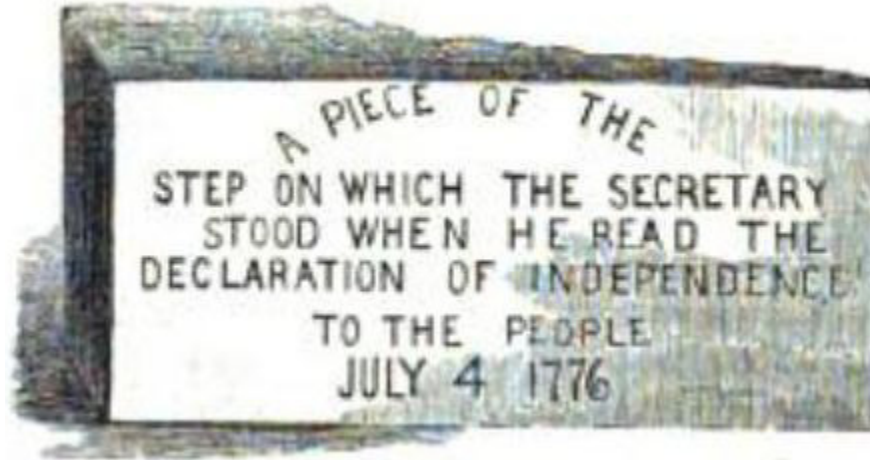


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represent Jefferson's symbol, and then found he had to pull them out in general replacing them by extra spaces.



This draft was not preserved and, it seems, nobody made any particular effort to preserve any copies of this original printing. Of the 25 copies that by the sheerest chance have survived, the 25th was to be discovered as the paper backing of a painting that had been bought at a flea market in Pennsylvania in 1989 for \$4, and this copy seems now to be worth more than \$8,000,000 on the open market as it has become the sole copy not owned by an institution. It would not be until after the delegation from the colony of New York had belatedly received instructions to cast their vote also for independence and thus render the vote of the Continental Congress unanimous, that the delegates would be able to insert the word "unanimous" into this title. At the same time they would delete the reference to mere "representatives," thus strengthening the affirmation of colonial consensus. Although the JOURNALS OF CONGRESS did identify the members of the committee that had prepared the draft for this Declaration document and thus listed the name of [Thomas Jefferson](#) among the others, there was no mention made at this time of his having provided a contribution that was being considered unique. —In fact Jefferson himself would make no such public claim, until the year prior to his death.



September: [Benjamin Franklin](#) was sent to Paris by the Continental Congress to solicit support for the American revolution and became, in his fur hat, wearing his own hair, an icon of New World natural sophistication which the French manufacturers painted onto [snuff](#)-boxes, onto chamber-pots, and onto everything in between.



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Adam Smith on “The cost of Empire,” from AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS:

The countries which possess the colonies of America, and which trade directly to the East Indies, enjoy, indeed, the whole show and splendour of this great commerce. Other countries, however, notwithstanding all the invidious restraints by which it is meant to exclude them, frequently enjoy a greater share of the real benefit of it. The colonies of Spain and Portugal, for example, give more real encouragement to the industry of other countries than to that of Spain and Portugal.... After all the unjust attempts, therefore, of every country in Europe to engross to itself the whole advantage of the trade of its own colonies, no country has yet been able to engross to itself anything but the expense of supporting in time of peace, and of defending in time of war, the oppressive authority which it assumes over them. The inconveniencies resulting from the possession of its colonies, every country has engrossed to itself completely. The advantages resulting from their trade it has been obliged to share with many other countries.

At first sight, no doubt, the monopoly of the great commerce of America naturally seems to be an acquisition of the highest value. To the undiscerning eye of giddy ambition, it naturally presents itself amidst the confused scramble of politics and war, as a very dazzling object to fight for. The dazzling splendour of the object, however the immense greatness of the commerce, is the very quality which renders the monopoly of it hurtful, or which makes one employment, in its own nature necessarily less advantageous to the country than the greater part of other employments, absorb a much greater proportion of the capital of the country than what would otherwise have gone to it.... It is not contrary to justice that ... America should contribute towards the discharge of the public debt of Great Britain... a government to which several of the colonies of America owe their present charters, and consequently their present constitution; and to which all the colonies of America owe the liberty, security, and property which they have ever since enjoyed. That public debt has been contracted in the defence, not of Great Britain alone, but of all the different provinces of the empire; the immense debt contracted in the late war in particular, and a great part of that contracted in the war before, were both properly contracted in defence of America.... If it should be found impracticable for Great Britain to draw any considerable augmentation of revenue from any of the resources above mentioned; the only resource which can remain to her is a diminution of her expense. In the mode of collecting, and in that of expending the public revenue; though in both there may be still room for improvement; Great Britain seems to be at least as economical as any of her neighbours. The military establishment which she maintains for her own defence in time of peace, is more moderate than that of any European state which can pretend to rival her either in wealth or in power. None of those articles, therefore, seem to admit of any considerable reduction of expense. The expense of the peace establishment of the colonies was, before the commencement of the present disturbances, very considerable, and is an expense which may, and if no revenue can be drawn from them ought certainly to be saved altogether. This constant expense in time of peace, though very great, is insignificant in comparison with what the defence of the colonies has cost us in time of war.



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Adam Smith on “The cost of Empire,” from AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS:

The last war, which was undertaken altogether on account of the colonies, cost Great Britain ... upwards of ninety millions. The Spanish war of 1739 was principally undertaken on their account; in which, and in the French war that was the consequence of it, Great Britain spent upwards of forty millions, a great part of which ought justly to be charged to the colonies. In those two wars the colonies cost Great Britain much more than double the sum which the national debt amounted to before the commencement of the first of them. Had it not been for those wars that debt might, and probably would by this time, have been completely paid; and had it not been for the colonies, the former of those wars might not, and the latter certainly would not have been undertaken. It was because the colonies were supposed to be provinces of the British empire, that this expense was laid out upon them. But countries which contribute neither revenue nor military force towards the support of the empire, cannot be considered as provinces. They may perhaps be considered as appendages, as a sort of splendid and showy equipage of the empire. But if the empire can no longer support the expense of keeping up this equipage, it ought certainly to lay it down; and if it cannot raise its revenue in proportion to its expense, it ought at least, to accommodate its expense to its revenue. If the colonies, notwithstanding their refusal to submit to British taxes, are still to be considered as provinces of the British empire, their defence in some future war may cost Great Britain as great an expense as it ever has done in any former war. The rulers of Great Britain have, for more than a century past, amused the people with the imagination that they possessed a great empire on the west side of the Atlantic. This empire, however, has hitherto existed in imagination only. It has hitherto been, not an empire, but the project of an empire; not a gold mine, but the project of a gold mine; a project which has cost, which continues to cost, and which, if pursued in the same way as it has been hitherto, is likely to cost, immense expense, without being likely to bring any profit; for the effects of the monopoly of the colony trade, it has been shown, are, to the great body of the people, mere loss instead of profit. It is surely now time that our rulers should either realise this golden dream, in which they have been indulging themselves, perhaps, as well as the people; or, that they should awake from it themselves, and endeavour to awaken the people. If the project cannot be completed, it ought to be given up. If any of these provinces of the British empire cannot be made to contribute towards the support of the whole empire, it is surely time that Great Britain should free herself from the expense of defending those provinces in time of war, and of supporting any part of their civil or military establishments in time of peace, and endeavour to accommodate her future views and designs to the real mediocrity of her circumstances.

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1777

Friedrich Wilhelm Augustin came to America, bringing with him 17-year-old [Pierre-Étienne Du Ponceau](#) as secretary.



(It would appear that this Prussian was able to persuade General George Washington, with the genial assistance of [Benjamin Franklin](#) and Silas Deane, that back home he had been acting as a lieutenant general whereas actually he had been nothing more than a captain; in addition, this naturalized American citizen would not somehow acquire his title “Baron von Steuben” until well after the period of the Revolution and, since he would retire in upstate New York on his cut of the Loyalist spoils without ever revisiting Europe, his use of such a honorarium would never be tested.)

Upon the completion of the American Revolution, his secretary Du Ponceau would settle at Philadelphia, and there would spend the remainder of his life as a scholar.



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1778

In Paris, [Benjamin Franklin](#) concluded treaties of defensive alliance, and of amity and commerce, and was received at court. Jean-Antoine Houdon produced the famous marble bust of Franklin. An ideologist of a historical theory of progress, the economist Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot, *baron de l-Aulne*, managed to out-fulsome everyone with a declamation that Franklin “had snatched the lightning from the skies and would snatch the sceptre from tyrants”⁴⁰.

Thoreau was aware that Franklin had become an American myth, a kind of archetype of self-help. In A WEEK he had ironically referred to Franklin as the prototype for an entry in a biographical dictionary:

Son of ——— and ———. He aided the Americans to gain their independence, instructed mankind in economy, and drew down lightning from the clouds.

Here he uses Franklin to illustrate that biography is essentially a personalized version of mythology.



August 4, Tuesday: In [The Pennsylvania Packet](#):

To be SOLD very reasonably, A **NEGRO** MAN about 32 or 35 years of age, a good tempered ingenious, handy fellow, is a tolerable cook, and can shave and dress a wig very well. HE has been employed as a house servant for some time past, and is now sold for faults which will not be likely to affect a purchaser who need not intrust a servant with liquor or the laying out of money. Enquire of Colonel THOMAS LOWRY, in Flemington, New Jersey, or of The **PRINTER**.

August 18, Tuesday: In [The Pennsylvania Packet](#):

To be SOLD very reasonably, A **NEGRO** MAN about 32 or 35 years of age, a good tempered, ingenious, handy fellow, is a tolerable cook, and can shave and dress a wig very well. - He has been employed as a house servant for some time past, and is now sold for faults which will not be

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

40. Although this motto would become in its most widely distributed and memorized form *Eripuit cælo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis* and would become in that form for many Americans of the 19th Century without a classical education the only Latin they knew, as of 1778, with the future of America’s relationship with George III still uncertain, the future tense seems to have been utilized for the second part of it, and thus it probably was, rather, at this point something like *Eripuit cælo fulmen mox scepra tyrannis*.



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likely to affect a purchaser who need not intrust a servant with liquor or the laying out of money. Enquire of Colonel THOMAS LOWRY, in Flemington, New Jersey, or to the **PRINTER**.

August 22, Saturday: In The Pennsylvania Packet:

WANTED, FOUR or five **NEGRO** MEN, strong and trained to the farming business. If some of them have been overseers or superintendants on a plantation, or else employed in hunting, they would be most agreeable, and if they have families, wives or children, all will be purchased together. For further information apply to the **Printer**.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

THE owner of a stray grey Horse, advertised in The Pennsylvania Packet, is desired to prove his property, pay charges and take him away within four weeks, otherwise he will be sold by JAMES VAUX.

Wanted to purchase, a good **Negro** Wench, from eighteen to twenty-five years of age; she must understand plain cooking and house work. If to be sold on terms of freedom by far the most agreeable. Enquire of the **Printer**.

August 27, Thursday: In The Pennsylvania Packet:

WANTED TO PURCHASE, A GOOD **Negro** Wench, from eighteen to twenty five years of age; she must understand plain cooking and house work. If to be sold on terms of freedom by far the most agreeable. Enquire of the **Printer**.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

September 5, Saturday: The British landed at Clark's Cove and put New Bedford to the torch. Nearly all the shipping, 20 shops, and 22 houses were destroyed.⁴¹

In The Pennsylvania Packet:

TO BE SOLD, A LIKELY healthy **Negro** Wench, with two male children. For particulars enquire of the **Printer**.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

September 8, Tuesday: In The Pennsylvania Packet:

TO BE SOLD, AN exceeding good **Negro** Man, regularly brought up to the ship chandlers business, and sold for want of employ; Enquire of the **Printer**.

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41. Since the William C. Taber House at 363 Main Street in New Bedford is said to date to this year, it might appear that its construction had not as yet been completed.



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September 12, Saturday: In The Pennsylvania Packet:

TO BE SOLD, A LIKELY healthy **Negro** Wench, with two male children. For particulars enquire of the **Printer**.

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September 14, Monday: Benjamin Franklin was selected to be sent to France as American minister.

September 22, Tuesday: In The Pennsylvania Packet:

WANTED in exchange for a likely healthy **Negro** BOY, about sixteen years of age, who has been bred to farming and rides well, a **Negro** WENCH that is sober and honest, used to house work, and fond of children. Enquire of the **Printer**.

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FRANKLIN

October 22, Thursday: In The Pennsylvania Packet:

WANTED to Purchase, A likely young **Negro** WENCH. Enquire of the **Printer**.

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FRANKLIN

December 5, Saturday: In The Pennsylvania Packet:

WANTED, A LIKELY young **NEGRO** MAN. Any person having such a one to dispose of, may be informed of a purchaser by enquiring of the **Printer**.

SLAVERY

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December 8, Tuesday: In The Pennsylvania Packet:

To be SOLD for want of employ, A LIKELY **NEGRO** BOY, about twenty years of age, works well at almost every branch in the tanning business, very active, strong and healthy, and remarkably good tempered. Enquire of the **Printer**.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

December 10, Thursday: In The Pennsylvania Packet:

WANTED, SIX **NEGRO** FELLOWS, from sixteen to thirty years of age. Whoever has such to dispose of, may be informed of a purchaser by applying to the **Printer**.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN

December 22, Tuesday: In The Pennsylvania Packet:

TO BE SOLD, TWO stout, likely **NEGRO** MEN: One about twenty eight years of age, is a good carter and wood cutter, and very suitable for a farmer: The other about twenty four years of age, is very capable of town and country work, or of waiting on a gentleman. Enquire of the **Printer**.

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1779

[Benjamin Franklin](#) was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to France.⁴² At ten years of age, [Napoleone di Bonaparte](#) obtained a place at the French military academy at Brienne. This was due in part to the lad's evident abilities, but it was also due in part to the relentlessness of the Buonaparte family of Corsica's social climbing — climbing which had included his mother's adultery with the Comte de Marbeuf, that island's French military governor.

42. Plenipotentiary means full of it. It's a nice word.



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1780

[Benjamin Franklin](#) appointed [John Paul Jones](#) to command the *Alliance*.



And in this year Franklin opinioned that “The rapid progress **true** science now makes occasions my regretting sometimes that I was born too soon.”



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1782

[Benjamin Franklin](#) signed the preliminary articles of peace.⁴³

43. These would not be finalized, and Americans would continue to be regarded by Brits as renegade Brit subjects, which would be one of the reasons for the War of 1812.

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1783

April: [Benjamin West](#) was in the process of preparing a commemorative painting for the Treaty of Paris, and had worked up the figures of the American negotiators, [John Jay](#), John Adams, [Benjamin Franklin](#), [Henry Laurens](#), and [William Temple Franklin](#), when the British commissioners refused to pose. The painting would never be completed:



READ THE FULL TEXT

During the peace negotiations between the United States and Great Britain, [Jay](#) would propose that “the subjects of his Britannic Majesty shall not have any right or claim under the convention, to carry or import, into the said States any [slaves](#) from any part of the world; it being the intention of the said States entirely to prohibit the importation thereof.” The response of the British negotiator, Fox, would be to point out that “If that be their policy, it never can be competent to us to dispute with them their own regulations.” No such proviso would appear in the final treaty, presumably because it was considered unnecessary.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: During the peace negotiations between the United States and Great Britain in 1783, it was proposed by Jay, in June, that there be a proviso inserted as follows: “Provided that the subjects of his Britannic Majesty shall not have any right or claim under the convention, to carry or import, into the said States any slaves from any part of the world; it being the intention of the said States entirely to prohibit the importation thereof.”⁴⁴ Fox promptly replied: “If that be their policy, it never can be competent to us to dispute with them their own regulations.”⁴⁵ No mention of this was, however, made in the final treaty, probably because it was thought

44. Sparks, *DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE*, X. 154.

45. Fox to Hartley, June 10, 1783, as quoted in Bancroft, *HISTORY OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES*, I. 61. Cf. Sparks, *DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE*, X. 154, June 1783.



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unnecessary.

In the proposed treaty of 1806, signed at London December 31, Article 24 provided that "The high contracting parties engage to communicate to each other, without delay, all such laws as have been or shall be hereafter enacted by their respective Legislatures, as also all measures which shall have been taken for the abolition or limitation of the African slave trade; and they further agree to use their best endeavors to procure the co-operation of other Powers for the final and complete abolition of a trade so repugnant to the principles of justice and humanity."⁴⁶

This marks the beginning of a long series of treaties between England and other powers looking toward the prohibition of the traffic by international agreement. During the years 1810-1814 she signed treaties relating to the subject with Portugal, Denmark, and Sweden.⁴⁷ May 30, 1814, an additional article to the Treaty of Paris, between France and Great Britain, engaged these powers to endeavor to induce the approaching Congress at Vienna "to decree the abolition of the Slave Trade, so that the said Trade shall cease universally, as it shall cease definitively, under any circumstances, on the part of the French Government, in the course of 5 years; and that during the said period no Slave Merchant shall import or sell Slaves, except in the Colonies of the State of which he is a Subject."⁴⁸ In addition to this, the next day a circular letter was despatched by Castlereagh to Austria, Russia, and Prussia, expressing the hope "that the Powers of Europe, when restoring Peace to Europe, with one common interest, will crown this great work by interposing their benign offices in favour of those Regions of the Globe, which yet continue to be desolated by this unnatural and inhuman traffic."⁴⁹ Meantime additional treaties were secured: in 1814 by royal decree Netherlands agreed to abolish the trade;⁵⁰ Spain was induced by her necessities to restrain her trade to her own colonies, and to endeavor to prevent the fraudulent use of her flag by foreigners;⁵¹ and in 1815 Portugal agreed to abolish the slave-trade north of the equator.⁵²

46. AMERICAN STATE PAPERS, FOREIGN, III. No. 214, page 151.

47. BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS, 1815-6, pages 886, 937 (quotation).

48. BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS, 1815-6, pages 890-1.

49. BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS, 1815-6, page 887. Russia, Austria, and Prussia returned favorable replies: BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS, 1815-6, pages 887-8.

50. BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS, 1815-6, page 889.

51. She desired a loan, which England made on this condition: BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS, 1815-6, pages 921-2.

52. BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS, 1815-6, pages 937-9. Certain financial arrangements secured this concession.



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May/August: In early May, Reykjanesryggur erupted off Iceland.⁵³ On June 8th, the Laki (Lakagigar) basalt fissure of Iceland began to erupt. A quarter of the people in Iceland would die. According to Professor John A. Day's *THE BOOK OF CLOUDS* (Silver Lining Books, 2002), [Friend Luke Howard](#)'s fascination with clouds was kindled by this period in which the skies of the Northern Hemisphere were laden with dust and ash from the eruptions of Iwaki crater and Asama Yama on the island of Honshu and Aoga-Shima on the island of Izu in [Japan](#) and of Reykjanesryggur off the coast and the Laki basalt fissure on the mainland of Iceland, a period termed the "Great Fog."

[William Cowper](#) would in 1785 in *THE TASK* describe the "dim and sickly eye" of this summer as "portentious, unexampled, unexplained." The smell of sulfur was everywhere. As far as this poetic "unexplained" went, [Benjamin Franklin](#) would in 1785 prepare a paper for the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, suggesting that this might be the result of unusual volcanic activity.

July 11, Friday: For some time during the first half of July in this summer, the heat in the English midlands had been stifling—in fact the hottest ever recorded—as a sultry haze enveloped everything. The sun was seen as blood red, and even at midday was casting a red glow. On this day the wife of Matthew Boulton, Anne, was found floating face down in a pool at Soho, apparently a victim of heat stroke. —Although the cause of this weather event would not until later be ascertained, there had been a massive volcanic eruption in Iceland.⁵⁴

September 19, Friday: At 1:00P.M. a taffeta balloon constructed by Etienne Montgolfier ascended into the sky above the royal palace of Versailles. This manmade craft carried the first Earth beings to leave the planet by means of such assistance: a sheep appropriately named Montauciel, with a duck and a rooster (names not found in the record). The craft landed eight minutes later in the forest of Vaucresson, a distance of a few kilometers. All three of the space travellers survived; Montauciel was found munching on straw. Approximately 100,000 humans with nothing much else of importance on their schedule, including [Benjamin Franklin](#), amused themselves in witnessing this epochal event.

53. According to Thordarson, Thomas & Self, S. "The Laki (Skaftar Fires) and Grimsvotn eruptions in 1783-1785." *Bulletin of Volcanology*. Volume 55, pages 233-263, this was probably one of the events known to volcanologists as the Laki and Grimsvotn eruptions. Soufrière on St. Vincent would blow in 1812, Mayon in the Philippines would blow in 1814, but these would become almost as pop-tarts popping up in a toaster when Tambora in Indonesia would blow in 1816, as it would be by far the most powerful volcanic blast since the Santorini volcano on island of Thera in the Aegean Sea blew its top in 1,628 BCE. All but 26 of the 12,000 Sumbawa islanders would lose their lives. We would have a mild taste of this volcano weather, in our own lives, in the series of cool summers after 1991 when Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines would blow its top — remember?

54. [Benjamin Franklin](#), noticing what he termed a "dry fog" interfering with the rays of the sun, may very well have been the first person who would think to connect such weather phenomena with volcanic eruptions. The eruptions were of Iwaki crater on the island of Honshu in Japan in December 1782, and of Asama Yama on the island of Honshu in [Japan](#) and Skaptar Jökul in Iceland during 1783. Soufrière on St. Vincent would blow in 1812, Mayon in the Philippines would blow in 1814, but these would become almost as pop-tarts popping up in a toaster when Tambora in Indonesia would blow in 1816, as this would be by far the most powerful volcanic blast of the past 10,000 years. All but 26 of the 12,000 Sumbawa islanders would lose their lives. We would have a mild taste of this volcano weather, in our own lives, in the series of cool summers after 1991 when Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines would blow its top — remember?



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1784

[Benjamin Franklin](#) devised the first bifocals. Although he urged the French to adopt Daylight Savings Time, they were unimpressed by such a concept.



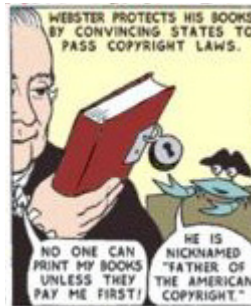
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1785

[Noah Webster, Jr.](#) fulminated in defense of the western land claims of Connecticut, in a contest with Pennsylvania. The state lost this particular contest but would, eventually, win some “Western Reserve” lands. He declined an offer from George Washington that he tutor his stepchildren, explaining that writing was his “principal pleasure.” During this year and the following one he would be traveling extensively to further copyright legislation, while lecturing and selling copies of his publications to make money.



