HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

The purpose of this accounting is to remind those who seen in WALDEN a piece of escape literature that, were the significant and unique thing about Thoreau the fact that he chose for a period to live alone close to nature, there are persons other than he, actual hermits, who would be more primarily relevant to our interest.

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

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

"Meeting a Hermit
I FOUND in one of my rambles up the hills a real hermit, living in a lonesome spot, hard to get at, rocky, the view fine, with a little patch of land two rods square. A man of youngish middle age, city born and raised, had been to school, had travel'd in Europe and California. I first met him once or twice on the road, and pass'd the time of day, with some small talk; then, the third time, he ask'd me to go along a bit and rest in his hut (an almost unprecedented compliment, as I heard from others afterwards.) He was of Quaker stock, I think; talk'd with ease and moderate freedom, but did not unbosom his life, or story, or tragedy, or whatever it was."

— Walt Whitman

THE THREE HERMITS
BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

THREE old hermits took the air
By a cold and desolate sea,
First was muttering a prayer,
Second rummaged for a flea;
On a windy stone, the third,
Giddy with his hundredth year,
Sang unnoticed like a bird:
"Though the Door of Death is near
And what waits behind the door,
Three times in a single day
I, though upright on the shore,
Fall asleep when I should pray."
So the first, but now the second:
"We're but given what we have earned
When all thoughts and deeds are reckoned,
So it's plain to be discerned
That the shades of holy men
Who have failed, being weak of will,
Pass the Door of Birth again,
And are plagued by crowds, until
They've the passion to escape."
Moaned the other, "They are thrown
Into some most fearful shape."
But the second mocked his moan:
"They are not changed to anything,
Having loved God once, but maybe
To a poet or a king
Or a witty lovely lady."
While he'd rummaged rags and hair,
Caught and cracked his flea, the third,
Giddy with his hundredth year,
Sang unnoticed like a bird.

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

Edith Sitwell's ENGLISH ECCENTRICS depicted the ornamental hermits of the 18th Century. Prominent hermits of literature included Johnson's hermit in RASSELAS, Fielding's MAN OF THE HILL, John Potter's ARTHUR O'BRADLEY, Graves's SPIRITUAL QUIXOTE, Miss Palmer's FEMALE STABILITY, Burney's ALBANY IN CECILIA, Fuller's THE CONVENT and MARIA, OR THE VICARAGE, Peter Logueville's ENGLISH HERMIT, the disguised Edwin in "A Ballad" included in THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD, Jakob Lenz's "Waldbruder," Frances Brooke's THE HISTORY OF EMILY MONTAGUE, Eliza Fenwick's SECRESY OR THE RUIN ON THE ROCK, Defoe's ROBINSON CRUSOE, etc. Sarah Orne Jewett's COUNTRY OF THE POINTED FIRS featured Joanna, the hermitess of Shell-heap Island. Tom Stoppard's recent play "Arcadia" includes a hermit living on the grounds of a big country house circa. 1805-1830. The hermit character in this play had taken to solitude after its great tragedy, but one has the impression that the presence of a hermit on the grounds was willingly tolerated because hermits on country estates were, after the situation of Rousseau, quite fashionable. -And in the 19th Century we have, of course, the hermit who rescues Coleridge's ancient mariner.

But those were merely virtual hermits. There were also real ones, such as the Reverend Stephen Duck in England and the Reverend William Blaxton first in what would become Cambridge MA and then on the Shawmut peninsula that would become Boston and then on the Blackstone River in what would become Rhode Island. And then there was of course Alexander Selkirk. Not ever hermit, of course, was famous, so I will also list some of the non-famous ones: Robert Voorhis who lived at the bridge between Massachusetts and Rhode Island, Timothy Leonard of Hermit Pond in New Marlborough, Massachusetts, Francis Abbott, who lived in a log cabin near the Niagara Falls, the "Lone Woman" of San Nicolàs Island off the California coast, Samuel Choate who spent 20 years on tiny Green Island in Boston Harbor, another person of unknown name on Slate Island in Boston Harbor, etc.