His travels would take him to New Haven, New-York, Baltimore, Virginia, and South Carolina. He would meet not only Washington but also Mrs. Aaron Burr, [Thomas Paine](#), and [Benjamin Franklin](#). While in New-York he perfected his scheme for a phonetic alphabet — Franklin in particular would be enthusiastic about this.

[Benjamin Franklin](#) noticed what he termed a “dry fog,” filtering the rays of the sun, and connected this with volcanic eruptions. The eruptions had been Mount Asama in [Japan](#) and Skaptar Jökul in Iceland. Franklin may have been the first to correlate this drop in temperature with volcanic dust in the atmosphere.⁵⁵

Franklin returned to America and was chosen President of Pennsylvania. He resumed writing on the memoirs or AUTOBIOGRAPHY which had been laid aside in 1771. 

55. Soufrière on St. Vincent would blow in 1812, Mayon in the Philippines would blow in 1814, but these would become almost as pop-tarts popping up in a toaster when Tambora in Indonesia would blow in 1816, as it would be by far the most powerful volcanic blast since the Santorini volcano on island of Thera in the Aegean Sea blew its top in 1,628 BCE. All but 26 of the 12,000 Sumbawa islanders would lose their lives. We would have a mild taste of this volcano weather, in our own lives, in the series of cool summers after 1991 when Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines would blow its top — remember?



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Antoine-Auguste Parmentier embarked on a campaign to persuade the French to rely upon the [potato](#). King Louis XVI allowed him to plant potatoes on a hundred abandoned acres outside Paris, and he kept the field under heavy guard. Then, one night, this cunning fellow allowed this guard to go off duty — and so of course as expected the local peasants sneaked over and stole his entire crop, to plant on their own farms. He persuaded the king to throw a banquet at which only potatoes were served, and persuaded [Marie Antoinette](#) to put potato blossoms in her hair. What an operator! [Benjamin Franklin](#) attended that banquet.

Humphry Marshall, cousin of [William Bartram](#) and the younger [John Bartram](#), who had a large arboretum at Marshallton in Chester County, Pennsylvania, in this year published a catalog *ARBUSTRUM AMERICANUM* in which he accounted for many of the species in his collection.

BOTANIZING

Beginning in this year [André Michaux](#) and his son [François André Michaux](#) were making their initial tour of the US, not only introducing plants from France and her colonies but also setting up nurseries from which they might export American plants to France. In southeastern North America they encountered wild populations of Cherokee rose, which were believed to be native. (The plant appears to have come to North America with early Spanish explorers or settlers, as it is native to China, and had been cultivated in Moslem countries. Similarly, when William Penn acquired Penn's Woods from the Indians, he found they were already cultivating the peach, native to Persia, in their gardens.) This visit would continue into the year 1796.



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1786

[Benjamin Franklin](#) was re-elected as President of Pennsylvania.





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1787

Organization was begun following a paper given by Dr. Benjamin Rush at the home of [Benjamin Franklin](#), entitled, “An Inquiry into the Effects of public punishment upon criminals and upon society.” Although the Quakers have always had a deep influence in Philadelphia, the organization would by no means be limited to Quakers. Dr. Rush for instance was a Unitarian, and Franklin wasn’t much of any religion. The President of the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons for its first 40 years would be an Episcopal Bishop, William White.⁵⁶

Since [Franklin](#) might be termed the grandfather of electroshock therapy on the basis of his early suggestion that persons suffering from insanity be shocked into sanity by the application of electricity, I will insert the following item here: in this year Dr. John Birch made the experiment of administering electroshock to a popular singer who was suffering from melancholia — after daily treatments for a month, he recorded, the singer was able to fulfil his engagements that summer “with his usual applause.”

Dr. Benjamin Rush was a member of the “Convention of Pennsylvania for the Adoption of the Federal Constitution.”

In this year Virginia was repealing its incorporation of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Fear of powerful and wealthy churches would induce the Virginia legislature to routinely refuse to incorporate any churches,

56. For those who wish to read more, there are two books by Dr. Negley Teeters of Temple University: THEY WERE IN PRISON, a history of the PA Prison Society, and THE CRADLE OF THE PENITENTIARY. Prior to this point, prison as punishment was not known. The motivation of the experiment was to create a substitute for corporal and capital punishment. This group promotes correctional reform and social justice to this day, although now it deems itself the Pennsylvania Prison Society.

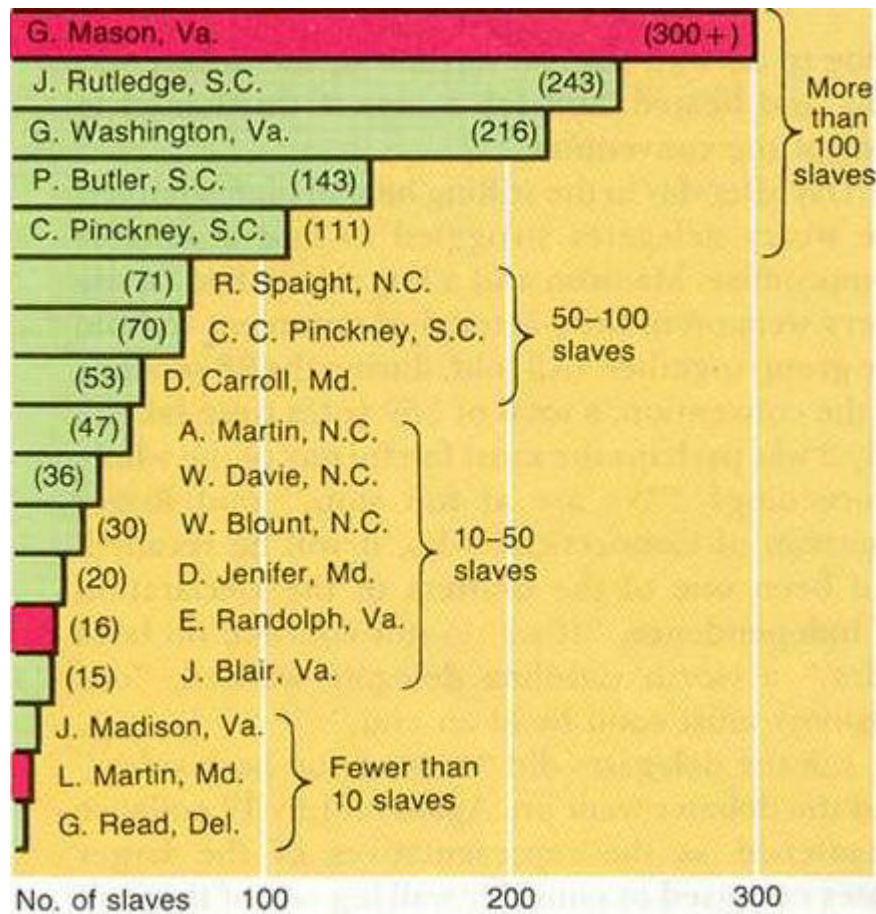
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seminaries, or religious charities whatever. Such provisions for [separation of church and state](#) would make their way into the US federal constitution and would continue through a succession of Virginia constitutional revisions, into the 21st Century.

Franklin was again reelected President of Pennsylvania and went as delegate to the Philadelphia convention for the framing of a Federal Constitution. Here is an indication of the lifestyles of the people who attended this convention. Note that George Mason of Virginia, J. Rutledge of South Carolina, and George Washington of Virginia were three of the largest slaveholders in North America, and that in all, 17 delegates to this convention owned the lives of some 1,400 human beings:





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Franklin, who owned slaves and acted as a slave-trader in Philadelphia out of his print-shop, went to the constitutional convention in part as the official representative of the anti-slavery cause — and never once raised this vital issue. Fifty years later, when the sealed proceedings would be disclosed to the American public and it would be revealed that he had betrayed us in this fundamental respect, there would be the greatest outrage at his conduct, and a debate would begin which would be germane to the origin of our civil warfare, a debate as to whether [the federal Constitution](#) was a pact with Satan which ought to be dissolved. That is to say, the activities (or lack of activities, for he was possibly already on opium at the time) of Franklin at the constitutional convention would lead directly to the foundation of the Northern Disunionist faction. But he spent his valuable time at this important convention arguing for banal nonce items such as having several executives rather than one and one legislature rather than several. The more important stuff, that he was supposed to be talking about, was precisely what the guy wasn't talking about. As a practical Pennsylvania politician he had found it was sometimes useful to ally with the local [Quakers](#), if this helped him neutralize the Brit influence, and we may observe in the following quotation from his AUTOBIOGRAPHY not only this government's general attitude toward people who have been pacified but also this "antislavery delegate" Franklin's attitude toward people who have been negrofied:

Ben Franklin's "Autobiography"

One afternoon, in the height of this public quarrel, we met in the street. "Franklin," says he, "you must go home with me and spend the evening; I am to have some company that you will like;" and, taking me by the arm, he led me to his house. In gay conversation over our wine, after supper, he told us, jokingly, that he much admir'd the idea of Sancho Panza, who, when it was proposed to give him a government, requested it might be a government of blacks, as then, if he could not agree with his people, he might sell them. One of his friends, who sat next to me, says, "Franklin, why do you continue to side with these damn'd Quakers? Had not you better sell them? The proprietor would give you a good price." "The governor," says I, "has not yet blacked them enough." He, indeed, had labored hard to blacken the Assembly in all his messages, but they wip'd off his coloring as fast as he laid it on, and plac'd it, in return, thick upon his own face; so that, finding he was likely to be negrofied himself, he, as well as Mr. Hamilton, grew tir'd of the contest, and quitted the government.

We can get a glimpse, in the above, of how it would come to be that Dr. Franklin could go off to the Constitutional Convention in 1787 as the designated representative of the civil rights people of his day — and then, precisely 50 years later, when the articles of secrecy the delegates had sworn to had expired, it would be discovered that this politician had betrayed the people he was supposed to be representing by uttering not one single word at any time during that convention in opposition to the "peculiar institution" of chattel slavery.⁵⁷ [James Madison](#) took very detailed minutes throughout the Convention, but they were subject to a secrecy

READ MADISON'S NOTES

conspiracy to keep the electorate in the dark, with a sworn duration period of precisely 50 years, which was adhered to by all participants. Madison had turned over his notes on the Convention to George Washington, who kept them at Mt. Vernon, and Madison's notes would not see the light of day until 1845. No member of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 would publish any account of the Convention's important deliberations until two years after the death the last member of the Constitutional Convention, Madison, when the notes of Luther Martin of [Maryland](#) and of Robert Yates of New York would be published in 1838 as SECRET PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION, 1787.

NOTES OF ROBERT YATES



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When Madison's records were opened on schedule, there was the greatest outrage. We felt totally betrayed. A Northern disunion party of sorts originated, and would constitute one of the causes of the frictions leading eventually to the US Civil War. We found out, belatedly, suddenly, that our Franklin had gone to the convention in part as the representative of the anti-slavery position, and —old, terminally ill, possibly already under the influence of opium, desiring some peace in his time— he had simply sold us out. Our guy hadn't even so much as **raised** the central issue of American slavery for **discussion**. We were so surprised, here we've got this slavemaster guy who used to keep the unwanted surplus slaves of his friends and business associates in a pen behind his print shop in Philadelphia, offering their bodies for sale to the highest bidder, and we trust him and we go and send him off to our constitutional convention to be our spokesperson against slavery — and we're so surprised and we feel so betrayed fifty years after the fact! There's now a book out that alleges that Ben more than any other human being was responsible for the American Revolutionary War. Per the book this was allegedly based upon his resentment at having been being fired as the colonial postmaster general, and publicly humiliated and scorned in Whitehall, on irrefutable charges having to do with the stealing of other people's correspondence. Well, I don't know about that issue — but, if I had to select out one American citizen who, more than any other, was responsible for the bloodshed of the US Civil War, I think I'd nominate Founding Father [Benjamin Franklin](#) for the honor. Well, maybe not. Anybody want to attempt to make a case for Nat Turner? Roger Taney?

[Slavery](#) is never directly mentioned in the US Constitution, although the document explicitly regard people coming into the nation from Africa to constitute cargo rather than to constitute prospective citizens. Also,

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other persons. (Art. I, Sec. 2)

57. Yes, children, it was our trusted and revered Founding Father [Benjamin Franklin](#), as much as any single American, who caused the bloodletting of our Civil War. Was the guy on drugs during this convention? —No, we don't know for certain sure that he began his heavy use of opium before the year after this one. The only drug we can be quite certain he was on at this point, besides fatheadedness, was racism.

*Son of so-and-so and so-and-so, this
so-and-so helped us to gain our independence,
instructed us in economy,
and drew down lightning from the clouds.*

Incidentally, in using the trope “peculiar institution” today we tend to make an implicit criticism of enslavement. Not so originally! In its initial usages, to refer to slavery as “peculiar” was not in any way to attack it but rather proclaim it to be defensible. “Peculiar,” in this archaic usage, indicated merely that the legitimacy of the system was based not upon any endorsement by a higher or more remote legal authority, but based instead upon the “peculiar conditions and history” of a particular district of the country and a particular society and a particular historically engendered set of customs and procedures and conventions. This trope went hand in hand with the Doctrine of States Rights, and went hand in hand with the persistence of the English common law.



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This is usually telegraphed by some comment such as “Our founding fathers believed that black people were subhuman, and evaluated them as $\frac{3}{5}$ ths of a human being.” That would have been bad enough, but this section is open to another, more accurate, and more pejorist, interpretation. Consider the key words here, “Representatives ... shall be apportioned” in the light of the end of this paragraph, which assigns the number of representatives each state would have until the first census could be taken, and ask yourself the question “So, how many representatives does each state initially get in the US Congress? The formula that was used is that representation was proportional to population, except that only 60% of the slaves were counted. Representatives represent those who elect and re-elect them. Blacks, free white children, and free white women were not allowed to cast ballots. The proper critical question to ask of this passage would not be, Why were slaves counted at only $\frac{3}{5}$ ths, when free white children and free white women were counted as whole units? The question would be, Why were they counted at all? Their inclusion in the census only served to inflate the representation of the free citizens of the slave-holding states. It certainly did nothing to promote the representation of the slaves in Congress. It could easily be demonstrated that the political interests of the free white men who were casting ballots had a significant amount of overlap in that period with the political interests of free white children and free white women, but it would be significantly harder to demonstrate a significant amount of overlap between the interests of [slaveholders](#) and the interests of their slaves. Of the actual voters in slave-holding states, how many held the same political opinions as the slaves? It might be a good guess that the answer is, close to zero. So why were these voters allowed extra representation, as if they could speak for 60% of the slaves? If we want to make a slogan of it, we shouldn't be saying that the founding fathers considered a slave to be $\frac{3}{5}$ ths of a person. We should be saying that they considered a slave a nonperson who increased someone else's, the possessor's, political worth by 60%. Bear in mind that what we are considering here is an era in which voting rights and property rights were still conceptually entangled — simply because in any event only men of property were entitled to cast a ballot.

Why $\frac{3}{5}$ ths? —Because on an average you can only get about $\frac{3}{5}$ ths as much work out of a slave, through a motivational system primarily consisting of punishments and the threat of punishment, that you can get out of a free person, through a motivational system primarily consisting of rewards and the prospect of rewards! (Also, very practically, because both the North and the South were willing to compromise at $\frac{3}{5}$ ths whereas the northern colonies would never have entered the Union had Southern slaves been weighed at $\frac{5}{5}$ ths and the southern colonies would never have entered the Union had their slave property been weighed at $\frac{0}{5}$ ths.)

On the popular but quite incorrect interpretation of Art. 1 Sec. 2 of the US Constitution, whatever benefit a population received from being counted, the slave population was to receive but $\frac{3}{5}$ ths of that benefit. On a more accurate interpretation, the slave population was to receive no positive benefit at all, or was to receive a negative benefit, from being thus counted, for you will notice that the benefit that accrues from counting $\frac{3}{5}$ ths of the slave population is a benefit which is assigned to the free voting population of the same state, which is thus even more powerful — and even more capable of abusing those being held in captivity.

In a November 9, 2000 op-ed piece in the New York [Times](#), “The Electoral College, Unfair from Day One,” Yale Law School's Akhil Reed Amar would argue that intent of the Founding Fathers in creating the electoral college which was so perplexing us during the Bush/Gore presidential election, like their intent in creating the $\frac{3}{5}$ ths rule, had been to protect America's southern white men from the vicissitudes of majority rule:

In 1787, as the Constitution was being drafted in Philadelphia, James Wilson of Pennsylvania proposed direct election of the president. But James Madison of Virginia worried that such a system would hurt the South, which would have been outnumbered by the North in a direct election system. The creation of the Electoral College got around that: it was part of the deal that



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Southern states, in computing their share of electoral votes, could count slaves (albeit with a two-fifths discount), who of course were given none of the privileges of citizenship. Virginia emerged as the big winner, with more than a quarter of the electors needed to elect a president. A free state like Pennsylvania got fewer electoral votes even though it had approximately the same free population.

The Constitution's pro-Southern bias quickly became obvious. For 32 of the Constitution's first 36 years, a white slaveholding Virginian occupied the presidency. [Thomas Jefferson](#), for example, won the election of 1800 against John Adams from Massachusetts in a race where the slavery skew of the Electoral College was the decisive margin of victory.

The system's gender bias was also obvious. In a direct presidential election, any state that chose to enfranchise its women would have automatically doubled its clout. Under the Electoral College, however, a state had no special incentive to expand suffrage — each got a fixed number of electoral votes, regardless of how many citizens were allowed to vote.

With the assistance of abolitionist [Quakers](#), in this year the newly freed slaves of the city of Philadelphia formed a Free African Society. The society was intended to enable mutual aid and nourish the development of a cadre of black leaders. The immediate cause of organization of this Free African Society was that in this year the St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia had segregated its colored members from its white communicants. Blacks to the back: African worshippers were sent to the church's gallery. One Sunday as the African members knelt to pray outside of their segregated area they were actually tugged from their knees, so they understood that they needed to form this new society — and out of this came an Episcopalian group and a Methodist one. The leader of the Methodist group was Richard Allen, and from his group would derive in 1816 the African Methodist Episcopal denomination.






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Pennsylvania enacted a gradual emancipation act providing that no child born in Pennsylvania after March 1, 1780 should be a slave. (It would still be possible to purchase and sell slaves in Pennsylvania after the passage of this act, and in fact we can find frequent sale ads in Pennsylvania newspapers as late as 1820. Pennsylvania slaves could not, however, any longer be legally sold out of the state. Anyone who was a slave prior to the passage of this Gradual Emancipation Act was still a slave for life, even if he or she had been a mere newborn infant as of February 1780. Slaveholders could still sell the time of young people born to slave mothers after 1780, subject to the ban on out-of-state sales, until they reached the [manumission](#) age of 28. Therefore, as late as the 1830 census, Pennsylvania still sported some 400 slaves. There were many conflicts over enforcing the law, including with slaveholders who attempted to transport pregnant slaves to [Maryland](#) so that a child would be born a slave rather than born merely a servant until the age of 28. Slaveholders initiated arguments about whether the grandchildren as well as the children of slaves would be bound to serve until age 28. "Sojourning" slaveholders from other states would raise issues of the status of slaves brought into Pennsylvania.



"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

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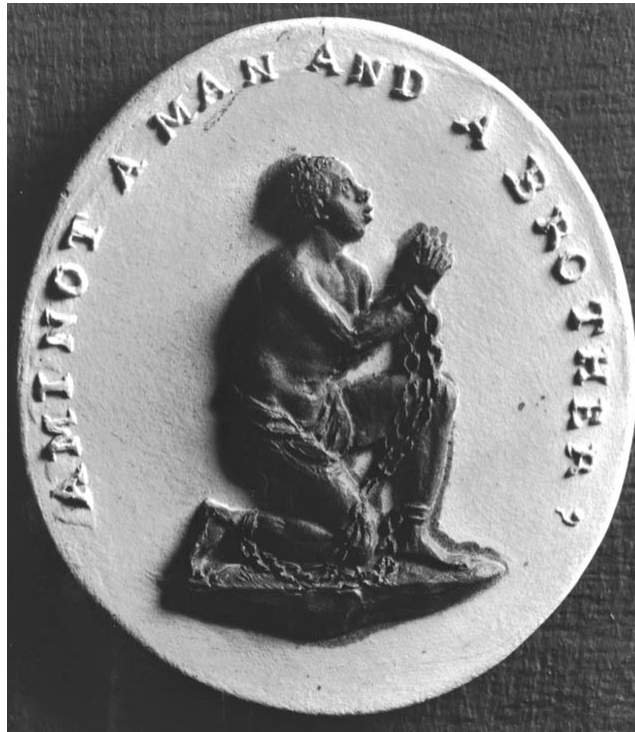
PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1788

A consignment of [Josiah Wedgwood](#)'s jasperware cameos was shipped to [Benjamin Franklin](#), and would be



worn by the white people of Philadelphia as medallions on bracelets, as hair ornaments, and used, in a gold mounting, as lids for snuff boxes:





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Having done a little good and much harm, the exceedingly wealthy slavemaster and former occasional incidental slavetrader (let's not dwell on this, shall we?) [Benjamin Franklin](#) retired from public life and published his AUTOBIOGRAPHY,



The AUTOBIOGRAPHY of course promulgates the very program WALDEN seeks to undercut – the obsessive drive for material comfort through technical mastery ... the building of worldly confidence by means of prudent method.

in which, as is pointed out discretely in its title BENJAMIN FRANKLIN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY 1706-1757,

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he prudently mentions only events of the year 1757 and earlier.⁵⁸



Although he identified Franklin as a crucial source of the materialism and commercial spirit of his countrymen, Thoreau perhaps gained from Franklin's AUTOBIOGRAPHY some important hints about how to shape a life story for the purpose of instruction.





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If you have seen allegations concerning [antisemitic](#) remarks supposedly made by George Washington and [Benjamin Franklin](#) at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, warning all Americans against the insidious influence of the Jews, please take into consideration that the primary authoritative source at present for the proceedings, Max Farrand (ed.) RECORDS OF THE FEDERAL CONVENTION, rev. ed., 4 volumes (New Haven and London, 1966, 1987) makes no reference to such antisemitic remarks by either the rural [slaveholder](#) Washington or the urban [slaveholder](#) Franklin. Washington's tolerant attitude toward Jews is evidenced by a letter he would write to the leader of the [Touro Synagogue](#) of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) on August 17, 1790, in which he would say that the government of the US "gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance," and requires only that those who live under the protection of the government "demean [which is to say, conduct] themselves as good citizens" (Edwin Gaustad, A RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF AMERICA [NY, 1966], page 125). (Since this congregation of Jews was, among other things, investing in the [international slave trade](#), here the definition of what constituted demeaning oneself as a good citizen was a quite lax one, involving merely the generation of profits.) As for Franklin's attitude toward American Jews in 1787, in this very next year he contributed to a fund to help pay off the debt of the Jewish Congregation Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia. The "text" of Franklin's alleged remarks originated in a magazine [Liberation](#) on February 3, 1934 and then began to be reprinted by any number of Nazi and antisemitic groups. Charles A. Beard, in the [Jewish Frontier](#) for March 1935, demonstrated this to have been a fabrication. The matter was further investigated by Julian P. Boyd, in the [Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography](#), [LXI](#) (1937), 233-234, and he concurred that the text was an entire fabrication. For a more recent treatment, refer to Claude-Anne Lopez's "Franklin, Hitler, Mussolini, and the Internet" as part of her MY LIFE WITH BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (Yale UP, 2000, pages 3-16).

58. His biographer Carl Van Doren has referred to this AUTOBIOGRAPHY as "that masterpiece of memory and honesty," although, myself, I would prefer to reserve such unabashed honorifics for the performance of Charles Van Doren on the "\$64,000 Question" rigged TV quiz show.



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1789

[Benjamin Franklin](#) began the heavy use of [opium](#) to control the pain from his gallstone.



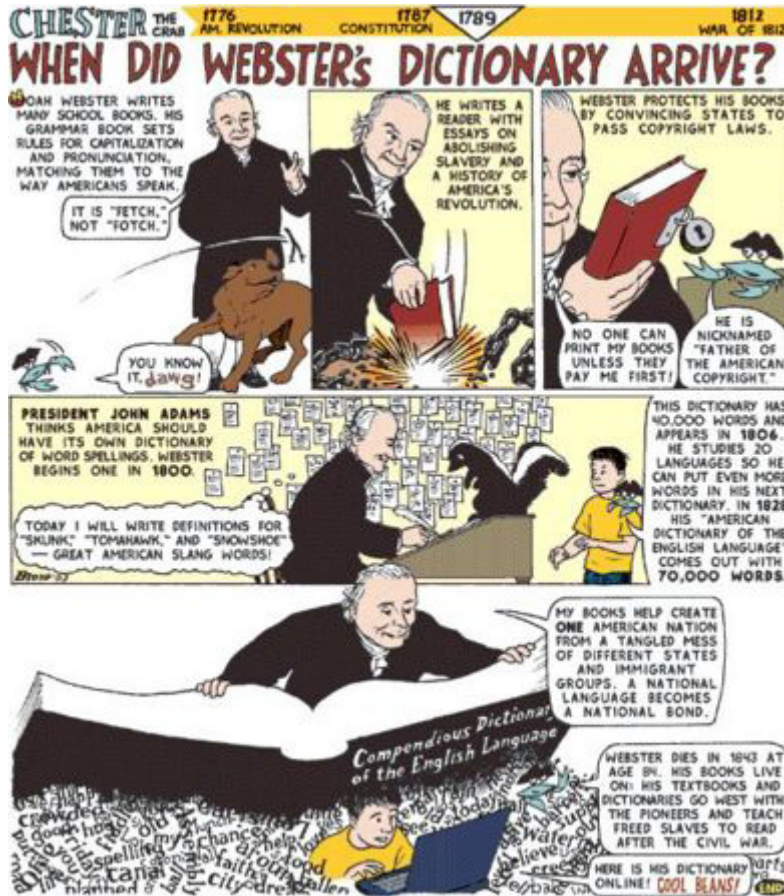
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May: In Boston, [Noah Webster, Jr.](#)'s DISSERTATIONS ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE; WITH NOTES. TO WHICH IS ADDED, AN ESSAY ON A REFORMED MODE OF SPELLING, WITH DR. FRANKLIN'S ARGUMENTS ON THAT SUBJECT, dedicated of course to [Benjamin Franklin](#).



He then returned to his family in Hartford, Connecticut, where he would practice law, write, and serve on the city council. He would author two books and place several articles in the [Courant](#) noting that epidemics of [influenza](#) (catarrh) followed shortly after volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, such as those of 1698, 1757, 1761, and 1781.

November 13, Friday: [Benjamin Franklin](#) wrote to a friend, "In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes."



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1790

February 11, Thursday: In New-York, [James Madison](#) addressed the federal congress in regard to the funding proposals of Alexander Hamilton.

The federal congress was petitioned by the [Religious Society of Friends](#), as the Continental Congress had been petitioned, to end our nation's participation in the [international slave trade](#).

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: It is doubtful if Congress of its own initiative would soon have resurrected the matter, had not a new anti-slavery weapon appeared in the shape of urgent petitions from abolition societies. The first petition, presented February 11, 1790,⁵⁹ was from the same interstate Yearly Meeting of Friends which had formerly petitioned the Confederation Congress.⁶⁰ They urged Congress to inquire "whether, notwithstanding such seeming impediments, it be not in reality within your power to exercise justice and mercy, which, if adhered to, we cannot doubt, must produce the abolition of the slave trade," etc. Another Quaker petition from New York was also presented,⁶¹ and both were about to be referred, when Smith of South Carolina objected, and precipitated a sharp debate.⁶² This debate had a distinctly different tone from that of the preceding one, and represents another step in pro-slavery doctrine. The key-note of these utterances was struck by Stone of Maryland, who "feared that if Congress took any measures indicative of an intention to interfere with the kind of property alluded to, it would sink it in value very considerably, and might be injurious to a great number of the citizens, particularly in the Southern States. He thought the subject was of general concern, and that the petitioners had no more right to interfere with it than any other members of the community. It was an unfortunate circumstance, that it was the disposition of religious sects to imagine they understood the rights of human nature better than all the world besides." In vain did men like Madison disclaim all thought of unconstitutional "interference," and express only a desire to see "If anything is within the Federal authority to restrain such violation of the rights of nations and of mankind, as is supposed to be practised in some parts of the United States." A storm of disapproval from Southern members met such sentiments. "The rights of the Southern States ought not to be threatened," said Burke of South Carolina. "Any extraordinary attention of Congress to this petition," averred Jackson of Georgia, would put slave property "in jeopardy," and "evinced to the people a disposition towards a total emancipation." Smith and Tucker of South Carolina declared that the request asked for

59. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 1st Congress, 2d Session, pages 1182-3.

60. JOURNALS OF CONGRESS, 1782-3, pages 418-9. Cf. above, pages 56-57.

61. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 1st Congress, 2d Session, page 1184.

62. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, pages 1182-91.



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"unconstitutional" measures. Gerry of Massachusetts, Hartley of Pennsylvania, and Lawrence of New York rather mildly defended the petitioners; but after considerable further debate the matter was laid on the table.

The very next day, however, the laid ghost walked again in the shape of another petition from the "Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery," signed by its venerable president, [Benjamin Franklin](#). This petition asked Congress to "step to the very verge of the power vested in you for discouraging every species of traffic in the persons of our fellow-men."⁶³ Hartley of Pennsylvania called up the memorial of the preceding day, and it was read a second time and a motion for commitment made. Plain words now came from Tucker of South Carolina. "The petition," he said, "contained an unconstitutional request." The commitment would alarm the South. These petitions were "mischievous" attempts to imbue the slaves with false hopes. The South would not submit to a general emancipation without "civil war." The commitment would "blow the trumpet of sedition in the Southern States," echoed his colleague, Burke. The Pennsylvania men spoke just as boldly. Scott declared the petition constitutional, and was sorry that the Constitution did not interdict this "most abominable" traffic. "Perhaps, in our Legislative capacity," he said, "we can go no further than to impose a duty of ten dollars, but I do not know how far I might go if I was one of the Judges of the United States, and those people were to come before me and claim their emancipation; but I am sure I would go as far as I could." Jackson of Georgia rejoined in true Southern spirit, boldly defending slavery in the light of religion and history, and asking if it was "good policy to bring forward a business at this moment likely to light up the flame of civil discord; for the people of the Southern States will resist one tyranny as soon as another. The other parts of the Continent may bear them down by force of arms, but they will never suffer themselves to be divested of their property without a struggle. The gentleman says, if he was a Federal Judge, he does not know to what length he would go in emancipating these people; but I believe his judgment would be of short duration in Georgia, perhaps even the existence of such a Judge might be in danger." Baldwin, his New-England-born colleague, urged moderation by reciting the difficulty with which the constitutional compromise was reached, and declaring, "the moment we go to jostle on that ground, I fear we shall feel it tremble under our feet." Lawrence of New York wanted to commit the memorials, in order to see how far Congress might constitutionally interfere. Smith of South Carolina, in a long speech, said that his constituents entered the Union "from political, not from moral motives," and that "we look upon this measure as an attack upon the palladium of the property of our country." Page of Virginia, although a slave owner, urged commitment, and Madison again maintained the appropriateness of the request, and suggested that "regulations



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might be made in relation to the introduction of them [i.e., slaves] into the new States to be formed out of the Western Territory." Even conservative Gerry of Massachusetts declared, with regard to the whole trade, that the fact that "we have a right to regulate this business, is as clear as that we have any rights whatever."

Finally, by a vote of 43 to 11, the memorials were committed, the South Carolina and Georgia delegations, Bland and Coles of Virginia, Stone of Maryland, and Sylvester of New York voting in the negative.⁶⁴ A committee, consisting of Foster of New Hampshire, Huntington of Connecticut, Gerry of Massachusetts, Lawrence of New York, Sinnickson of New Jersey, Hartley of Pennsylvania, and Parker of Virginia, was charged with the matter, and reported Friday, March 5. The absence of Southern members on this committee compelled it to make this report a sort of official manifesto on the aims of Northern anti-slavery politics. As such, it was sure to meet with vehement opposition in the House, even though conservatively worded. Such proved to be the fact when the committee reported. The onslaught to "negative the whole report" was prolonged and bitter, the debate pro and con lasting several days.⁶⁵

64. HOUSE JOURNAL (reprinted 1826), 1st Congress, 2d Session, I. 157-8.

65. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 1st Congress, 2d Session, pages 1413-7.



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April 17, Saturday evening: [Benjamin Franklin](#) died and became the recipient of a magnificent state funeral. His many eulogists in France, where the King was a prisoner in the gilded cage of the Tuileries, contested with one another in fulsomeness, and an ideologist of a historical theory of progress, the economist Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot, *baron de l-Aulne*, managed to out-fulsome everyone with his declamation that Franklin had “snatched the lightning from the skies and the sceptre from tyrants”⁶⁶:

Thoreau was aware that Franklin had become an American myth, a kind of archetype of self-help. In A WEEK he had ironically referred to Franklin as the prototype for an entry in a biographical dictionary:

Son of ——— and ———. He aided the Americans to gain their independence, instructed mankind in economy, and drew down lightning from the clouds.

Here he uses Franklin to illustrate that biography is essentially a personalized version of mythology.



His bones are in the Christ burying ground at 5th and Arch streets in Philadelphia, if that’s worth anything to you. Interestingly, the famous epitaph Franklin himself composed is not on the original tombstone, because he instructed that it not be; it has, however, been added as a plaque only in a later timeframe. The copy of said

66. Coined in 1778 at the latest, the same year in which Jean-Antoine Houdon had done the famous marble bust of Franklin, this was in its most widely distributed and memorized form *Eripuit cælo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis* and became for many Americans of the 19th Century without a classical education the only Latin they knew.

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epitaph which he himself had written out in his own hand in 1784 is now at the Library of Congress.

Epitaph written 1728.

The Body of
B. Franklin Printer,
(Like the Cover of an old Book
Its Contents torn out
And strip of its Lettering & Gilding)
Lies here, Food for Worms.
But the Work shall not be lost;
For it will, (as he believ'd) appear once more,
In a new and more elegant Edition
Revised and corrected,
By the Author.

HDT

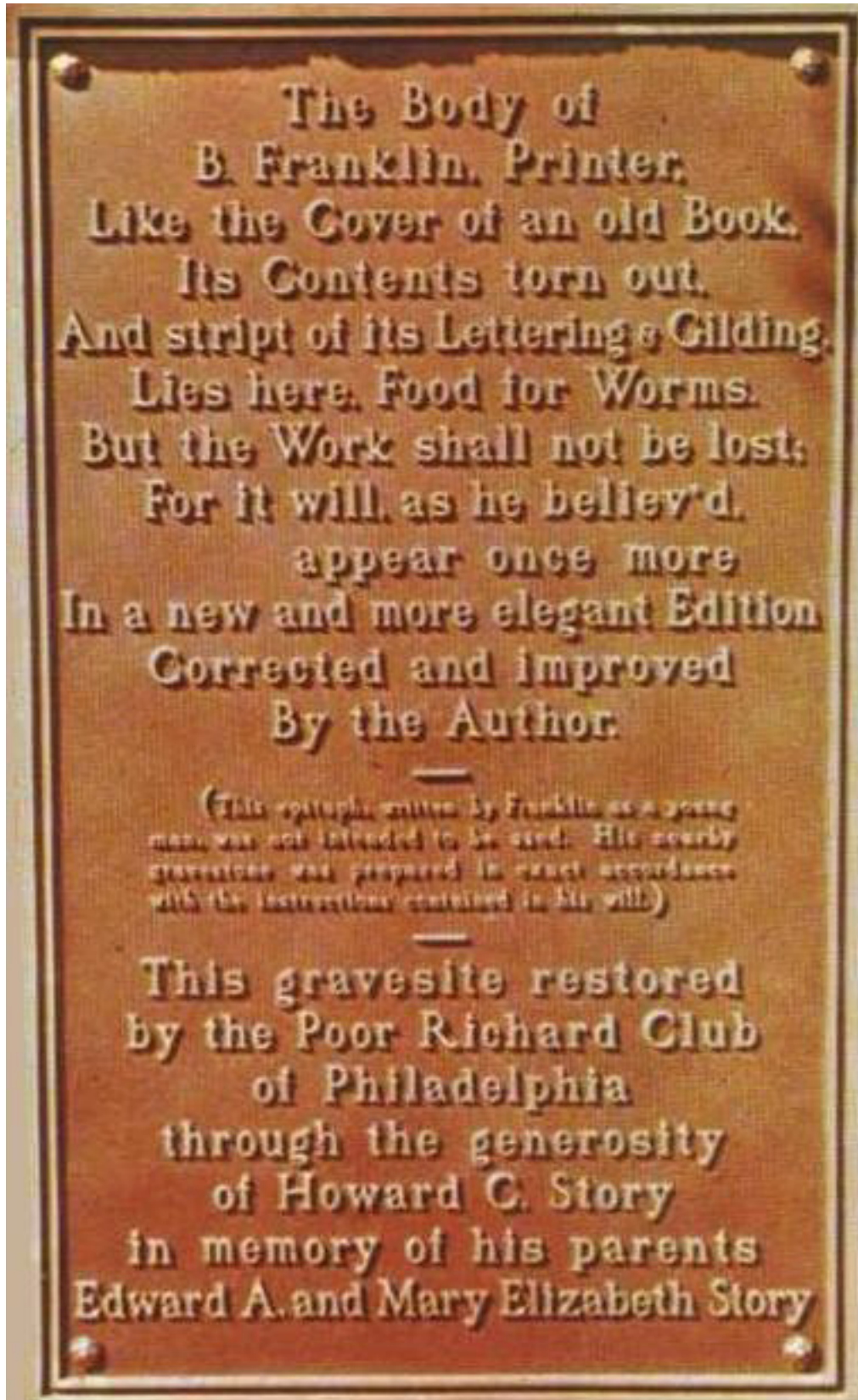
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Famous Last Words:



“What school is more profitably instructive than the death-bed of the righteous, impressing the understanding with a convincing evidence, that they have not followed cunningly devised fables, but solid substantial truth.”



– A COLLECTION OF MEMORIALS CONCERNING DECEASED MINISTERS, Philadelphia, 1787

“The death bed scenes & observations even of the best & wisest afford but a sorry picture of our humanity. Some men endeavor to live a constrained life — to subject their whole lives to their will as he who said he might give a sign if he were conscious after his head was cut off — but he gave no sign Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows.”

—Thoreau’s JOURNAL, March 12, 1853

1681	Headman Ockanickon of the Mantas	the Mantas are the “Leaping Frogs” group of the Lenape tribe	<i>“Be plain and fair to all, both Indian and Christian, as I have been.”</i>
1692	Massachusetts Bay colonist Giles Corey	being pressed to death for refusing to cooperate in his trial for witchcraft	<i>“Add more weight that my misery may be the sooner ended.”</i>
1777	John Bartram	during a spasm of pain	<i>“I want to die.”</i>
1790	Benjamin Franklin	unsolicited comment	<i>“A dying man can do nothing easy.”</i>
1793	Louis Capet, King Louis XVI of France	being beheaded in the Place de la Concorde	<i>“I die innocent of all the crimes laid to my charge; I Pardon those who have occasioned my death; and I pray to God that the blood you are going to shed may never be visited on France.”</i>
1793	Jean-Paul Marat	reviewing a list of names	<i>“They shall all be guillotined.”</i>
1793	<u>Citizen Marie Antoinette</u>	stepping on the foot of her executioner	<i>“Pardonnez-moi, monsieur.”</i>
<i>... other famous last words ...</i>			



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October 27, Wednesday: In The Pennsylvania Gazette:

FOR **SALE**, A Young **Negro** Wench, Can cook, wash, iron, and do all kinds of house-work. Enquire of the Printers.

SLAVERY

FRANKLIN





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1791

A continuation of [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s Massachusetts Magazine, or, Monthly Museum of Knowledge and Rational Entertainment subsequent to his death, that would be prepared at Boston, initially by Isaiah Thomas and Ebenezer T. Andrews (1789-1793), Ezra W. Weld (1794), Samuel Hill (1794), William Greenough (1794-1795), Alexander Martin (1795-1796), Benjamin Sweetser (1796), and James Cutler (1796), as edited by Isaiah Thomas, Thaddeus Mason Harris (1795-1796), and William Biglow (1796).



Henry Thoreau would extract from the February/March 1791 issue (Issue #3) the Reverend [James Freeman](#)'s "Description of Cape Cod, and the County of Barnstable" for CAPE COD, pages 119-20 and 175.

March: 1st appearance in print of [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s self-description, in French in Paris in March 1791, as *MEMOIRES DE LA VIE PRIVEE*.... This would be translated in London in 1793 as *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE LATE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D. ... ORIGINALLY WRITTEN BY HIMSELF, AND NOW TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH*, and would then see publication in part in America as of 1794. Mistitled today as *THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN*, this self-description consists of an initial five chapters he had composed in England in 1771, with material he had added 13 years later in Paris (1784-1785) and material he had added in 1788 after he had returned to the United States. Franklin put the best face upon or was silent about much of his early life and revealed no details of his dealings after 1757 while he was still merely 51 years old.



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There is a significant reference to the mode established by [Franklin](#)'s AUTOBIOGRAPHY on the very first page of the first chapter of [WALDEN](#). There [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote of how it is that

WALDEN: In most books, the **I**, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained; that, in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were any body else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience.

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and used precisely the terms that would be calculated to remind his reader of the immensely popular [Franklin](#)'s writerly legitimization on page 44 of his AUTOBIOGRAPHY:



I shall indulge the Inclination so natural in old Men ... to thank God for his Vanity among the other Comforts of Life.

William C. Johnson, Jr. has analyzed this reference as follows:⁶⁷

[Where] Franklin attests humility in confessing he enjoys vanity, and suggesting that it may be "productive of Good," Thoreau is self-indulgent out of active principle – the a priori workings of subjectivity (with a pun on "I"/"Egotism") implicit in any text. With Franklin, vanity is useful for promoting benign self-interest, which in turn calls for a method of virtue. With Thoreau, egotism, the very existential condition of selfhood, is the given ground of experience out of which text, reading, and understanding proceed.

67. William C. Johnson, Jr. WHAT THOREAU SAID: WALDEN AND THE UNSAYABLE. Moscow IO: U of Idaho P, 1991



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1793

[Benjamin Franklin](#)'s self-description, that had first appeared, posthumously, in French in Paris in March 1791, as *MEMOIRES DE LA VIE PRIVEE...*, in this year surfaced in London in translation, as THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE LATE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D. ... ORIGINALLY WRITTEN BY HIMSELF, AND NOW TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH. It would not see publication in America for another year and even then would appear only in part. Mistitled today as THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, this self-description consists of an initial five chapters he had composed in England in 1771, with material he had added 13 years later in Paris (1784-1785) and material he had added in 1788 after he had returned to the United States. Franklin put the best face upon or was silent about much of his early life and revealed no details of his dealings after 1757 while he was still merely 51 years old.

January 3, Thursday: On [Nantucket Island](#), [Friend](#) Lucretia Coffin received her membership in the [Religious Society of Friends](#) (that is, she was born on this date as a "birthright" member of a [Quaker](#) family).

A native of the Island of Nantucket, – of the Coffins and Macys on the father's side, and of the Folgers on the mother's; through them related to Dr. Franklin.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Born in 1793. During childhood was made actively useful to my mother, who, in the absence of my father, on a long voyage, was engaged in mercantile business, often going to Boston and purchasing goods in exchange for oil and candles, the staple of the island. The exercise of women's talents in this line, as well as the general care which devolved upon them in the absence of their husbands, tended to develop their intellectual powers and strengthen them mentally and physically.

LUCRETIA MOTT

AN 1884 BIOGRAPHY



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1794

1st appearance in print from an American press of material from [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s self-description, which had originally appeared in French in Paris in March 1791 as *MEMOIRES DE LA VIE PRIVEE...*, and then in London in 1793 as THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE LATE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D. ... ORIGINALLY WRITTEN BY HIMSELF, AND NOW TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH. Mistitled today as THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, this consists of an initial five chapters composed in England in 1771, with material added 13 years later in Paris (1784-1785) and material added in 1788 after he had returned to the United States. Franklin put the best face upon or was silent about much of his early life and revealed no details of his dealings after 1757 while he was still merely 51 years old: THE WORKS OF THE LATE DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: CONSISTING OF HIS LIFE WRITTEN BY HIMSELF: TOGETHER WITH ESSAYS HUMOROUS, MORAL, & LITERARY, CHIEFLY IN THE MANNER OF THE SPECTATOR. NY: Printed by Tiebout & Obrian for H. Gain, V. Nutter, R. McGill, T. Allen, J. Read, E. Duyckinck, & Co. and Edward Mitchell no. 9, Maiden Lane.



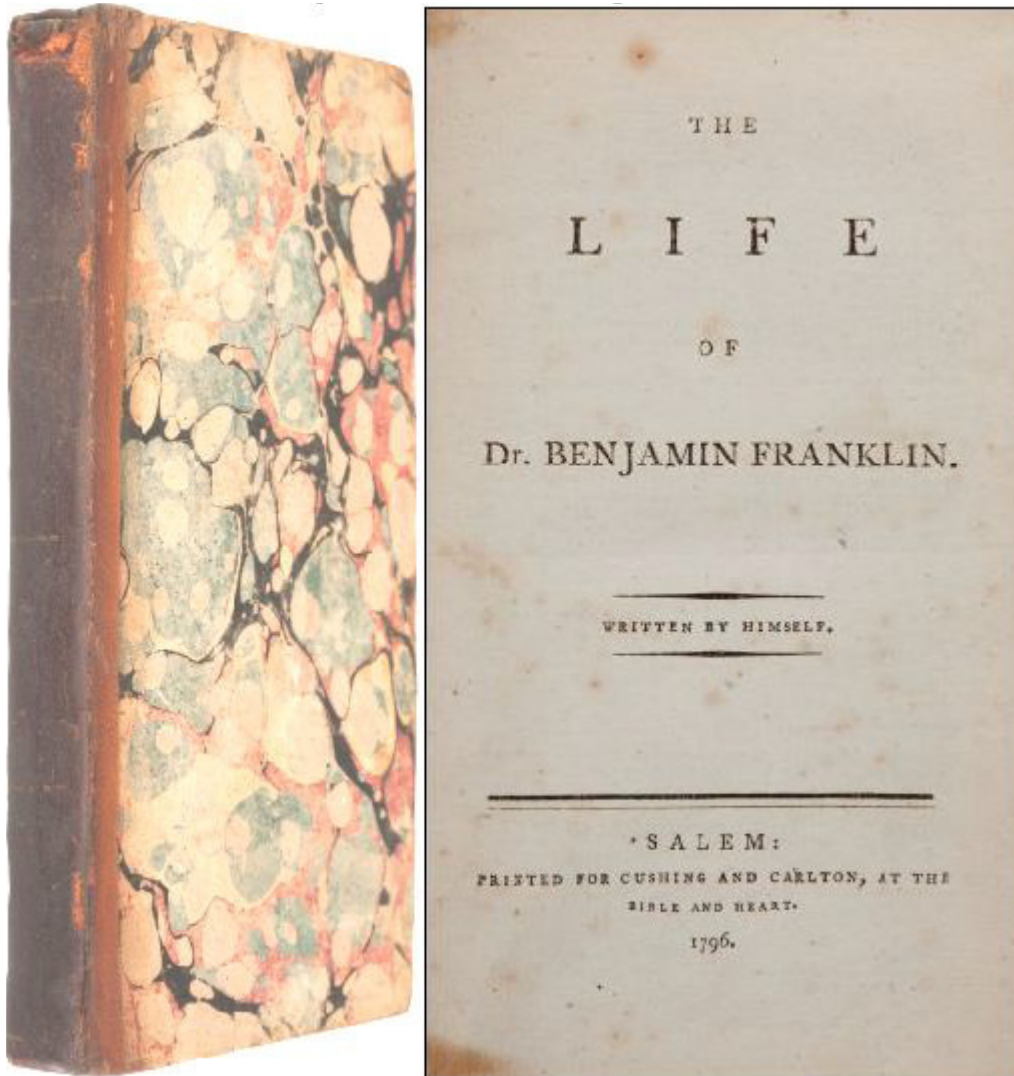
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1796

[Henry Thoreau](#)'s copy of THE LIFE OF [DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN](#). WRITTEN BY HIMSELF had been printed in this year at Salem for Cushing and Carlton, at the Bible and Heart:



This edition's preface includes a letter by Richard Price. It also includes, as pages 82-126, a continuation about Franklin's life composed by Henry Steuber, and as pages 127-132, "Extracts from the last will and testament of Dr. Franklin."

DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

It is very significantly different from every "Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin" book you have ever



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perused! –To grasp what Thoreau knew, and what Thoreau did not know, of the life of Franklin, one must consult this book that he had on his bookshelf in his garret in Concord.

[Edward Gibbon](#)'s autobiography, MEMOIRS OF MY LIFE:



I see that you are turning a broad furrow among the books, but I trust that some very private journal all the while holds its own through their midst. Books can only reveal us to ourselves, and as often as they do us this service we lay them aside. I should say read Goethe's Autobiography by all means, also Gibbon's Haydon the Painter's- & our Franklin's of course; perhaps also Alfieris, Benvenuto Cellini's, & De Quincey's Confessions of an Opium Eater - since you like Autobiography.

I think you must read Coleridge again & further - skipping all his theology - i.e. if you value precise definitions & a discriminating use of language. By the way, read De Quincey's reminiscences of Coleridge & Wordsworth.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

VITTORIO ALFIERI

BENVENUTO CELLINI

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN





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1798

News items relating to the development of ELECTRIC WALDEN technology:

ELECTRIC WALDEN

- It was in about this year that Paris became fascinated by a rear-projection lantern show presented by a Belgian who denominated himself “Robertson.” This “Phantasmagoria” presented to an audience seated in a darkened room such images as a head of [Benjamin Franklin](#) slowly transforming itself into a skull (*sick transit*, as somebody once commented).
- Aloys Senefelder, a young playwright of München, needed a way to distribute copies of his handwritten scripts to actors for rehearsals without printing, which he could not afford. While preparing a laundry list for his mother he noticed that he could write upon any dry but wettable surface with greasy ink or crayon, and then wet this surface, and when he pushed a roller, of the special sort of printing [ink](#) which since 1793 he had been developing, across the surface of smooth Solenhofer limestone which he had prepared, the greasy ink would stick to the greasy writing but not to the watery surface. He could press a sheet of dry paper to the surface, pull off a positive print, apply his grease roller, press yet another sheet of paper and obtain yet another image, and so forth for as many copies as he had actors, without ever having to go to a print shop and set up sticks of type! He himself termed this new technology “chemical printing.” Not only that, but the new process could reproduce his handwriting, and could reproduce his drawings, whatever he needed to distribute. At the time the only porous wettable surface which was available was a porous stone, and so this process came to be known at first as “lithography.” What Senefelder had invented, of course, was the entire industry of offset printing and photolithography. Plus, have you ever done a mimeograph stencil?



All succeeding methods of planographic printing, including the modern offset press, are based upon Senefelder’s remarkable discovery.

HISTORY OF THE PRESS



“Among all the manufactures which -for the mental and mechanical skill required in their prosecution, the remarkable steps by which they have attained their present rank, and the influence which they exert on society generally- claim our attention and admiration, none perhaps is more striking than the **manufacture of a book.**”



— George Dodd’s DAYS AT THE FACTORIES

HISTORY OF THE BOOK



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May: Publication of the 1st brief version of the Reverend Thomas Robert Malthus's influential essay AN ESSAY ON THE PRINCIPLE OF POPULATION...



It is observed by Dr. Franklin, that there is no bound to the prolific nature of plants or animals, but what is made by their crowding and interfering with each other's means of subsistence.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

The Reverend Malthus's discussion of the potential for increase in size of a population as compared to the available resources would provide important ideas for Charles Darwin and others. He noted among other things that since populations grew geometrically they are going to be generally limited by the food supply, since this can increase only arithmetically.



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1799

[Sylvestre François Lacroix](#)'s *ELÉMENTS DE GÉOMÉTRIE* (most of his texts would be created for use in his own courses). He was voted into the newly formed Institut National des Sciences et des Arts.

With [Sir Joseph Banks](#), the Count von Rumford helped establish the Royal Institution of Great Britain and choose the chemist Sir Humphrey Davies as lecturer. He established the Rumford medals of the Royal Society, and established the Rumford professorship at [Harvard College](#), and established the Rumford medals of the

NEW "HARVARD MEN"

American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He would even have the balls to propose himself for the post of supervisor of the Military Academy of the United States of America at West Point, the military position which had once almost been betrayed by its commanding general, Benedict Arnold. However, when in a more caloric mood: the townhouse of the Count's friend Mary Palmerston in London was so disgusting due to smoke and cinders from its fireplaces that she feared to sit on its furniture in her gown, so he designed an improved fireplace and chimney with a narrower and shallower aperture and a smoke shelf to inhibit the gusts of wind that came down the chimney and scattered soot, and wrote "On the Salubrity of Warm Rooms," "On the management of Fire and the Economy of Fuel," and "Chimney Fireplaces, with Proposals for Improving Them to Save Fuel, to Render Dwelling-Houses more Comfortable and Salubrious, and Effectually to Prevent Chimneys From Smoking."



Unlike the stove designed by his compatriot [Benjamin Franklin](#), the Count's improvements worked and did not need later to be tinkered with.⁶⁸ On a subsequent screen is a cartoon sketch done on June 12, 1800 in the Count's presence, as he warmed his buttocks before one of his fireplaces:

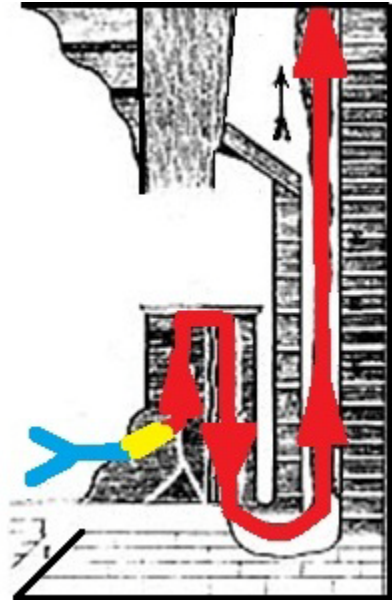
68. In today's world everyone seems to have heard of Franklin's stove but no-one seems to be able to retain the fact that this stove design could not be made to function effectively and had to be abandoned. For instance, in one of the many egregious errors and misconstructions of Daniel J. Boorstin's inane *THE CREATORS: A HISTORY OF THE HEROES OF THE IMAGINATION* (New York: Random House, 1992, page 578), he declares that the Franklin stove has "not been much improved since." (We note also that at an equivalent level of inanity but at much greater harm to our national spirit, the one reference Boorstin makes in his many, many pages to the previous existence of American slaves and American [slavery](#) is an assertion that Franklin petitioned for its abolition.) Franklin was a "patriot" and the key thing is that America wants to remember him as a contributor. No-one seems to remember the Rumford fireplace, in spite of the fact that it worked very well indeed, throwing abundant heat into a room while sucking the smoke up the chimney, because Rumford must be classed as an "expatriate and traitor" and therefore should not be remembered as a contributor.

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And here, by way of contrast, is the design of the celebrated Franklin Stove which –Americans pretend not to know– did not function well and had to be abandoned:



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1800

 January 12, Sunday or 13, Monday: “Parson” Mason Locke Weems wrote to his publisher, Matthew Carey, in Philadelphia, a few weeks after the death of George Washington:

Washington, you know, is gone! Millions are gaping to read something about him. I am very nearly prim^d & cock^d for ‘em. 6 months ago I set myself to collect anecdotes of him. You know I live conveniently for that work. My plan! I give his history, sufficiently minute – I accompany him from his start, thro the French & Indian & British or Revolutionary wars, to the Presidents chair, to the throne in the hearts of 5,000000 of People.

He would prepare for publication an 80-page patriotic pamphlet, initially titled A HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND DEATH, VIRTUES AND EXPLOITS, OF GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON (also, THE LIFE AND MEMORABLE ACTIONS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, GENERAL AND COMMANDER OF THE ARMIES OF AMERICA). This bio of the founding father who would not make himself our king would become one of the first great best-sellers in American literature — yet this soi-disant “Parson” would persist in referring to himself as a “ragged Mother Carey’s chicken.” This initial telling did not contain the story of the cherry tree about which little Georgie couldn’t lie, a confabulation which would not appear until the 5th edition. (One wonders how many American liars that ingenious fable has interrupted, or enabled, over the years!)

Weems would continue with seriously flawed short biographies of [Benjamin Franklin](#),⁶⁹ General Francis Marion, and Friend [William Penn](#).

69. Incidentally, our best evidence that [Franklin](#) did not pun to John Hancock, at the signing of the [Declaration of Independence](#), that if they did not hang together they would assuredly hang separately, is the fact that in the collection of mostly spurious anecdotes presented by Mason Locke Weems, this particularly specious anecdote had not yet made its appearance.



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Largest Scale Global Weather Oscillations 1800-1817

	Southern Oscillation	South Pacific current reversal
1800	absent	cold La Niña
1801	absent	cold La Niña
1802	very strong	cold La Niña
1803	very strong	warm El Niño very strong
1804	very strong	warm El Niño very strong
1805	absent	cold La Niña
1806	moderate	warm El Niño moderate
1807	moderate	warm El Niño moderate
1808	absent	cold La Niña
1809	absent	cold La Niña
1810	moderate	warm El Niño moderate
1811	absent	cold La Niña
1812	moderate +	warm El Niño moderate +
1813	absent	cold La Niña
1814	strong	warm El Niño strong
1815	absent	cold La Niña
1816	absent	cold La Niña
1817	moderate +	warm El Niño moderate +

The southern ocean / atmosphere “seesaw” links to periodic Indonesian east monsoon droughts, Australian droughts, deficient Indian summer monsoons, and deficient Ethiopian monsoon rainfall causing weak annual Nile floods. This data is presented from Tables 6.2-6.3 of Quinn, William H. “A study of Southern Oscillation-related climatic activity for AD 622-1900 incorporating Nile River flood data,” pages 119-49 in Diaz, Henry F. and Vera Markgraf, eds. EL NIÑO: HISTORICAL AND PALEOCLIMATIC ASPECTS OF THE SOUTHERN OSCILLATION. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992.

In February there was a classic winter New England “nor’easter” storm. [Benjamin Franklin](#) had theorized that the wintry northeast winds which, in New England, were often associated with rain and snow, generally caused a precipitation pattern which began in the south and flowed up the coast of the ocean. What he was noticing, we now understand, although of course in those days they weren’t aware of the jet stream and didn’t know how it dips into a meridional path off the shore here in winter months, is that these “nor’easters” are actually smaller counterclockwise systems embedded in a larger, steering flow.



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At any rate, after this particular storm a newspaper editor noted that the spat of weather they had just experienced was a perfect case fitting Founding Father Franklin's theorizing.

ENSO
WEATHER





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1802



Philipstal, the gent who had taken Robertson's a rear-projection lantern show known as the "Phantasmagoria" on tour in the British Isles, invited the woman who would become known as "Madame Tussaud" to move her exhibit of wax figures from Paris to his new "Grand Cabinet of Optical and Mechanical Curiosities" in [London](#). Madame Tussaud's waxworks appeared at the Lyceum, on Wellington Street. The three early simulations displayed along with the [Egyptian](#) relics which constituted the bulk of this exhibit (mummies and suchlike) would be, first, "automata," or early mechanical robots, second, tinted wax torso portraits such as had been popular among the nobles at the court of Louis XVI, and third, the "Phantasmagoria" projection device of "Robertson," capable of displaying such marvels as a skeletal Grim Reaper image slowly advancing toward an audience seated in a dark chamber on the other side of the screen, and the head of the deceased [Benjamin Franklin](#) as it slowly transformed itself into just another skull.

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1805

→ Benjamin West's "[Benjamin Franklin](#) Drawing Electricity from the Sky":



THE SCIENCE OF 1805

In 1767, fifteen years after the alleged incident, Joseph Priestly described, in HISTORY AND PRESENT STATE OF ELECTRICITY, what [Franklin](#) had actually claimed about his alleged kite experiment of 1752:

The Doctor, having published his method of verifying his



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hypothesis concerning the sameness of electricity with the matter of lightning, was waiting for the erection of a spire in Philadelphia to carry his views into execution, not imagining that a pointed rod of a moderate height could answer the purpose, when it occurred to him that by means of a common kite he could have better access to the regions of thunder than by any spire whatever. Preparing, therefore, a large silk handkerchief and two cross-sticks of a proper length on which to extend it, he took opportunity of the first approaching thunderstorm to take a walk in the fields, in which there was a shed convenient for his purpose. But, dreading the ridicule which too commonly attends unsuccessful attempts in science, he communicated his intended experiments to nobody but his son who assisted him in raising the kite.

The kite being raised, a considerable time elapsed before there was any appearance of its being electrified. One very promising cloud had passed over it without any effect, when, at length, just as he was beginning to despair of his contrivance, he observed some loose threads of the hempen string to stand erect and to avoid one another, just as if they had been suspended on a common conductor. Struck with this promising appearance, he immediately presented his knuckle to the key, and (let the reader judge of the exquisite pleasure he must have felt at that very moment) the discovery was complete. He perceived a very evident electric spark. Others succeeded, even before the string was wet, so as to put the matter past all dispute, and when the rain had wet the string he collected electric fire very copiously. This happened in June 1752, a month after the electricians in France had verified the same theory, but before he heard of anything they had done.

The evidentiary value of the above account in demonstrating that Franklin really did conduct such an experiment—since it is a mere relaying of an uncorroborated story once told by Franklin about himself, and since we know that the man sometimes made stuff up, and since we know that had such an experiment been conducted its outcome would likely have been unfortunate—is of course nil.




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1815



At this point the water-works at Fairmount, begun in 1812 to supply Philadelphia with water, were complete. As far back as 1764,  after the [yellow fever](#) had struck the city, [Benjamin Franklin](#) had advocated the necessity of supplying the city with adequate clean water, and in his will of June 23, 1789, had recommended that the city make an appropriation for that purpose. In 1797 water had been brought from Spring Mill Creek and from the Schuylkill by steam power, to be stored in tanks ready for use, but in 1812 these more efficient gravity-flow works had also been undertaken.

With the turning on of the Fairmount Waterworks, enough pressure became available to the water system of the city of Philadelphia that it would be able to attach fire hoses directly to its hydrants in order to produce fire-quenching streams of water (New-York would not achieve this level of water main pressure until its Croton Reservoir opened in 1842 and [Boston](#) would not achieve this until 1848).



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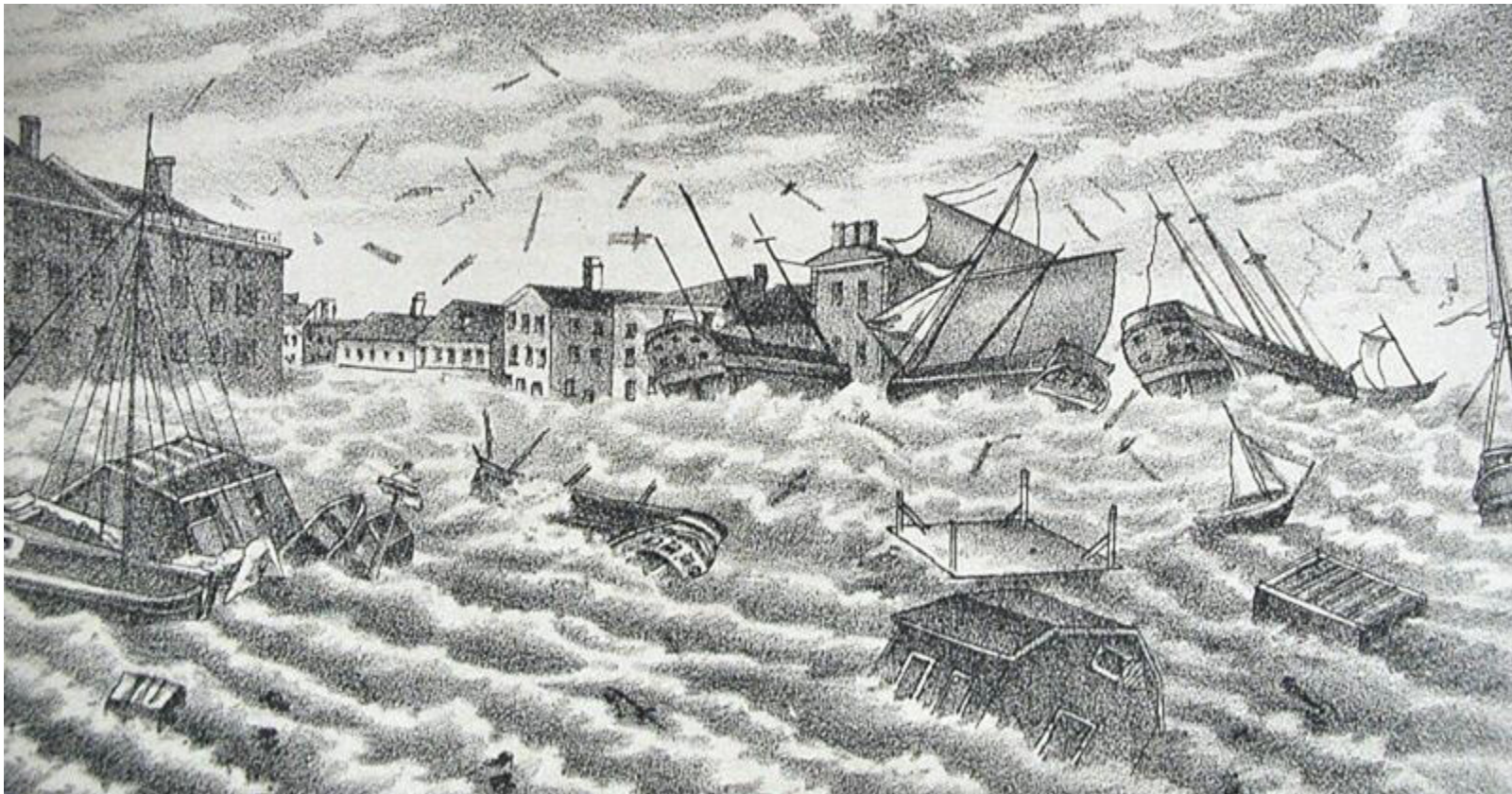
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September 23, Saturday: Unable to persuade his king Louis XVIII to appeal to the allies to rescind or modify their ultimatum, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, prince de Bénévvent resigned as Prime Minister of France.

During the 18th Century there had been some 15 violent storms sweeping across New England, but none of them approached the fury of the hurricane that hit the southern New England coastline at 9AM on this day, known as the "Great September Gale of 1815." The eye of the hurricane came ashore at Old Lyme in Connecticut and the greatest destruction was done along the path of the storm's "eastern quarter," such as in [Providence](#).



1815. The glad tidings of Peace were announced here February 12, and our streets were thronged with delighted men and women, and resounded with acclamations of joy. The town was brilliantly illuminated in the evening, and although it was intensely cold, the streets were thronged to a late hour by persons of both sexes and of all ages, and the sound of mirth resounded from almost every dwelling. Many, however, who had been carried along by this tide of rejoicing, had cause to mourn when the excitement had subsided, and the "sober second thought" of reflection had returned. They had speculated largely, when prices were high, and vast amounts were invested in merchandise, the value of which, on restoration of peace, "fell, like Lucifer, never to rise again." Many failures were the consequence; but to people



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at large, peace came as a blessing.

This year was signalized by the Great Storm and high tide. The storm commenced Sept. 22, and the wind was violent, and increasing through the night and the succeeding morning, many houses were unroofed, and other blown down. The tide on the 23d, rose to an extraordinary height, the gale from the South-East was of unparalleled severity, both combined, they drove the principal part of the shipping in the harbor from its moorings up the river against Weybosset bridge, which in short time gave way, and the whole was driven up and landed on the northern shore of the cove. A large sloop was left a considerable distance North of Great Point, now the site of the State Prison, and between that point and the upper part of the Canal basin, were upwards of thirty sail, of a burthen from 500 tons downwards. The water entirely filled the lower stories of the buildings in Market-street, west of the bridge, and a portion of the brick wall of the Washington Insurance building, in the third story, was broken in by the bowsprit of the ship Ganges, as she was driven rapidly by in the foaming current. A sloop of some 50 or 60 tons was driven across Weybosset-street, into Pleasant-street, where she grounded. The Baptist meeting-house, built for Rev. Mr. Cornell, near Muddy Dock, now Dorrance-street, was entirely destroyed. Many houses, stores and barns were swept from the wharves in South Water, Weybosset and some other streets, into the cove, where many of them were crushed to pieces. The water at the junction of Westminster and Orange-streets was at least six feet in depth. Two human beings only here lost their lives in this storm, which was matter of great wonder, when so many were perilled. No measures were taken to ascertain the damage done by the storm, but it was estimated at about a million of dollars.



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A large trunk of the public papers of former [Rhode Island](#) governor [Stephen Hopkins](#) were swept out of the house in which they were stored, and lost (Hopkins's house, which now stands adjacent to Benefit Street, at that time stood adjacent to what is now Main Street, within reach of the waters). By noon the storm had passed up into the wildernesses of the north and was breaking up, but the high winds had stalled the ebbing of the high tide, and then over these high waters came rushing the additional waters driven by the storm, pushing up Narragansett Bay and concentrating at the docks of Providence. First there had been the fury of the wind and then came the fury of the water:

Wind:

The vessels there were driven from their moorings in the stream and fastenings at the wharves, with terrible impetuosity, toward the great bridge that connected the two parts of the town. The gigantic structure was swept away without giving a moment's check to the vessel's progress, and they passed to the head of the basin, not halting until they were high up on the bank....

Water:

Stores, dwelling houses, were seen to reel and totter for a few moments, and then plunge into the deluge. A moment later their fragments were blended with the wrecks of vessels, some of which were on their sides, that passed with great rapidity and irresistible impetuosity on the current to the head of the cove, to join the wrecks already on the land.

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Some 500 buildings were destroyed in this city. The Indiaman *Ganges* was forced all the way up Westminster Street to Eddy Street, where its bowsprit pierced the 3rd story of the city's Market House.⁷⁰



In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Friend [Moses Brown](#) would be making a detailed tabulation of the various trees that had toppled in his yard. The salt spray was carried from the ocean 40 or 50 miles inland. Apples and other fruit were blown off the trees, the corn was injured, and fences and trees were prostrated. In particular the

70. Some 4-foot-long metal tubes jammed into the marshy soil and sediment layers at Succotash Marsh in East Matunuck, [Rhode Island](#) (at the west side of the ocean entrance of the [Narragansett Bay](#)) by Tom Webb of the Geological Sciences Department of [Brown University](#), have revealed that there has been a series of overwash fans created by storm tidal surges, indicating that seven category-three hurricanes have struck Narragansett lowlands in about the past millennium. The 1st such overwash fan that has been revealed dated to the period 1295-1407CE, the 2nd to the period of roughly the first half of the 15th Century, the 3rd to approximately 1520CE (give or take a few decades), and the 4th to the historic storm of the 14th and 15th of August, 1635. The 5th such overwash fan obviously dates specifically to this historic storm of September 23, 1815.

[NEW ENGLAND](#)

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original apple tree near Woburn MA of the Loammi Baldwin apple got knocked over:



At the time Captain [Paul Cuffe](#)'s ship was fortunately out of harm's way in New-York and Philadelphia.

In [Newport](#), [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) recorded in his journal that:

7th day 23 of 9 M / This forenoon we had the most severe Gale that Newport ever experienced - it commenced before day break to Rain Thunder & lighten, continued to increase gradually till a little before 9 OC when it suddenly increased & the tide rose with surprising velocity such as was never seen before - The wind & tide making such devastation of Vessels houses Stores & even lives as appalled all Skill to save. The destruction of houses was chiefly on the Long Wharf & on the Point - Andrew Allens wife, three children & a girl that lived with them were all in the house when it went off into the cove & they were all drowned - Over the Beach John Irish in attempting to save his boat was drowned - & two men who lived with Godfrey Hazard in trying to save their Sheep were also drowned. - Shocking was the Scene I have no powers to describe it, tho' at a more lesure



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Moment I intend to attempt a more full description Our cellar was full of Water, but we lost nothing of consequence. - We were humbly thankful it was no worse




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Many boats were destroyed at [Boston](#) wharves:



I recollect being engaged near my father's saw-mill handling lumber with my brothers [[Adin Ballou](#) was 12 years old ] when the stock of boards around us, piled up to season, began to be caught away by the rising wind and blown about strangely. We endeavored to pick them up and replace them for a while, but found ourselves borne along and almost lifted from the ground in spite of our utmost exertions. We were soon in danger of limb and life from the flying rubbish and lumber, and betook ourselves to a place of safety at the substantial farmhouse, which was built heavily and strong enough to resist the stoutest storm. The wind increasing, buildings began to be unroofed, smaller structures were moved out of place or completely demolished, apple and forest trees were upturned by the roots, and even the stoutest dwellings creaked and trembled before the mighty gusts that seemed to threaten destruction to everything that happened to be in their way.

The tempest, which began about 7 o'clock in the morning, reached its height at noon, when it was little else than a hurricane. Multitudes of people were filled with terror and consternation. I confess that I was, and hastening to my chamber, obtained what relief and composure I could from the unseen world by earnest supplication. I gained something of trust and calmness, but hardly enough to overcome all my fearful apprehensions, for there seemed to be no place of refuge from impending danger and my faith was not of the surest type.

When the storm subsided, the inhabitants of southern New England looked with amazement on the devastations it had caused. Inland the noblest timber lots were covered with prostrate trees and upturned earth, the finest orchards were laid waste, rail-fences, wood, and lumber were scattered far and wide, roads were rendered impassable by accumulated debris, and incalculable damage had been done to buildings on every hand, many of the lighter ones being wholly destroyed. In seaport towns and along the shore, still greater havoc, if possible had been wrought. The ocean rolled in upon the coast its mountainous waves, which, in thickly settled localities, inundated the wharves, streets, and exposed places of business, filled the cellars and lower stories of dwellings and warehouses near the water line, causing the occupants to flee for their lives, and destroying immense amounts of property that chanced to be within reach. The wind drove before it all sorts of sea-craft, even the largest vessels, sinking some, wrecking others, and landing many high on the beach, far away from tide-water. The remains of sloops and schooners, gradually dismantled and abandoned, appeared on the sand banks and along the coast for years, victims of the Storm-King's insatiate power. Such was the "great gale" of 1815, the like whereof has never been seen by New Englanders since the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock.



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Many of the trees on the Boston Common were blown down.

When, in [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#), Henry Thoreau would argue for the liberty to travel unnecessarily on the Sabbath, he was arguing against one of the pet projects of the very most prominent citizen of his town, Squire Samuel Hoar. For a story had it that when the great hurricane of 1815 had devastated the woodlands around [Concord](#), one old farmer exclaimed:

I wish the wind'd come on Sunday! -Sam Hoar would've stopped it.

[A WEEK](#): History has remembered thee; especially that meek and humble petition of thy old planters, like the wailing of the Lord's own people, "To the gentlemen, the selectmen" of Concord, praying to be erected into a separate parish. We can hardly credit that so plaintive a psalm resounded but little more than a century ago along these Babylonish waters. "In the extreme difficult seasons of heat and cold," said they, "we were ready to say of the Sabbath, Behold what a weariness is it." - "Gentlemen, if our seeking to draw off proceed from any disaffection to our present Reverend Pastor, or the Christian Society with whom we have taken such sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company, then hear us not this day, but we greatly desire, if God please, to be eased of our burden on the Sabbath, the travel and fatigue thereof, that the word of God may be nigh to us, near to our houses and in our hearts, that we and our little ones may serve the Lord. We hope that God, who stirred up the spirit of Cyrus to set forward temple work, has stirred us up to ask, and will stir you up to grant, the prayer of our petition; so shall your humble petitioners ever pray, as in duty bound -" And so the temple work went forward here to a happy conclusion. Yonder in Carlisle the building of the temple was many wearisome years delayed, not that there was wanting of Shittim wood, or the gold of Ophir, but a site therefor convenient to all the worshippers; whether on "Buttrick's Plain," or rather on "Poplar Hill."



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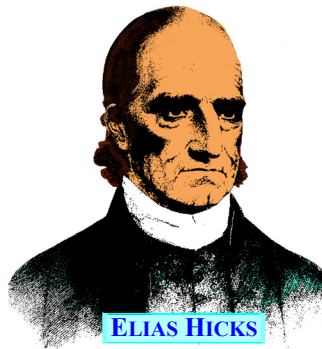
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Many of the local historians of [Concord](#), and many Thoreauvian scholars, have made this sort of connection. It is the sort of connection in which they deal, between one prominent citizen of Concord MA with prominent attitudes and another prominent citizen of Concord MA with prominent attitudes. It is, I might say, an easy association. But how many such historians and scholars know that when Thoreau would grow up in Concord in the following generation, and would take such attitudes, he was seconding the attitudes of the great Quaker preacher, [Elias Hicks](#)? For Hicks had pronounced in opposition to the so-called Blue Laws, laws which for instance entitled the Quakers of Philadelphia to stretch chains across the public street during their First Day silent worship in order to prevent the noise of the passage of carriages. For Hicks, First Day was just another day, of no greater or lesser holiness than any other weekday. He would come in from the fields, change his clothing, put on his gloves, and go off to Meeting for Worship on First Day just as he would come in from the fields, change his clothing, put on his gloves, and go off to Meeting for Worship on Fourth Day (Wednesday). But this was not merely a matter of preference for Friend Elias, any more than it was a matter of preference for Squire Hoar: it was a principle. Blue laws were laws, and laws were enacted by governments, and therefore such laws were infringements upon religion, sponsored by the state apparatus which should be allowed have no connection whatever with religion. In this direction lay a great danger, sponsored by the Squires of this world who would like nothing better than to be able to legislate the religious convictions of other people. Thus, when the Governor of New York issued a Thanksgiving Proclamation, Friend Elias was greatly alarmed, that he

*“has
by recommending a religious act
united the civil and ecclesiastical authorities,
and broken the line of partition between them,
so wisely established
by our enlightened Constitution,
which in the most positive terms
forbids
any alliance between church and state,
and is the only barrier
for the support of our liberty and independence.*

*For if that is broken down
all is lost
and we become the vassals of priestcraft,
and designing men,
who are reaching after power
by subtle contrivance
to domineer over the consciences
of their fellow citizens.”*



ELIAS HICKS

The terminology and the cadence was not Thoreauvian, but Thoreau's attitudes as proclaimed in [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) would be identical with this.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE



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Subsequent to this historic gale, and in consequence of it, [John Farrar](#), Hollis Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy at [Harvard College](#), who had since 1807 been maintaining and analyzing weather records in Cambridge, would be able to elaborate upon the insights of [Benjamin Franklin](#) into the nature of the “nor’easter” weather phenomenon by conceptualizing such hurricanes as “a moving vortex and not the rushing forward of a great body of the atmosphere” (he had noted not only the lagging times of arrival of the winds at Boston versus New-York and the wind’s opposite directionality, as had Franklin, but had also been able to analyze mathematically the veering of the wind as a fluid phenomenon).



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1829



July 4, Saturday: On an unusually uncelebratory 4th-of-July during which the most interesting item had been a “nondescript fish” which could be viewed for fourpence, a fight was staged between a challenger and “King Dick” (Richard Crafus or Richard Seaver) of [Boston](#)’s Negro Hill. Big Dick of course won easily.



He was a dancing-master by profession, and a peace-maker by practice. He is remembered by some old men as standing head and shoulders above his fellows, weight 300 pounds, with short open blouse, red jacket, little round-top hat, and was feared by all. He long since “shuffled off this mortal coil” but his stately figure may still be seen not a mile from his former residence.

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction (Volume 14, Number 379) carried a notice of a recent visit to the grave of founding father [Benjamin Franklin](#):

FRANKLIN’S GRAVE.

Captain Basil Hall, in his TRAVELS IN NORTH AMERICA, just published, says, “On the 12th of December, we made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Franklin – dear old Franklin! It consists of a large marble slab, laid flat on the ground, with nothing carved upon it but these words:–

**BENJAMIN AND DEBORAH
FRANKLIN.**

1790.

Franklin, it will be recollected, wrote a humorous epitaph for himself; but his good taste and good sense showed him how unsuitable to his living character it would have been to jest in such a place. After all, his literary works, scientific fame, and his undoubted patriotism, form his best epitaph. Still, it may be thought, he might have been distinguished in his own land by a more honourable resting-place than the obscure corner of an obscure burying-ground, where his bones lie indiscriminately along with those of ordinary mortals; and his tomb, already wellnigh hid in the rubbish, may soon be altogether lost. One little circumstance, however, about this spot is very striking. No regular path has been made to the grave, which lies considerably out of the road; but the frequent tread of visitors having pressed down the rank grass which grows in such places, the way to the tombstone is readily found without any guide.”

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1834



Joseph B. Felt's HISTORY OF IPSWICH, ESSEX AND HAMILTON explained that although the lightning rod had been invented by [Benjamin Franklin](#) (that had been in about 1749), at this point, although an entire span of human life had passed, this device had been but little used in any part of Ipswich — except on the old jail. By this year, although still none of the structures in either Essex or Hamilton were protected by lightning rods, yet there had been a grand sum total of merely seven installed in Ipswich. A likely reason for such inertia would have been the general Colonial sentiment that such devices testified to a reluctance to rely upon God's Providence, causing the electric fluid to deviate from its natural and direct course. By this point in time, however, a change was being accomplished in the public thinking, and such a Christian sentiment in opposition to the marvels of science and technology was coming to be generally condemned under the rubric "Mahommedan fatality."



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1837



The conspiracy of secrecy entered into by the founding fathers, not to discuss the work done at the Constitutional Convention for fifty years, expired. It was revealed that the founding fathers had not intended, in employing vague phrases such as “We the People,” that the protections would gradually be expanded until they included blacks, and Indians, and women.

Interest alone [by which was meant prosperity, was] the governing principle.

It was revealed, by the expiration of this oath of secrecy in regard to the machinations that had produced [the federal Constitution](#), that the president of the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of [Slavery](#), [Benjamin Franklin](#), had betrayed the American slave. During the course of the Constitutional Convention he had not so much as **brought the topic up for discussion**. The convention had simply capitulated to the American [slaveholders](#) — and the freedom of women of course never crossed anyone’s mind. The only consideration given to the fact that some Americans were being held in bondage was to allow those who were chaining them to cast more weighty votes than non-slaveholders –in their behalf– in all the national elections!



“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

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The Constitution of the United States of America was thus revealed to have been a “Covenant with Death and an Agreement with Hell,” to paraphrase ISAIAH 28:15 in the manner favored by abolitionists.⁷¹



What to do? —To replace the expired 50-year gag agreement on discussing the proceedings of the 1887 Constitutional Convention, Congress enacted a new gag rule that would effectively suppress any and all congressional debate on anything and everything having to do with the national slavery issue.

As the result of a Connecticut trial, *Jackson v. Bullock*, any **slave** brought into Connecticut from a slave state of the federal union would be considered to be immediately free. This followed the 1836 Massachusetts case of *Commonwealth v. Aves* which in turn followed the 1772 British case, *Somerset v. Stewart*. New York and Pennsylvania overrode the Somerset decision by statutory enactments, according to which Pennsylvania granted 9 months transit until 1847 and New York granted 9 months transit until 1841.

In this year the Reverend Horace Bushnell was warning America to protect its Anglo-Saxon blood from the

71. In a sense, the correct answer to the standard classroom question “What caused the Civil War?” would be “Uh, Ben Franklin?”

*Son of so-and-so and so-and-so, this
so-and-so helped us to gain our independence,
instructed us in economy,
and drew down lightning from the clouds.*

Repeat after me, class: “*Nobody ever does just one thing.*”

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immigrant tide.

[RACISM](#)

IRISH IBERIAN



ANGLO-TEUTONIC



NEGRO

The Reverend Hosea Easton, a black abolitionist, warned sensibly that doing away with human [slavery](#) in itself would not correct America's wrong, for after that it would still be necessary for the US's whites to overcome their color prejudice which made dusky skin "a mark of degradation."

One might suppose that the [La Amistad](#) slaves would, under such an arrangement, have been free the moment they set foot on Connecticut soil, but no, they had been brought there not from a [slave](#) state of our federal union but across the [Middle Passage](#) from Africa by way of Cuba, and perhaps they weren't really slaves in not having been legally enslaved, and therefore there were two significant considerations bearing upon whether this Connecticut law having to do with slaves brought into Connecticut from a slave state of the federal union could be made to stick in court.

During this year 11 American [Ships](#) would clear from the port of Havana on their way to the coast of Africa to pick up slave cargo (HOUSE DOCUMENT, 26th Congress, 2d session V, No. 115, page 221). In particular the *negrero Washington*, named of course in honor of our founding father, was enabled by the American consul at Havana, himself (what are buddies for?), to proceed to the coast of Africa to pick up slave cargo (HOUSE DOCUMENT, 26th Congress, 2d session V, No. 115, pages 488-90, 715 ff; HOUSE DOCUMENT, 27th Congress, 1st session, No. 34, pages 18-21).

[INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE](#)



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1842

Using his new cranked bicycle, Kirkpatrick Macmillan accomplished the 140-mile round trip to Glasgow at an average speed of 8 MPH. A large crowd gathered to see him, a small boy was knocked down, and Macmillan was fined five shillings at police court for having created a public nuisance. There is a legend that the local magistrate paid this fine himself in return for a demonstration of the device. On his way back home Macmillan entered into a wager with a coachman of the Glasgow-Carlisle mail coach as to who might first arrive at the Sanquhar stage stop. In what was both the first recorded pedal bicycle race and the first betting on a bicycle race, of course the bicycle won.⁷²

Despite all the previous experiments with a vegetable diet such as that of [Benjamin Franklin](#):

When about 16 Years of Age, I happen'd to meet with a Book written by one Tryon, recommending a Vegetable Diet.

actually the first recorded occurrence of the term “vegetarian” dates merely to this year.⁷³

Boston's [Perkins Institute](#) began the first circulating library for the blind.

72. No authentic relic bicycle devices from this period are now in existence.

73. Refer to: Timothy Morton, *Shelley and the Revolution in Taste* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994).

Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: A History of the Modern Sensibility* (New York: Pantheon, 1983)

Janet Barkas, *The Vegetable Passion: A History of the Vegetarian State of Mind* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975)

Keith Tester, *Animals and Society: The Humanity of Animal Rights* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

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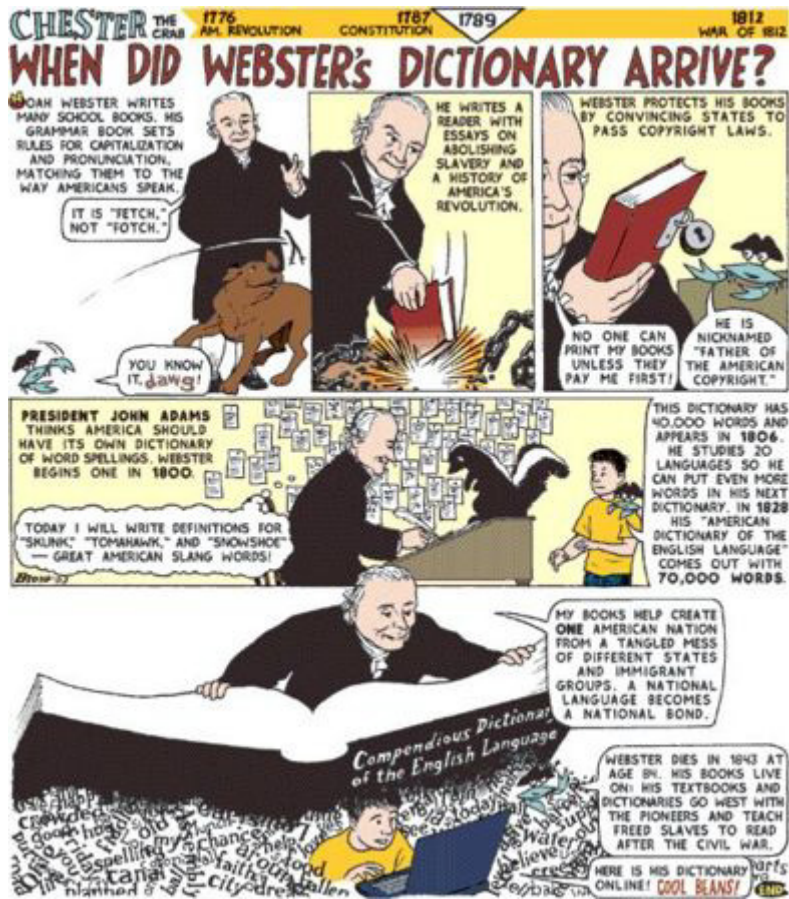
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1843

May 28, Sunday: In a ceremony in Nauvoo, Illinois, [Joseph Smith, Jr.](#) and his wife of many years Emma Hale Smith became “sealed” in marriage for eternity (and isn’t that nice).

[Noah Webster](#) died. Nationalist jingo to the end, among his final words were expressions of hope that his writings had contributed and would contribute to the strength of the Nation through the education of the Nation’s youth.



The body would be placed in the Central Cemetery of New Haven, Connecticut. The rights to his populist dictionaries would be acquired by the firm of Charles and George Merriam of Springfield, Massachusetts, who would employ the lexicographer Chauncey Goodrich to revise the unsatisfactory edition of 1841 and offer it for sale at \$6.⁰⁰. This edition would become the “common denominator” cheap dictionary for America and Webster’s inane attempt at a “nu speling” would eventually be expurgated, as would the more embarrassing of his etymologies (and isn’t that nice).

Noah Webster ... was by all accounts a severe, correct, humorless, religious, temperate man who was not easily liked, even by other severe, religious, temperate, humorless people. A



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provincial schoolteacher and not-very-successful lawyer from Hartford, he was short, pale, smug, and boastful. (He held himself superior to [Benjamin Franklin](#) because he was a Yale man while Franklin was merely self-educated.) Where Samuel Johnson spent his free hours drinking and discoursing in the company of other great men, Webster was a charmless loner who criticized almost everyone but was himself not above stealing material from others.

—Bill Bryson, THE MOTHER TONGUE



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1846

June 15, Monday: Treaty between the United States of America and Great Britain, in Regard to Limits Westward of the Rocky Mountains.



An anti-Mexican-War statement about the higher law by [Henry Thoreau](#) appeared in a Whig newspaper that generally supported that war, the [Boston Courier](#):

Conflict of Laws

In the conflict of laws, one law must be supreme. If our state laws conflict with our national, the state law yields. The higher law always renders the conflicting lower law null and void. Is it not so in all cases? If the national law bids me do what my conscience forbids, must not my conscience be supreme? Shall the law of conscience or the law of Christ be repealed by the Congress of the United States?

WAR ON MEXICO

In regard to this 1846 public appeal to conscience by Thoreau, we should consider that according to Professor Daniel Walker Howe's MAKING THE AMERICAN SELF: JONATHAN EDWARDS TO ABRAHAM LINCOLN (Studies in Cultural History. Cambridge MA: Harvard UP, 1997, page 236), the real subject of Thoreau's January 1848 lecture "'The Rights and Duties of the Individual in Relation to Government'" would be the construction of a moral self, to which the act of breaking the law is a means.... Thoreau refused to accept the conventional wisdom that conscience was a weak faculty, and undertook to illustrate, through precept and example, the potential power of conscience in everyday life ... his essay is in its way a religious document, part of the literature of spiritual perfectionism." Although the title which Thoreau assigned for his essay "Resistance to Civil Government" highlights his repudiation of Garrisonian nonresistance, Howe points out on page 240 that "Thoreau had attempted to preserve some of the conventional nonresistant attitude toward government. 'I submit to loss, inconvenience, suffering, in obedience to law even if I conceive the law unjust,' he declared, 'but I cannot do wrong,' even to obey the law."

Continuing on pages 244-5, Howe argues that Thoreau cannot be described as a liberal. What he was rather than a liberal, Howe offers, was "a Romantic religious perfectionist."

Thoreau's orientation to political thought did not really come primarily from the liberal tradition. His extensive library included none of Locke's political writings and nothing at all by [Thomas Jefferson](#). He conceded the applicability of liberal premises to American institutions of government only in order to consign them to the inferior realm of man-made, as opposed to the eternal moral principles of nature. The coordinates of Thoreau's thinking about politics had been established by his study of moral philosophy as an undergraduate. The philosophers whom [Harvard College](#) took most seriously in his day were ethical intuitionists like the Scotsman [Dugald Stewart](#). A

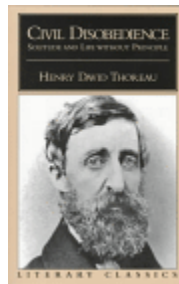


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favorite whipping-boy of Harvard moral philosophy was [William Paley](#), archdeacon of Carlisle and popularizer of "Christian Evidences." ... As the title "Resistance to Civil Government" indicates, Thoreau framed his argument as a sarcastic commentary on Paley's chapter on the "Duty of Submission to Civil Government" in his MORAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.... (Paley only deals with the question of revolution, not with selective civil disobedience.) Thoreau comments sardonically: "Paley never seems to have contemplated those cases to which the rule of expediency does not apply, in which a people, as well as an individual, must do justice, cost what it may. If I have unjustly wrested a plank from a drowning man, I must restore it to him though I drown myself. This, according to Paley, would be inconvenient. But he that would save his life, in such a case, shall lose it."⁷⁴ Paley represented a tradition in Latitudinarian Anglicanism going all the way back to Archbishop Tillotson and John Locke, one that [Benjamin Franklin](#) had found congenial. For Thoreau, Paley typified the shortcomings of the whole of bourgeois utilitarian liberalism, concerned with self-interest and expediency. It was no accident that Thoreau's essay, along with his other writings, gained a significant audience only when nineteenth-century liberalism was coming under widespread attack.



RESISTANCE TO CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Continuing on pages 245-6, Howe offers that:

To understand Thoreau's purpose in the essay "Resistance to Civil Government," we must see it as an example of religious perfectionism. Among the earliest and most consistently influential examples of the constructed self in American culture were religious identities. The distinguishing characteristic of the evangelical tradition is its insistence that a proper Christian must be born again, that is, must experience



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a transformation into a new identity as follower of Christ. The decision for Christ is generally conceived as a response to divine grace. Henry David Thoreau's writings are also framed to provoke in his readers a conversion experience of a sort – or at least, as preparation for a transforming grace that will be encountered in nature. The objective is a new identity as a moral being, and this demands a conscious resolve.... Particularly relevant was Jonathan Dymond (1796-1828), an English Quaker whose ESSAYS ON THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY Thoreau studied in his student days. Dymond argued that the American colonists of 1776 could have made their point successfully and without bloodshed simply by massive noncompliance with the tax laws.

JONATHAN DYMOND



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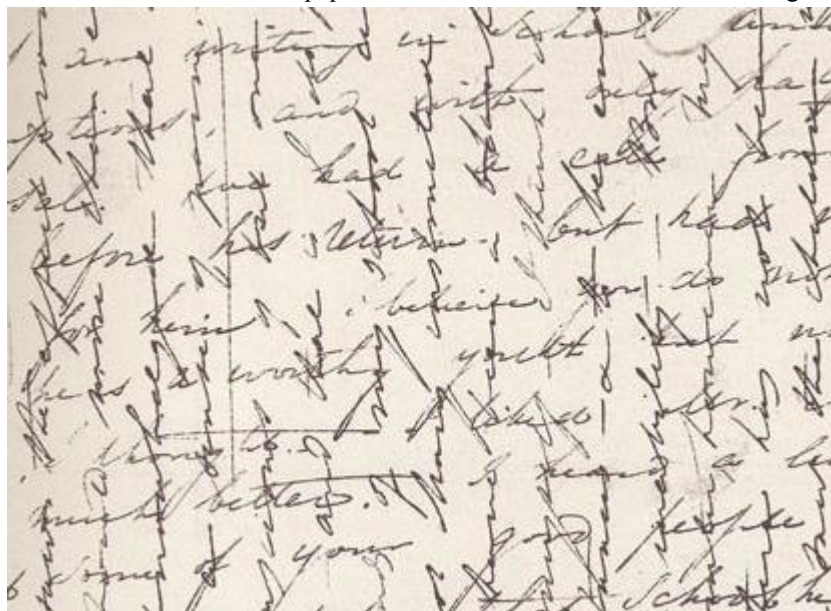
PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1847

July: The US Post Office issued an adhesive brown 5¢ postage stamp bearing the head of [Beni. Franklin](#) and an adhesive black 10¢ stamp bearing the head of G^{co}. Washington. Letter postage was 5¢ per ounce. If the postal patron lacked a Franklin, half a Washington pasted onto the envelope would serve quite nicely. (At least we know where we stand!)



Thus it was that an invention of a retired Brit schoolteacher named Rowland Hill (1795-1879) in use in England since 1840  and in Switzerland and Brazil since 1843, began to be used as well in the USA! Letters of minimum weight were 12¹/₂ cents (that'd be like \$12.⁵⁰ today, don't forget, which explains why people in that era often wrote on tissue paper and often wrote both crosswise and lengthwise on this tissue





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paper, covering the paper twice with their words, and then often also wrote on the inside of the envelope) but heavy letters and parcels were considerably more expensive because the primary cost to the US Post Office at these low volumes was not in piece-by-piece sorting but in haulage. Previously, postal fees might be paid either by the sender or by the recipient, and in fact one individual who had been nominated to be President of the United States did not even find out about his nomination, because when the official letter came from the political convention it had borne postage due he had advised the mail deliverer as to his policy of long standing, not to accept any but prepaid letters.



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1850

The second part of [Benjamin Franklin](#)'s AUTOBIOGRAPHY, carrying the narrative forward to the year 1757, was published.



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1851

February 18, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) mused in his journal about photography, etc.:



February 18, Tuesday: Ground nearly bare of snow pleasant day with a strong south wind. Skated though the ice was soft in spots –saw the skunk cabbage in flower –gathered nuts & apples on the bare ground still sound & preserving their colors red & green –many of them.

Yesterday the river was over the road by Hubbard's bridge.

Surveyed White Pond yesterday Feb– 17th

There is little or nothing to be remembered written on the subject of getting an honest living. Neither the New testament nor Poor Richard speaks to our condition. I cannot think of a single page which entertains –much less answers the questions which I put to myself on this subject. How to make the getting our living poetic –! for if it is not poetic –it is not life but death that we get

Is it that men are too disgusted with their experience to speak of it? Or that commonly they do not question the common modes.

The most practically important of all questions, it seems to me, is how shall I get my living –& yet I find little or nothing said to the purpose in any book. Those who are living on the interest of money inherited –or dishonestly i.e. by false methods acquired are of course incompetent to answer it.

I consider that society with all its arts, has done nothing for us in this respect.– One would think from looking at literature –that this question had never disturbed a solitary individual's musings.

Cold and hunger seem more friendly to my nature than those methods which men have adopted & advise to ward them off⁷⁵

If it were not that I desire to do something here (accomplish some work) I should certainly prefer to suffer and die rather than be at the pains to get a living by the modes men propose.

There may be an excess even of informing light

Niece a Frenchman announced that “No substance can be exposed to the sun's rays without undergoing a chemical change.” Granite rocks & stone structures & statues of metal &c –“are” says [Rob. Hunt](#) “all alike destructively acted upon during the hours of sunshine, and, but for provisions of nature no less wonderful, would soon perish under the delicate touch of the most subtle of the agencies of the universe.” But Niepce showed says [Hunt](#) “that those bodies which underwent this change during daylight, possessed the power of restoring themselves to their original conditions during the hours of night, when this excitement was no longer influencing them” So in the case of the Daguerreotype “The picture which we receive to-night, unless we adopt some method of securing its permanency, fades away before the morning, & we try to restore it in vain. – –

(infers) “the hours of darkness are as necessary to the inorganic creation as we know night & sleep are to the organic kingdom.”

Such is the influence of “actinism” that power in the sun's rays which produces a chemical effect.⁷⁶

BENJAMIN FRA





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75. [Henry Thoreau](#) would extrapolate from this entry in his journal, for his early lecture “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”:

[Paragraph 40] It is remarkable that there is little or nothing to be remembered written on the subject of getting a living. Neither the New Testament nor Poor Richard speaks to our condition. I cannot think of a single page which entertains, much less answers, the questions which I put to myself on this subject. How to make getting our living not merely honest and honorable, but altogether inviting and glorious.¹ One would think from looking at literature that this question had never disturbed a solitary individual’s musings. Is it that men are too much disgusted with their experience to speak of it? The lesson of value which money teaches, which the author of the universe has taken so much pains to teach us²—we are inclined to skip altogether. As for the means of living—it is wonderful how indifferent men of all classes are about it—even reformers, so called, whether they inherit, or earn, or steal it. I think that society has done nothing for us in this respect, or rather she has undone what she has done. Cold and hunger seem more friendly to my nature than those methods which men have adopted and advise to ward them off.

1. Bradley P. Dean has emended the manuscript copy-text from ‘poetic’ to ‘but altogether inviting and glorious’ on authority of the Nantucket [Inquirer](#), the [National Aegis](#) (Worcester), and “LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE” 15.
 2. Probably an allusion to MATTHEW 6:19-20. Compare Thoreau’s use of this scripture in [WALDEN](#), page 5.

The poet W.H. Auden has in 1962 brought forward a snippet of this as:

THE VIKING BOOK OF APHORISMS, A PERSONAL SELECTION BY W.H. AUDEN...

Pg	Topic	Aphorism Selected by Auden out of Thoreau
157	The Arena	There is little or nothing to be remembered written on the subject of getting an honest living. Neither the New Testament nor Poor Richard speak to our condition. One would think, from looking at literature, that this question had never disturbed a solitary individual’s musings.



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“WALKING”: There may be an excess even of informing light. Niepce, a Frenchman, discovered “actinism,” that power in the sun’s rays which produces a chemical effect; that granite rocks, and stone structures, and statues of metal “are all alike destructively acted upon during the hours of sunshine, and but for provisions of nature no less wonderful, would soon perish under the delicate touch of the most subtile of the agencies of the universe.” But he observed “that those bodies which underwent this change during the day-light possessed the power of restoring themselves to their original conditions during the hours of night, when this excitement was no longer influencing them.” Hence it has been inferred that “The hours of darkness are as necessary to the inorganic creation, as we know night and sleep are to the organic kingdom.” Not even does the moon shine every night, but gives place to darkness.

I would not have every man nor every part of a man cultivated, any more than I would have every acre of earth cultivated; part will be tillage, but the greater part will be meadow and forest, not only serving an immediate use, but preparing a mould against a distant future, by the annual decay of the vegetation which it supports.

ROBERT HUNT

76. Laura Dassow Walls has suggested that this reading about actinism in [Robert Hunt](#)’s 1850 book THE POETRY OF SCIENCE, OR STUDIES OF THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA OF NATURE may have marked a decisive point in [Thoreau](#)’s development of an innocent and Humboldtian agenda for the poetic/scientific, non-manipulative, non-interventive investigation of natural phenomena:

There are, indeed, “tongues in trees”; but science alone can interpret their mysterious whispers, and in this consists its poetry. (xxi-xxii)

We may note in the above passage from Thoreau’s journal that there is a ligature, in the journal writing and in the mind of Thoreau, between the topic “how to live,” with its sub-topic “getting a living,” and the topic of “informing light.” One might almost say that, to Thoreau’s way of thinking, the seeing as in “science,” this being a scientific **seer**, was another sub-topic of “how to live” parallel to the subtopic of “getting a living,” and one might almost be forgiven for suspecting that, for Thoreau, to wield science like a sword *à la* [Louis Agassiz](#) was approximately as morally innocent as, say, the institution of human slavery (which that peculiar professor happened also to support).



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1852

July 17, Saturday: It was reported in the Practical Christian that, during a sermon at Hopedale delivered by the Reverend John Murray Spear, Medium, the spirit of Benjamin Franklin had manifested itself through the reverend, and had communicated its satisfaction with “the rise and progress of a people so **practical**, in respect to all that is necessary to human welfare, morally, intellectually and physically.”



The Hopedale community would become more and more entangled in spiritualism and table-rapping.

SPIRITUALISM

Herman Melville wrote to Nathaniel Hawthorne:

My Dear Hawthorne: –
This name of “Hawthorne” seems to be ubiquitous. I have been on something of a tour lately, and it has saluted me vocally & typographically in all sorts of places & in all sorts of ways. I was at the solitary Crusoeish island of Naushon (one of the Elisabeth group) and there, on a stately piazza, I saw it gilded on the back of a very new book, and in the hands of a clergyman. – I went to visit a gentleman in Brooklyne, and as we were sitting at our wine, in came the lady of the house, holding a beaming volume in her hand, from the city – “My Dear,” to her husband, “I have brought you Hawthorne’s new book.” I entered the cars at Boston for this place. In came a lively boy “Hawthorne’s new book!” – In good time I arrived home. Said my lady-wife “there is Mr Hawthorne’s new book, come by mail” And this morning, lo! on my table a little note, subscribed Hawthorne again. – Well, the Hawthorne is a sweet flower; may it flourish in every hedge. I am sorry, but I can not at present come to see you at Concord as you propose. – I am but just returned from a two weeks’ absence; and for the last three months & more I have been an utter idler and a savage – out of doors all the time. So, the hour has come for me to sit down again. Do send me a specimen of your sand-hill, and a sunbeam from the countenance of Mrs. Hawthorne, and a vine from the curly arbor of Master Julian. As I am only just home, I have not yet got far into the book but enough to see that you have most admirably employed materials which are richer than I had fancied them. Especially at this day, the volume is welcome, as an antidote

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to the mooniness of some dreamers – who are merely dreamers – Yet who the devil aint a dreamer? H Melville My remembrances to Miss Una & Master Julian – & the “compliments” & perfumes of the season to the “Rose-bud.”



July 17, Saturday: Cooler weather – a gentle steady rain not shower – such coolness as rain makes – not sharp & invigorating – exhilarating as in the spring – but thoughtful – reminding of the fall – still – moist – unoppressive weather in which corn & potatoes grow – not a vein of the N-W. wind or the N-E. The coolness of the west tempered with rain & mist. As I walked by the river last evening. I heard no toads. – A coolness as from an earth covered with vegetation – such as the toad finds in the high grass. A verdurous coolness – not a snowy or icy one – in the shadow of the vapors which the heat makes rise from the earth. Can this be dog-day-ish?

Pm A summer rain– A gentle steady rain – long agathering – without thunder or lightning– Such as we have not & methinks could not have had earlier than this.

To Beck Stow’s I pick raspberries dripping with rain beyond Sleepy Hollow– This weather is rather favorable to thought – on all sides is heard a gentle dripping of the rain on the leaves – yet it is perfectly warm. It is a day of comparative leisure to many farmers. Some go to the mill-dam & the shops, some go a-fishing. The Antennaria Margaritacea Pearly Everlasting is out. & the thoroughworts – red & white begin to show their colors. Notwithstanding the rain some children still pursue their black berrying on the Great Fields. Swamp pink lingers still. Roses are not so numerous as they were– Some which I examine now have short stout hooked thorns & narrow bracts– Is it the R. Carolina? I love to see a clear crystalline water flowing out of a swamp over white sand & decayed wood – spring like. The year begins to have a husky look or scent in some quarters– I remark the green coats of the hazel nuts – & hear the permanent jay. Some fields are covered now with tufts or clumps of Indigo weed yellow with blossoms – with a few dead leaves turned black here & there. Beck Stow’s swamp! What an incredible spot to think of in town or city! When life looks sandy & barren – is reduced to its lowest terms – we have no appetite & it has no flavor– Then let me visit such a swamp as this deep & impenetrable where the earth quakes for a rod around you at every step. – with its open water where the swallows skim & twitter – its meadow & cotton grass – its dense patches of dwarf andromeda now brownish green— — with clumps of blue-berry bushes – its spruces & its verdurous border of woods imbowering it – on every side. The trees now in the rain look heavy & rich all day as commonly at twilight – drooping with the weight of wet leaves. That seriocarpus conyzoides prevails now & the entire leaved erigeron still abounds every where– The meadows on the Turnpike are **white** with the meadow rue **now more than ever**. They are filled with it many feet high. The lysimachia lanceolata is very common too. All flowers are handsomer in rain. Methinks the sweetbriar is done. The hard-hack whose spines are not yet abundant stands to me for agreeable coarseness. Swallows are active throughout this rain.



Lobelia inflata Ind. tobacco.
Lappa Major Burdock.
Amaranthus hybridus — though not yet red.
Verbena hastata.
blue vervain.
Gnaphalium uliginosum by the roadside.
cud-weed

Again methinks I hear the goldfinch but not for a day or two the bob-o-link.
At evening the prunellas in the grass like the sky glow purple which were blue all day– The vetch I looked for is mown – but I find it fresh elsewhere. The caducous polygala has the odor of checker-berry at its root & hence I thought the flower had a fugacious spicy fragrance Hypericum Canadense. The slender bell flower – galium like with a triangular stem in low grounds now.



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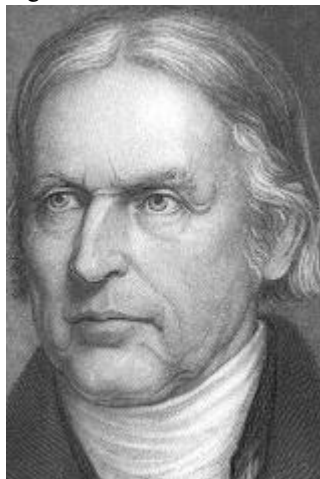
1854

The Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) wrote his main justification of the [Hopedale](#) Community, PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM.



CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM

The first section of this treatise would be his only completed work of systematic theology. He asserted that God permeated an “infinitarium,” that is, an infinity of universes, and that both space and time were without center or limit. Every separate one of these universes, of this infinity of universes within this “infinitarium,” he asserted, was going through an unending sequence of “grand cycles,” each one of which could appropriately be characterized as “an eternity.” His Christology was not Unitarian, nor was it Trinitarian, but instead was rather similar to the ancient heresy known as “Sabellianism.” He asserted that Christ was a manifestation of God, proportioned in such manner as to be comprehensible by our finite minds, but he asserted also that Christianity might not be the sole religion to contain divine truth. Like the Reverend Hosea Ballou, the



Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) portrayed atonement as a form of demonstration by God, an appeal to human beings for a spiritual and moral response. He differed from this other Reverend Ballou in asserting that divine punishment in the afterlife was necessary, not only for the sake of justice but also as a mechanism for individual correction and progress. Our human spirits, as they were gradually regenerated, were eventually to become one with God.



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This treatise laid out a plan for human society that was as simple and as obvious as the Lord's Prayer. To be perfect as God is perfect is a difficult thing for us human creatures. We all impinge on each other in one manner or another; we are all in life together, on this planet together, and should we fail to forgive "them" their trespasses, no way could our own trespasses be forgiven — for our own trespasses against "them" are in no way more privileged than "their" trespasses against us. When we manage to avoid seeking to retaliate for the harms that are done to us by others, we face only a further obligation. After accepting these harms with no spirit of retribution, no spirit of doing harm in response, we must go on and do more: we must ask that the people who did these things to us be forgiven. And we can ask for this only if we ourselves are ready to grant the prayer. "After this manner, therefore, pray ye.... Forgive us our debts, **as** we forgive our debtors." The word "as" in this prayer means "to the extent that." To the extent that we are able to forgive these other people for what they have done to us, to that extent and to that extent only, forgive us for what we ourselves have done against them, and, the inverse also, if there should be lurking in us any residual unwillingness to forgive, to that extent please do not forgive us for what we have ourselves done, but instead take retribution against us. There's no such thing as selective forgiveness, it only works if it is perfectly indiscriminate, and if it is perfectly applied across the board.⁷⁷

If, while we sue for mercy, we exercise none; if, while we pray for forgiveness, we meditate vengeance; if, while we ask to be treated better than we deserve, we are trying to respond to others according to their deserts; then we at once display our own insincerity, and our worship is a fraud and God is mocked. Our spirit of partiality is in opposition to the Lord's spirit of indiscriminate acceptance (which seems while we are in this spirit to be mere blind and callous indifference); we stand self-excluded from his presence alike unforgiving and unforgiven. The idea, repeated over and over, is that it is a law of life that only the forgiving can be forgiven. This forgiving is what constitutes our proof of our sincerity. This, not something as trivial as passing the salt to others at the table if we wish others to have the politeness to pass the salt to us, is the meat of the golden rule of doing unto others as we would have done unto ourselves. Our spirits must be fit to receive forgiveness. Then God can commune with us, for we have erected no barrier, we have not held ourselves away from his perfect spirit. It is only in the spirit of human forgiveness that we can receive and enjoy the divine forgiveness.

Yet Christianity has been suborned to authorize, to aid, and to abet the whole catalog of penal injuries, and when they are not enough, capital punishment, and not only that, but also the just war. The Chaplain leads the troops in the Lord's Prayer, while Christians draw near their God with their lips, and hold their hearts far away in a safe place where there may yet be found vengeance.

77. Also, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:12-15). "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?" Jesus said unto him, "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22). "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses; but if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses" (Mark 11:25-26). "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" (Luke 6:37).



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This, then, would be the foundation of our economic life, that to the greatest extent possible we voluntarily refrain from gaining our bread in any manner that interferes one with another, recognizing that a certain minimal level of such interference is inevitable, and, since we know full well that these residual interferences are unavoidable, we merely be understanding of these residual interferences in a spirit of awareness that we are as likely ourselves to commit such blunders against others, as they are to commit such against us. – The remainder of any economic program, obviously, is just window dressing and agenda and special pleading.

By this point the Reverend John Murray Spear, Medium, of the [Hopedale](#) community, had come to be under the direction of a group of spirits that termed itself “The Association of the Beneficents.” His committee (in sequence according to how long they had been in the spirit realm) included:⁷⁸



DIED	PERSONALITY
65CE	Lucius Annaeus Seneca
1546	Martin Luther
1683	Roger Williams
1772	Emmanuel Swedenborg
1790	Benjamin Franklin
1790	John Howard
1809	John Murray
1813	Benjamin Rush
1825	Thomas Jefferson
1834	Lafayette
1842	William Ellery Channing



78. John Murray, 4th Earl of Dunmore (1732-1809), had been the appointed governor of the Virginia colony. After the battles of Lexington and Concord he had taken gunpowder stores from Williamsburg and moved his seat of government to a British man-of-war anchored off Yorktown. After he had burned Norfolk in 1776, the Americans had been able to drive him back to England from his station on Gwynn’s Island in Chesapeake Bay. It is not clear that John Murray Spear had been named after this earl, and it is not clear that this is the John Murray that he was intending to channel. An alternative hypothesis was that he was intending to channel the father of American Universalism, the Reverend John Murray (1741-1815) and that somewhere somehow an error has crept in.



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What this spiritual committee decided was that voting would not be necessary. All decisions, it seemed, could in the future be made by “a single leading, sound, central mind,” indeed, by the mind of the Reverend John M. Spear, Medium. “The leading mind gathers up, focalizes, concentrates the whole.” (This of course is what we in the 20th Century are familiar with as the *Führerprinzip*.) Spear proceeded to set up a new community of spiritualists in a city to be called Harmonia, in western New York, and to experiment with the creation of a perpetual motion machine. The machine was to be constructed in the Lynn home of the Hutchinson Family Singers, and the spirit of [Benjamin Franklin](#) guaranteed that, when constructed, it would work.



(The community of Harmonia would soon be charged with free love, and would disintegrate.)



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1855

In ISRAEL POTTER; HIS FIFTY YEARS OF EXILE, [Herman Melville](#) launched an all-out satiric onslaught against everything that [Benjamin Franklin](#) had stood for.

The Melvilles, in financial desperation despite these new publications, offered their home "[Arrowhead](#)" to local officials as a possible site for an insane asylum which was in the planning process.



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1856

Richard S. Greenough's portrait statue of [Benjamin Franklin](#), who had been born at 17 Milk Street in Boston, was set up on a pedestal at the Old City Hall. This sculptor now has a street and a park named after him in Boston. The Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#)'s sermon "Virtue vs. Defeat" was offered in the form of a pamphlet by the Cincinnati [Gazette](#). (If a newspaperman like Ben Franklin can substitute prudence for morality and for this receive the bronze, then so can the ministry, and of course in such a case the power of the press is at your service.)

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOLUME II



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1857

April 26, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Benjamin B. Wiley](#) and attempted to explicate his parable in [WALDEN: OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) of the loss of the hound, horse, and turtle-dove.

WALDEN: In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line. You will pardon some obscurities, for there are more secrets in my trade than in most men's, and yet not voluntarily kept, but inseparable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all that I know about it, and never paint "No Admittance" on my gate.

I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves.

To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn merely, but, if possible, Nature herself! How many mornings, summer and winter, before yet any neighbor was stirring about his business, have I been about mine! No doubt many of my townsmen have met me returning from this enterprise, farmers starting for Boston in the twilight, or woodchoppers going to their work. It is true, I never assisted the sun materially in his rising, but, doubt not, it was of the last importance only to be present at it.





THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Curiously, he explicated it as if he were explicating his reference to [Mencius](#)'s remark about the loss of the "sentiments of the heart" in [A WEEK](#) where he had quoted as follows:

[A WEEK](#): Mencius says: "If one loses a fowl or a dog, he knows well how to seek them again; if one loses the sentiments of his heart, he does not know how to seek them again.... The duties of practical philosophy consist only in seeking after those sentiments of the heart which we have lost; that is all."

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

MENCIUS

So what he sent off to Wiley was:

How shall we account for our pursuits if they are original? We get the language with which to describe our various lives out of a common mint. If others have their losses, which they are busy repairing, so have I **mine**, & their hound & horse may **perhaps** be the symbols of some of them. But also I have lost, or am in danger of losing, a far finer & more ethereal treasure, which commonly no loss of which they are conscious will symbolize - this I answer hastily & with some hesitation, according as I now understand my own words.

I would infer, from this confusion, that in Thoreau's memory his quotation in [THE DIAL](#) and then in [A WEEK](#) of a parable from [Mencius](#), a parable which referred to a fowl and a dog, and his invention of his own parable in [WALDEN](#), which referred to a hound, a horse, and a turtle-dove, had, by 1857 at least, become commingled.

THE SCHOLAR.

Teen, son of the king of Tse, asked what the business of the scholar consists in? Mencius replied, In elevating his mind and inclination. What do you mean by elevating the mind? It consists merely in being benevolent and just. Where is the scholar's abode? In benevolence. Where is his road? Justice. To dwell in benevolence, and walk in justice, is the whole business of a great man.

Benevolence is man's heart, and justice is man's path. If a man lose his fowls or his dogs, he knows how to seek them. There are those who lose their hearts and know not how to seek them. The duty of the student is no other than to seek his lost heart.

He who employs his whole mind, will know his nature. He who knows his nature, knows heaven.

It were better to be without books than to believe all that they record.



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

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A WEEK: Mencius says: "If one loses a fowl or a dog, he knows well how to seek them again; if one loses the sentiments of his heart, he does not know how to seek them again.... The duties of practical philosophy consist only in seeking after those sentiments of the heart which we have lost; that is all."

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

MENCIUS

We should, therefore, limit the range of possible interpretations of Thoreau's parable to those which are not blatantly discordant with the more decipherable intention of the Mencius parable. And immediately we notice that a key to the Mencius parable is that "loss" can mean such different things, that we may know how to recover from one "loss" but may have no clue as to how to recover from another "loss."

THOREAU AND CHINA

There is a marked difference in the meaning of the word "my" when it is applied to my hound, my horse, and my turtledove.



Did we suppose that "my" means the same in the expression "Please get my hat" as in the expression "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" No, we did not suppose that, nor are we to suppose that the possessive pronoun is the same when it is applied to a family pet with whom we share a long-term and deep affectional relationship, to a barn animal we saddle in order to go somewhere, and to a wild bird we glimpse as it disappears behind a cloud. In the sense in which the dog is my dog, the horse is not my horse. In the sense in which the horse is my horse, the turtledove is not my turtledove. And there is not only a difference in the definition of the possessive pronoun "my" when it is applied to my hound, my horse, and my turtledove, there is also a difference in the meaning of the economic term "loss." For me to lose my hound is for this dog to run off after a scent and return when it chooses. For me to lose my horse is for this horse to be stolen by a horse thief, or for me to gamble it away, or for it to lie down and die. For me to lose a turtledove is — what? Thoreau didn't need to clutch a turtledove, so how could he lose it? What he said was "In Boston yesterday an ornithologist said significantly, 'If you held the bird in your hand-'; but I would rather hold it in my affections," and the bird of which he and the ornithologist spoke might as well have been a turtledove as an eponymous anonymous bird of some other species. When one gets to the turtledove part of the saying, one recognizes that Thoreau's parable of loss is a secret joke, a joke on the whole idea that in this world there could be such a thing as loss. We may well wonder how the idea of loss could have arisen in a world in which each instant of our lives is a gift to us, and is a gift over which we have no control whatever.



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Note that if we interpret the parable of the “loss” of the hound, horse, and turtle-dove as a secret joke on the whole idea that in this world there could be such a thing as loss, then the parable becomes an intrinsic part of the chapter, for the chapter, according to Stanley Cavell’s *THE SENSES OF WALDEN*, is, in its entirety, a parable about the unreality of loss and an attempt to subvert our customary deployment of economic terms such as loss when we attempt to deal with the affect of our lives:



The writer comes to us from a sense of loss; the myth does not contain more than symbols because it is no set of desired things he has lost, but a connection with things, the track of desire itself.

Note also that if we interpret this parable of the “loss” of the hound, horse, and turtle-dove as a secret joke on the simpleminded presumption that “loss” is one single, unproblematic concept, then we are led directly back, full circle, to this citation of [Mencius](#) in [A WEEK](#), the citation in which the “duties of practical philosophy” are specified.

[A WEEK](#): Mencius says: “If one loses a fowl or a dog, he knows well how to seek them again; if one loses the sentiments of his heart, he does not know how to seek them again.... The duties of practical philosophy consist only in seeking after those sentiments of the heart which we have lost; that is all.”

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

MENCIUS

Barbara Johnson, while agreeing that the parable has to do with losses, evidently disagrees with the idea that the chapter is intended to distance us from the easy application of such economic terms to the affect of our lives. Rather, she suggests, [WALDEN](#) wakes us up to our losses, evidently to the reality of our losses:



WALDEN’s great achievement is to wake us up to our own losses, to make us participate in the trans-individual movement of loss in its own infinite particularity, urging us passionately to follow the tracks of we know not quite what, as if we had lost it, or were in danger of losing it, ourselves. In order to communicate the irreducibly particular yet ultimately unreadable nature of loss, Thoreau has chosen to use three symbols [hound, bay horse, and turtledove] that clearly **are** symbols but that do not really symbolize anything outside themselves.

We may note also, here, that Johnson is attempting a pre-emptive strike at anyone and everyone who would make the three symbolic animals “symbolize anything outside themselves.” My own attitude toward this is that a good reader is an active reader, and seeks to read meaning into what she is reading. We should judge each attempt on its merits, and make no pre-emptive strike against the attempt to actively engage with the presented material.

Concord April 26th



THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1857

Dear Sir

I have been spending a fortnight in New Bedford, and on my return find your last letter awaiting me.

I was sure that you would find Newcomb inexhaustible, if you found your way into him at all. I might say, however, by way of criticism, that he does not take firm enough hold on this world, where surely we are bound to triumph.

I am sorry to say that I do not see how I can furnish you with a copy of my essay on the wild. It has not been prepared for publication, only for lectures, and would cover at least a hundred written pages. Even if it were ready to be dispersed, I could not easily find time to copy it. So I return the order.

I see that you are turning a broad furrow among the books, but I trust that some very private journal all the while holds its own through their midst. Books can only reveal us to ourselves, and as often as they do us this service we lay them aside. I should say read Goethe's Autobiography by all means, also Gibbon's Haydon the Painter's— & our Franklin's of course; perhaps also Alfieris, Benvenuto Cellini's, & De Quincey's Confessions of an Opium Eater— since you like Autobiography.

I think you must read Coleridge again & further—skipping all his theology— i.e. if you value precise definitions & a discriminating use of language. By the way, read De Quincey's reminiscences of Coleridge & Wordsworth.

How shall we account for our pursuits if they are original? We get the language with which to describe our various lives out of a common mint. If others have their losses, which they are busy repairing, so have I mine, & their hound & horse may perhaps be the symbols of some of them. But also I have lost, or am in danger of losing, a far finer & more ethereal treasure, which commonly no loss of which they are conscious will symbolize— This I answer hastily & with some hesitation, according as I now understand my own words.

I take this occasion to acknowledge, & thank you for, your long letter of Dec 21st. So poor a correspondent am I. If I wait for the fit time to reply, it commonly does not come at all, as you see. I require the presence of the other party to suggest what I shall say.

Methinks a certain polygamy with its troubles is the fate of almost all men.

They are married to two wives— their genius (a celestial muse) and also to some fair daughter of the earth. Unless these two were fast friends before marriage, and so are afterward, there will be but little peace in the house.

In answer to your questions, I must say that I never made, nor had occasion to use a filter of any kind; but, no doubt, they can be bought in Chicago.

You cannot surely identify a plant from a scientific description until after long practice.

The "millers" you speak of are the perfect or final state of the insect.

The chrysalis is the silken bag they spun when caterpillars, & occupied in the nymph state.

Yrs truly

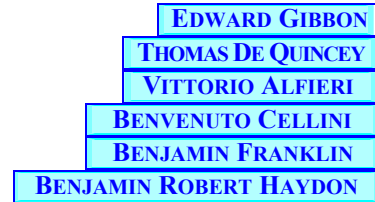


THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Henry D. Thoreau



READ ALFIERI'S TEXT

READ FRANKLIN'S TEXT



April 26. Riordan's cock follows close after me while spading in the garden, and hens commonly follow the gardener and plowman, just as cowbirds the cattle in a pasture. I turn up now in the garden those large leather-colored nymphs.

P. M. — Up Assabet to White Cedar Swamp.

See on the water over the meadow, north of the boat's place, twenty rods from the nearest shore and twice as much from the opposite shore, a very large striped snake swimming. It swims with great ease, and lifts its head a foot above the water, darting its tongue at us. A snake thus met with on the water appears far more monstrous, not to say awful and venomous, than on the land. It is always something startling and memorable to meet with a serpent in the midst of a broad water, careering over it. But why had this one taken to the water? Is it possible that snakes ever hibernate in meadows which are subject to be overflowed? This one when we approached swam toward the boat, apparently to rest on it, and when I put out my paddle, at once coiled itself partly around it and allowed itself to be taken on board. It did not hang down from the paddle like a dead snake, but stiffened and curved its body in a loose coil about it.

This snake was two feet and eleven inches long; the tail alone, seven and a quarter. There [were] one hundred and forty-five large abdominal plates, besides the three smaller under the head, and sixty-five pairs of caudal scales. The central stripe on the back was not bright-yellow, as Storer describes, but a pale brown or clay-color; only the more indistinct lateral stripes were a greenish yellow, the *broad* dark-brown stripes being between; beneath greenish. Beneath the tail in centre, a dark, somewhat greenish line.

This snake was killed about 2 P.M.; *i.e.*, the head was perfectly killed then; yet the posterior half of the body was apparently quite alive and would curl strongly around the hand at 7 P.M. It had been hanging on a tree in the meanwhile.

I have the same objection to killing a snake that I have to the killing of any other animal, yet the most humane man that I know never omits to kill one.

I see a great many beetles, etc., floating and struggling on the flood.

We sit on the shore at Wheeler's fence, opposite Merriam's. At this season still we go seeking the sunniest, most sheltered, and warmest place. C. says this is the warmest place he has been in this year. We are in this like snakes that lie out on banks. In sunny and sheltered nooks we are in our best estate. There our thoughts flow and we flourish most. By and by we shall seek the shadiest and coolest place. How well adapted we are to our climate! In the winter we sit by fires in the house; in spring and fall, in sunny and sheltered nooks; in the summer, in shady and cool groves, or over water where the breeze circulates. Thus the average temperature of the year just suits us. Generally, whether in summer or winter, we are not sensible either of heat or cold.

A great part of our troubles are literally domestic or originate in the house and from living indoors. I could write an essay to be entitled "Out of Doors," — undertake a crusade against houses. What a different thing Christianity preached to the house-bred and to a party who lived out of doors! Also a sermon is needed on economy of fuel. What right has my neighbor to burn ten cords of wood, when I burn only one? Thus robbing our half-naked town of this precious covering. Is he so much colder than I? It is expensive to maintain him in our midst. If some earn the salt of their porridge, are we certain that they earn the fuel of their kitchen and parlor? One man makes a little of the driftwood of the river or of the dead and refuse (unmarketable!) wood of the forest suffice, and nature rejoices in him. Another, Herod-like, requires ten cords of the best of young white oak or



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hickory, and he is commonly esteemed a virtuous man. He who burns the most wood on his hearth is the least warmed by the sight of it growing. Leave the trim wood-lots to widows and orphan girls. Let men tread gently through nature. Let us religiously burn stumps and worship in groves, while Christian vandals lay waste the forest temples to build miles of meeting-houses and horse-sheds and feed their box stoves.

The white cedar is apparently just out. The higher up the tree, the earlier. Towed home an oak log some eighteen feet long and more than a foot through, with a birch with around it and another birch fastened to that. Father says he saw a boy with a snapping turtle yesterday.

HDT

WHAT?

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1858

John B. Murray purchased the wooden [press](#) used by [James Franklin](#) and [Benjamin Franklin](#).





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1859

December 6, Tuesday: Loaded pistols were being flourished on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Here is how Peter Wallenstein has parsed the situation in his article "Incendiaries All":



Thus it was that, while the House was debating the speakership, Senator [Alfred] Iverson of Georgia went wild. Charging Northern senators with duplicity, he noted that they "disclaim for themselves and their people any sympathy whatever with Brown and his acts and his intentions. And yet, sir, look at what is transpiring this very day in this very Capital." By supporting John Sherman, the Republican party was "this day attempting to raise to the third office in this Government a man who has openly indorsed sentiments more incendiary in their character than anything that John Brown has ever uttered."

REPUBLICAN PARTY



The troublesome sentiments that this Ohio congressman John Sherman of the Republican Party (pictured above) had been endorsing happen to have been those of the notorious Southern racist-abolitionist admirer of

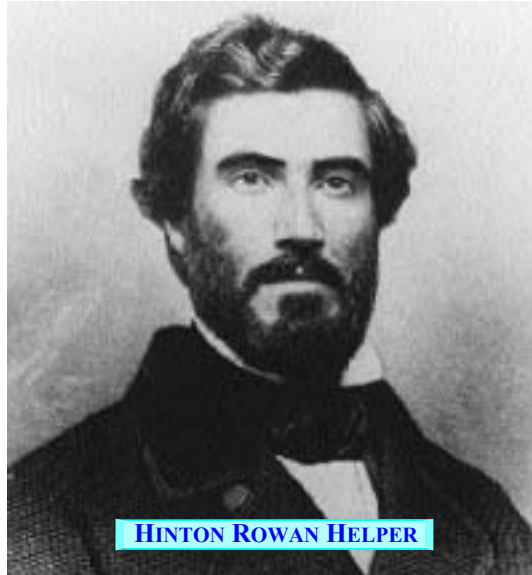


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[Waldo Emerson](#), Hinton Rowan Helper.



HINTON ROWAN HELPER

In his journal, [Henry Thoreau](#) was making a distinction between the uncredentialed earnestness of the writing of John Brown and the credentialed lack of earnestness of the writing, by way of invidious contrast, of such recognized masters as [Washington Irving](#) and [Benjamin Franklin](#).⁷⁹



December 6: P.M. – To Walden and Baker Bridge, in the shallow snow and mizzling rain. It is somewhat of a lichen day. The bright-yellow sulphur lichens on the walls of the Walden road look novel, as if I had not seen them for a long time. Do they not require cold as much as moisture to enliven them? What surprising forms and colors! Designed on every natural surface of rock or tree. Even stones of smaller size which make the walls are so finished, and piled up for what use? How naturally they adorn our works of art! See where the farmer has set up his post-and-rail fences along the road. The sulphur lichen has, as it were, at once leaped to occupy the northern side of each post, as in towns handbills are pasted on all bare surfaces, and the rails are more or less gilded with them as if it had rained gilt. The handbill which nature affixes to the north side of posts and trees and other surfaces. And there are the various shades of green and gray beside. Though it is melting, there is more ice left on the twigs in the woods than I had supposed. The mist is so thick that we cannot quite see the length of Walden as we descend to its eastern shore. The reflections of the hillsides are so much the more unsubstantial, for we see even the reflected mist veiling them. You see, beneath these whitened wooded hills and shore sloping to it, the dark, half mist-veiled water. For two rods in width next the shore, where the water is shallowest and the sand bare, you see a strip of light greenish two or three rods in width, and then dark brown (with a few green streaks only) where the dark sediment of ages has accumulated. And, looking down the pond, you see on each side successive wooded promontories –with their dim reflections– growing dimmer and dimmer till they are lost in the mist. The more distant shores are a mere dusky line or film, a sort of concentration of the mistiness. In the pure greenish stripe next the shore I saw some dark-brown objects above the sand, which looked very much like sea turtles in various attitudes. One appeared holding its great head up toward the surface. They were very weird-like and of indefinite size. I supposed that they were stumps or logs on the bottom, but was surprised to find that they were a thin and flat collection of sediment on the sandy bottom, like that which covered the bottom generally further out. When the breeze rippled the surface some distance out, it looked like a wave coming in, but it never got in to the shore. No sooner has the snow fallen than, in the woods, it is seen to be dotted almost everywhere with the fine seeds and scales of birches and alders, – no doubt an ever-accessible food to numerous birds and perhaps mice.

79. The importance of being earnest.



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Thus it is alternate snow and seeds.

Returning up the railroad, I see the great tufts of sedge in Heywood's meadow curving over like locks of the meadow's hair, above the snow.



These browned the meadow considerably. Then came a black maze, of alders moistened by the rain, which made a broad black belt between the former brown and the red-brown oaks higher up the hillside.

The white pines now, seen through the mist, the ends of their boughs drooping a little with the weight of the glaze, resemble very much hemlocks, for the extremities of their limbs always droop thus, while pines are commonly stiffly erect or ascendant.

Came upon a round bed of tansy, half a dozen feet in diameter, which was withered quite black, as seen above the snow, – blacker than any plant I remember. This reminded me that its name was by some thought to be from *ἀθανασία*, or immortality, from its not withering early, but in this case it suggested its funereal reputation.

What a transit that of his horizontal body alone, but just cut down from the gallows-tree! We read that at such a time it passed through Philadelphia, and by Saturday night had reached New York. Thus like a meteor it passed through the Union from the Southern regions toward the North. No such freight have the cars borne since they carried him southward alive.⁸⁰

What avail all your scholarly accomplishments and learning, compared with wisdom and manhood? To omit his other behavior, see what a work this comparatively unread and unlettered man has written within six weeks! Where is our professor of *belles-lettres*, or of logic and rhetoric, who can write so well? He has written in prison, not a History of the World like Raleigh, for his time was short, but an American book which shall live longer than that.

The death of [Irving](#), which at any other time would have attracted universal attention, having occurred while these things were transpiring, goes almost unobserved. Literary gentlemen, editors, and critics think that they know how to write because they have studied grammar and rhetoric; but the art of composition is as simple as the discharge of a bullet from a rifle, and its masterpieces imply an infinitely greater force behind it. This unlettered man's speaking and writing is standard English. Some words and phrases deemed vulgarisms and Americanisms before, he has made standard American. "*It will pay.*" It suggests that the one great rule of composition – and if I were a professor of rhetoric I should insist on this – is to *speak the truth*. This first, this second, this third. This demands earnestness and manhood chiefly.⁸¹

I felt that he, a prisoner in the midst of his enemies and under sentence of death, if consulted as to his next step, could answer more wisely than all his countrymen beside. He best understood his position; he contemplated it most calmly. All other men, North and South, were beside themselves. Our thoughts could not revert to any greater or wiser or better men with whom to compare him, for he was above them all. The man this country was about to hang was the greatest and best in it.⁸²

Commonly men live according to a formula, and are satisfied if the order of law is observed, but in this instance they returned to original perceptions and there was a revival of old religion; and they saw that what was called order was confusion, what was called justice, injustice, that the best was deemed the worst.

Most Northern men, and not a few Southern ones, have been wonderfully stirred by Brown's behavior and words. They have seen or felt that they were great, heroic, noble, and that there has been nothing quite equal to them in this country, if in the recent history of the world. But the minority have been unmoved by them. They have only been surprised and provoked by the attitude of their neighbors. They have seen that Brown was brave and believed that he had done right, but they have not detected any further peculiarity in him. Not being accustomed to make fine distinctions or to appreciate noble sentiments, they have read his speeches and letters as if they read them not, – they have not known when they burned. They have not felt that he spoke with authority, and hence they have only remembered that the law must be executed. They remember the old formula; they do not hear the new revelation. The man who does not recognize in Brown's words a wisdom and nobleness, and therefore an authority, superior to our laws, is a modern Democrat. This is the test by which to try him. He is not willfully but constitutionally blind, and he is consistent with himself. Such has been his past life. In like manner he has read history and his Bible, and he accepts, or seems to accept, the last only as an established formula, and not because he has been convicted by it. You will not find kindred sentiments in his commonplace-book.⁸³

80. Cape Cod, and Miscellanies, page 449; Misc., Riv. 247.

81. Cape Cod, and Miscellanies, pages 446-448; Misc., Riv. 244, 245.

82. Cape Cod, and Miscellanies, pages 441, 442; Misc., Riv. 237, 238.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

And in these six weeks what a variety of themes he has touched on! There are words in that letter to his wife, respecting the education of his daughters, which deserve to be framed and hung over every mantelpiece in the land. Compare their earnest wisdom with that of [Poor Richard!](#)⁸⁴

“He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
.
.
.
Nor called the gods with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.”⁸⁵

Years are no longer required for a revolution of public opinion; days, nay hours, produce marked changes. Fifty who were ready to say, on going into some meeting in honor of him, that he ought to be hung, will not say it when they come out. They hear his words read, every one of which “conveys the perfect charm;” they see the earnest faces of the congregation; and perhaps they join in singing the hymn in his praise.

What confessions it has extorted from the cold and conservative! Witness the Newton letter. The order of instruction has been reversed. I hear that the preacher says that his act was a failure, while to some extent he eulogizes the man. The class-teacher, after the services, tells his grown-up pupils that at first he thought as the preacher does now, but now he thinks that John Brown was right. But it is understood that the pupils are as much ahead of the teacher as he is ahead of the priest; and the very little boys at home ask their parents why God did not save him.

They, whether in the church or out of it, who adhere to the spirit and abandon the letter, and who are accordingly called infidel, have been foremost in this movement.⁸⁶

I took out my boots, which I have not worn since last spring, with the mud and dust of spring still on them, and went forth in the snow. That is an era, when, in the beginning of the winter, you change from the shoes of summer to the boots of winter.

83. Cape Cod, and Miscellanies, pages 443, 444; Misc., Riv. 240, 241.

84. Cape Cod, and Miscellanies, page 447; Misc., Riv. 244, 245.

85. Cape Cod, and Miscellanies, page 449; Misc., Riv. 247.

86. Cape Cod, and Miscellanies, pages 442, 443; Misc., Riv. 238, 239.



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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1861

Massachusetts Board of Education, TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT, together with the TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT of the Secretary of the Board, Boston, William White. (The General Statutes of Massachusetts regarding public education are included in this report, with explanations by the Secretary of the Board.)

REPORTS OF THE SELECTMEN AND OTHER OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD, FROM MARCH 5, 1860, TO MARCH 4, 1861. INCLUDING THE MARRIAGES, BIRTHS AND DEATHS IN TOWN IN 1860. ALSO, THE REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 1, 1861. Bound with REPORTS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE SCHOOLS, OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD, MASS., WITH A NOTICE OF AN EXHIBITION OF THE SCHOOLS, IN THE TOWN HALL, ON SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 1861. Concord: Printed by Benjamin Tolman, 78 pages. One thousand copies were printed for distribution and one of these copies wound up of course in the personal library of [H.D. Thoreau](#), who was listed in the town's expenses as having been paid \$1.00 before the onset of his illness for "surveying on turnpike."

SCHOOL REPORT 1860-61

(We note with interest that the electronic copy hiding behind the above hypertext button turns out to have been



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donated from the library of sometimes-Thoreau-scholar “Dr.” Samuel Arthur Jones,⁸⁷ and that the postage the town of [Concord](#) had needed to mail this book to him at an Ann Arbor, Michigan address had been four newly issued serrated-edge penny stamps featuring [Benjamin Franklin](#) in a greenish ink.⁸⁸)



Superintendent of Schools A. Bronson Alcott’s report instanced that [Mr. Emerson](#) had given the school a conversation on persons and books, Mr. Pratt had read a paper on Flowers and Flower Culture, and [Mr. Sanborn](#) had read a paper on the History of Numbers, but that [Mr. Bull](#)’s engagements had prevented him from delivering his “partly promised” account of the discovery and culture of the Concord grape (since he had lost his entire crop due to an early frost, he may have been disheartened), and that due to health issues [Mr. Thoreau](#) had unfortunately proved unable to deliver a promised discourse upon his favorite theme of Nature as the friend and preceptor of man (a topic on which everyone hoped he was still writing).

Thirty-two persons were reported to have gotten married in Concord during the previous year, 22 of them Concord inhabitants “and 10 from other places,” and this official report took explicit note of the fact that although one of the bridegrooms had been getting married for the 2d time, and another for the 3d time, “Of the females, all were first marriages.” (Count their legs and divide by two, sixteen lovely brides!)

Forty-three births were reported to have occurred in Concord during 1860, and this official report noted that less than a third of those infants were Irish whereas in 1859, fully half had been Irish — and therefore “America will have cause to be hopeful.” (Hopeful that Irish immigrants might not actually be able to swamp America with their relentless fecundity?)

The following persons were officially reported to have succumbed in Concord during 1860:

- George Atcheson, who had lived 1 year, 1 month, 8 days.
- Nehemiah Ball, who had lived 69 years, 2 months, 11 days.
- Martha Tilden Bartlett, who died at the age of 61 years.
- Ruth J. Clark, who died at the age of 75 years.
- Julia Collins, who died at the age of 1 year, 9 months, 16 days.
- Mary Collins, who died at the age of 8 months, 16 days.
- Ephraim Dakin, who had lived 86 years, 1 month, 24 days.
- Mary B. Dakin, who died at the age of 55 years.

87. We note that in this very year “Dr.” Jones, having been awarded a diploma by the Missouri Homoeopathic Medical College in St. Louis, Missouri —although this was an institution of medical education and training at which in fact he had never studied— was attempting to utilize that new document, piling piece of paper atop piece of paper, to build credentials for himself as a physician. (Heaven protect his patients!)

88. Originally so honored had been 1st President George Washington, in black with straight edges at X cents, and 1st Postmaster Franklin, worth precisely one-half X cents, as of 1847.





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PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

- James W. Dean, who died at the age of 2 months, 6 days.
- Margaret Fahan, who died at the age of 32 years.
- Roxanna Flint, who died at the age of 55 years.
- John Garrison, who died at the age of 91 years.
- Mary Gleason, who died at the age of 9 months, 6 days.
- Annie W. Goodnow, who died at the age of 4 years.
- John M. Goodwin, who died at the age of 58 years.
- Charles Gordon, who had lived 76 years, 9 months.
- Milly Holden, who died at the age of 86 years.
- Tilly Holden, who died at the age of 76 years.
- Rufus Hosmer, who died at the age of 51 years.
- Sarah L. Hutchinson, who died at the age of 18 years.
- Edward Lamson Kent, who died at the age of 3 months.
- David Murphy, who died at the age of 3 months, 8 days.
- Catherine Murray, who died at the age of 2 years, 3 months.
- Mary Newcomb, who had lived 81 years, 2 months.
- Thomas Nolan, who died at the age of 1 day.
- Jane T. Prichard, who had lived 69 years, 8 months, 27 days.
- Lucia Simmons, who had lived 5 years, 5 months, 24 days.
- Edward Hurd Skinner, who died at the age of 10 months, 2 days.
- Martha W. Smith, who died at the age of 32 years.
- Elizabeth A. Starkey, who had lived 35 years, 2 months, 1 day, with her unnamed day-old infant.
- Evangeline Surette, who died at the age of 3 months, 13 days.
- An unnamed infant, Waldron, who died at the age of 4 days.
- Isaac Watts, who died at the age of 61 years.
- Susan P. Weston, who had lived 27 years, 7 months.
- Frank Wetherbee, who died at the age of 2 months.
- Charles Wheeler, who had lived 49 years, 4 months, 15 days.

In addition the record for 1859 was expanded to include a missed report:

- Theodore Parker Pratt, who had lived 16 years, 8 months, 18 days.

The average length of life was thus computable at thirty-three and three quarters years. Most of the deaths had been due to Cholera Infantum or other infant ailments, to Apoplexy, and to Consumption (TB), and there had been but one suicide in the town.



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1863

Christian Schuessle's 19 Men of Progress had been brought together only in the artist's imagination, in oil on canvas in the previous year. In the background the artist has of course included as patron saint a portrait of [Benjamin Franklin](#).



The artist had prepared two versions,⁸⁹ and his lithographs would soon be adorning many American homes:

89.The version I am showing is the one which hangs in the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.



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Taking pride of place among these some 19 or 20 dead white men is the immensely wealthy painter Samuel F.B. Morse displaying the latest version of his telegraph recorder:



Dr. William Thomas Green Morton is in attendance, but not Emerson's sad brother-in-law Charles Jackson

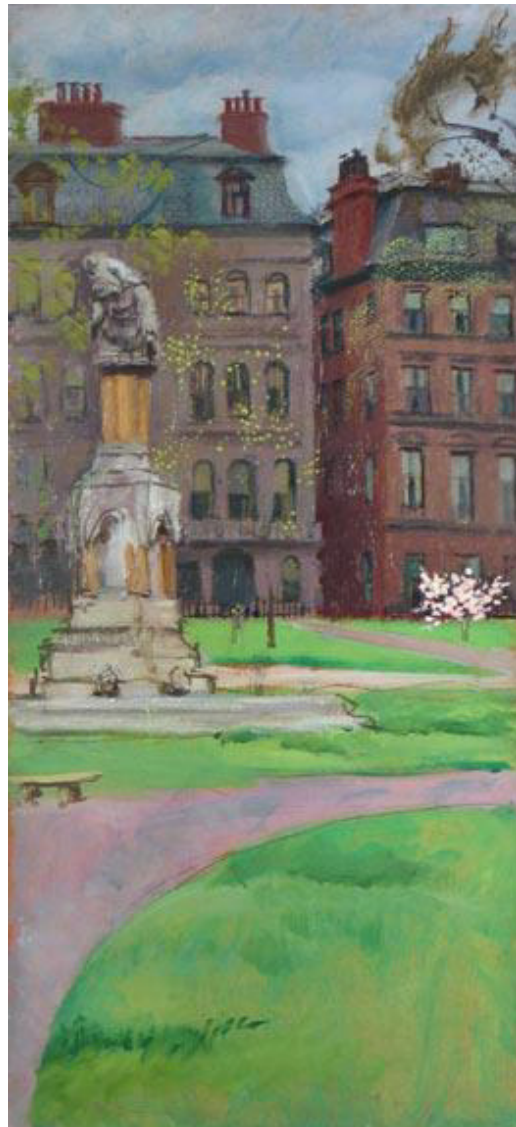


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who also made a claim to the development of surgical anesthesia:



James Bogardus, developer of cast-iron construction:



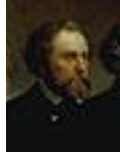


THE PEOPLE OF WALDEN:

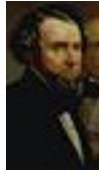
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

Samuel Colt seems disarming enough:



Cyrus Hall McCormick stands grim behind his reaper:



Joseph Saxton, inventor of a coal-burning stove, a hydrometer, and an ever-pointed pencil is there. Surely the artist should not have made his portrait so dim!



A careful eye can make out some rubbers under the chair of Charles Goodyear (nowadays we'd have this guy demonstrating how to put on a condom):



Peter Cooper, father of our railway locomotive:



The inventor of a cooking stove that could use coal for fuel, Jordan Mott, is in this group of famous men who had “altered the course of contemporary civilization” because it had been he who had, in 1857, commissioned



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the portraiture of 18 men:



Joseph Henry, for his electromagnet design:



Eliphalet Nott, developer of efficient heat conduction for stoves and steam engines:



Just before the picture was completed, John Ericsson's Union armored turret warship, the Monitor, had won its victory over the Confederacy's Merrimac, and so Ericsson's likeness had been hastily added in the background:



Frederick Sickels, developer of steam-engine gear and steering device for ships:



Henry Burden, inventor of a machine for the manufacture of horseshoes:



Richard March, inventor of the rotary printing press which was creating such demand for the Thoreau family's line of uniform finely powdered graphite:





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Erastus Bigelow, developer of a power loom for the manufacture of carpets:



Isaiah Jennings, inventor of a threshing machine, and a repeating gun, and a friction match:



Thomas Blanchard, inventor of a useful device, the irregular turning lathe:



Elias Howe, inventor of the sewing machine:



One source claims that this is either Robert Hoe the father or Richard M. Hoe the son of R. Hoe & Co., talking to Morse about their rotary printing press, a plan for which lies unrolled on the floor:



(I don't know how to explain the discrepancy, that this is elsewhere claimed to be a depiction of Richard March, the actual inventor of that rotary printing press.)

More recently the Cooper Union has commissioned Edward Sorel to paint a sequel made up of figures from the 20th Century. This painting depicts:

Philo T. Farnsworth (1906-1971) Visualized the principles of electronic TV as a 13-year-old farm boy; sent his first image, a single line, when he was 21 — after he had applied for a patent. The patent expired, however, before he could profit from commercialization of his technology.

George Washington Carver (1861-1943), the father of agricultural technology.

Jonas Salk (1914-1995), developer of a polio vaccine.

Henry Ford (1863-1947), automotive pioneer.

Orville Wright (1871-1948), inventor of the airplane.

Wilbur Wright (1867-1912), inventor of the airplane.



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Albert Einstein (1879-1955), discoverer of special and general relativity and the equivalence of mass and energy, which eventually led to the development of atomic weapons and power.

Charles H. Townes (1915-) In 1951, while a professor at Columbia, he was struck with the idea of using feedback to stimulate the emission of microwave radiation from excited molecules. This led directly to the maser; its outgrowth, the laser, was built in a race among several scientists that was ultimately won by Theodore Maiman of Hughes Aircraft.

Charles Steinmetz (1865-1923), pioneer of electrical transmission.

J.C.R. Licklider (1915-1990), father of the Internet.

John Von Neumann (1903-1957), contributor to the Manhattan Project and the hydrogen bomb who also described the stored-program computer, the basis of today's computer industry.

William H. Gates III (1955-) Learned to program at 14, started his first business at 16, and dropped out of Harvard to design a Basic compiler and found Microsoft. His company's programs Excel, Word and Windows have dominated personal computing and given it broad conformity since the 1980s.

Robert Goddard (1882-1945), rocket developer.

James Dewey Watson (1928-), codiscoverer of the structure of DNA.

Wallace Hume Carothers (1896-1937), inventor of nylon.

Rachel Carson (1907-1964), author of Silent Spring, the 1962 book about the perils of DDT, which did more than any other single event to launch the environmental movement.

Willis Carrier (1876-1950), inventor of air conditioning.

Gertrude Elion (1918-1999), developer of breakthrough drugs against leukemia, herpes, gout, malaria, and organ rejection.

Edwin H. Armstrong (1890-1954) Fascinated by radio, when 20 years old he built a 125' tall tower in his front yard; invented the continuous-wave transmitter in 1912, the superheterodyne circuit in 1918 and FM radio in 1933 — all of which remain underpinnings of broadcasting today.

Robert Noyce (1927-1990) Co-inventor of the integrated circuit. In 1958 Jack Kilby, of Texas Instruments, hand-crafted the first true integrated circuit; the next year, Noyce, working independently at Fairchild Semiconductor, came up with a version that could be miniaturized and reliably manufactured. In 1968 he co-founded Intel Corporation.

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1864

January: At a 158th-birthday celebration in honor of [Benjamin Franklin](#), the wooden [press](#) used by him as an apprentice and by [James Franklin](#) in [Boston](#) and [Newport](#) was presented by John B. Murray to the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanics' Association.





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1900

[Thomas Jefferson](#) had hoped to eliminate religion from his proposed public university by removing theology from the curriculum. However, as evangelical Protestantism came in the early 19th Century to dominate Virginia's culture, he had been forced to compromise and his University of Virginia had begun to provide nonsectarian religious instruction (under the rubric "Moral Philosophy"). Jefferson's compromise had then been reenacted at all the other institutions of higher education in the state, so that even denominational colleges had been able to adhere to one or another such "nonsectarian" pretense while offering an essentially religious education. By the end of the 19th Century [separation of church and state](#) in Virginia's public school system had become compatible with a generalized evangelical Protestantism — complete with all its Bible-thumping, all its obligatory-lecture "praying," all its singing of tendentiously worded "hymns," and all its dissing of any other religious understanding.



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When asked to nominate the “Americans most deserving representation” for inclusion in a hall of fame that was being planned in Massachusetts, the Honorable George Frisbie Hoar needed to exclude his world-class heroes William Ewart Gladstone, [John Milton](#), the *Marquis de Lafayette*, General Simon Bolivar, [Giuseppe Mazzini](#), [Lajos Kossuth](#), and Miss Florence Nightingale because they were not Americans (well, in addition to being disqualified as a mere Brit, Miss Florence was not even male and not even yet deceased), and he excused [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) and [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) because to be great a man must possess “more than the quality of a great artist,” and he banished [Benjamin Franklin](#) to the outer darkness for having been “without idealism, without lofty principle, and, on one side of his character, gross and immoral,” and, finally, aware that he could not get away with submitting his own name because he wasn’t dead yet (and besides that it would have been utterly immodest), he submitted the following dozen dead white American malenesses:

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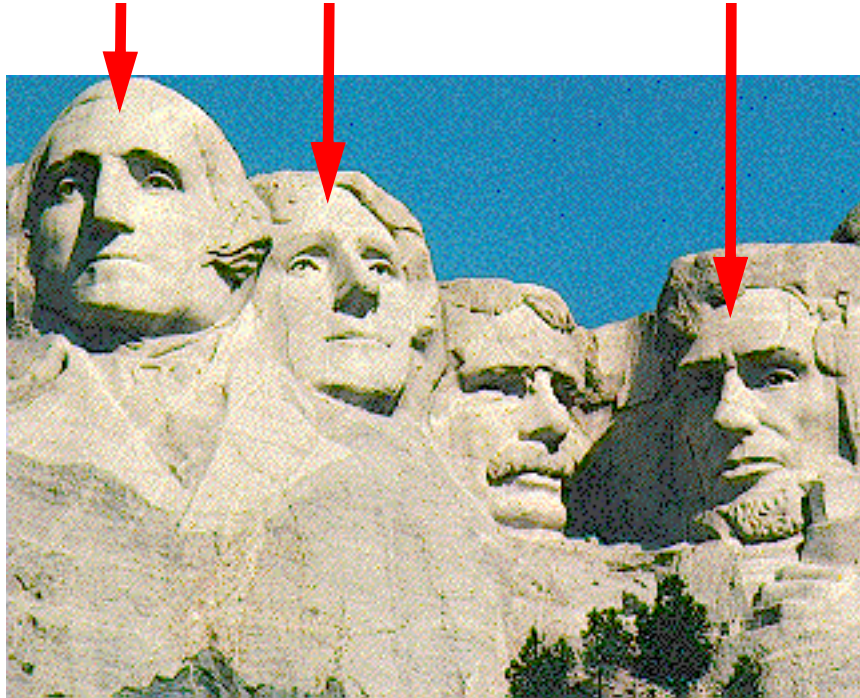
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- President George Washington (the most “noble” on the list, representing “the prime meridian of pure, exalted, human character”)
- President [Thomas Jefferson](#) (the most “influential” on the list, because of his alleged authorship of the [Declaration of Independence](#), a document endorsed by the Honorable George Frisbie Hoar’s grandfather Roger Sherman)
- President Abraham Lincoln
- The Reverend [Jonathan Edwards](#)
- President John Adams
- Sam Adams
- Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton
- Senator [Daniel Webster](#)
- Chief Justice John Marshall
- Senator Charles Sumner
- [Waldo Emerson](#)
- Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#)



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[Daniel Chester French](#) did an equestrian statue of George Washington, for Paris.



(This isn't it — bronze horses are so easily mistaken for one another.)

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Oh, all right. How can I keep it from you?



The general had of course ridden various horses at various times. At least two of his mounts had been killed in combat. “Old Nelson,” “Roger Leo,” “Ellen Edenberg,” and “Blueskin” were among the survivors. We seem to have lost track of which of these the sculptor was here attempting to render immortal in bronze — perhaps he was merely immortalizing the spirit of horseness.



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1993

Fall: Alan K. Leahigh's "The history of -quote, unquote- public relations" appeared in Public Relations Quarterly volume 38, number 3, beginning on page 24. This study provided quotations amply demonstrating that the doctrines of public relations had been being recognized, evaluated, and practiced long before public relations began to emerge as a "profession." The historical personages quoted include George Ade, Lewis Carroll, [James Fenimore Cooper](#), [Albert Einstein](#), F. Scott Fitzgerald, [Benjamin Franklin](#), Ernest Hemingway, Hubert Humphrey, [Ben Jonson](#), Carl Gustav Jung, Abraham Lincoln, Walter Lippmann, St. Matthew, Margaret Mead, [Napoleon Bonaparte](#), Dan Rather, [Henry David Thoreau](#), Mark Twain, E.B. White, Osmo A. Wiio, Oscar Wilde, and Admiral Elmo Russell Zumwalt, Jr.

"MAGISTERIAL HISTORY" IS FANTASIZING: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY



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

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



Prepared: October 19, 2014



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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



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



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

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