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

BROOK FARM

WALDO EMERSON

ELLERY CHANNING

LONGFELLOW

BRONSON ALCOTT

THE SCARLET LETTER: Such were some of the people with whom I now found myself connected. I took it in good part, at the hands of Providence, that I was thrown into a position so little akin to my past habits; and set myself seriously to gather from it whatever profit was to be had. After my fellowship of toil and impracticable schemes with the dreamy brethren of Brook Farm; after living for three years within the subtle influence of an intellect like Emerson's; after those wild, free days on the Assabeth, indulging fantastic speculations, beside our fire of fallen boughs, with Ellery Channing; after talking with Thoreau about pine-trees and Indian relics in his hermitage at Walden; after growing fastidious by sympathy with the classic refinement of Hillard's culture; after becoming imbued with poetic sentiment at Longfellow's hearthstone – it was time, at length, that I should exercise other faculties of my nature, and nourish myself with food for which I had hitherto had little appetite. Even the old Inspector was desirable, as a change of diet, to a man who had known Alcott. I looked upon it as an evidence, in some measure, of a system naturally well balanced, and lacking no essential part of a thorough organization, that, with such associates to remember, I could mingle at once with men of altogether different qualities, and never murmur at the change.

Given that there were such things as real hermits, in real hermitages, what import should we ascribe to Hawthorne's description of Thoreau's shanty at Walden Pond as a "hermitage"?

Here is **Lawrence Buell** on Thoreau as a "mature woman protagonist" (to be played, in the movie version, by Dustin Hoffman in drag?) per page 46 of THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMAGINATION: THOREAU, NATURE WRITING, AND THE FORMATION OF AMERICAN CULTURE (quote):

> Starting well before Thoreau, male narratives of self-reliant cabin-dwelling isolatoes are common, whereas the commonest counterpart in women's narrative is the story of the "female hermit" who has not risen above society but fallen below it as a result of a disastrous love affair, usually estranged, which has left her with a child, who usually dies. For women like Joanna, the hermitess of Shell-heap Island in Sarah Orne Jewett's COUNTRY OF THE POINTED FIRS, nature is where you go if you have no place to go. Yet the personal bond to nature can also retain a more positive value for the mature woman protagonist who, as Annis Pratt and Barbara White put it, may "look back to moments of naturalistic epiphany as touchstones in a quest for her lost selfhood." This is precisely how Thoreau pictures himself when confessing that one of his earliest childhood memories was of being taken to Walden Pond, so that by his return to live there "I have at length helped to clothe that fabulous landscape of my infant dreams" (WALDEN). A similar reenactment process is evident in the work of the early female Thoreauvian mentioned above.

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

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

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

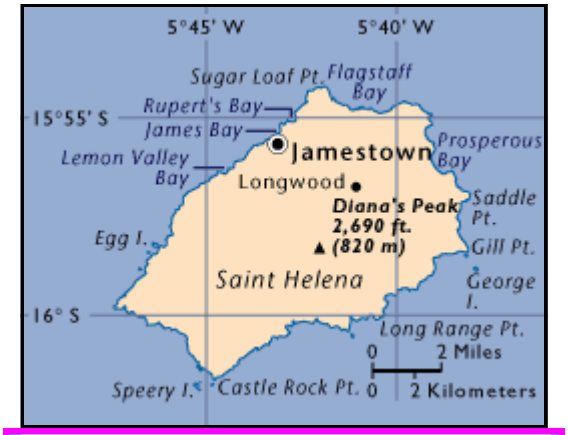
1515

Portuguese naval general Alfonso de Albuquerque died at the entrance to Goa harbor, whereupon Fernão Lopez seems to have stowed himself away aboard a vessel bound for Lisbon. When this Portuguese ship stopped at St. Helena for food and water, he asked to be left behind there as a hermit. When he landed he was in the company of three or four black slaves (we have no idea what subsequently became of these others) and they were left with a barrel of biscuits, some dried meat and fish, a tinderbox, and a saucepan. It would be nearly a year before another ship would drop anchor at this island.

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT

1516

Fernão Lopez, a Portuguese on his way back toward Europe from India, had chosen to remain behind at the St. Helena stopover.

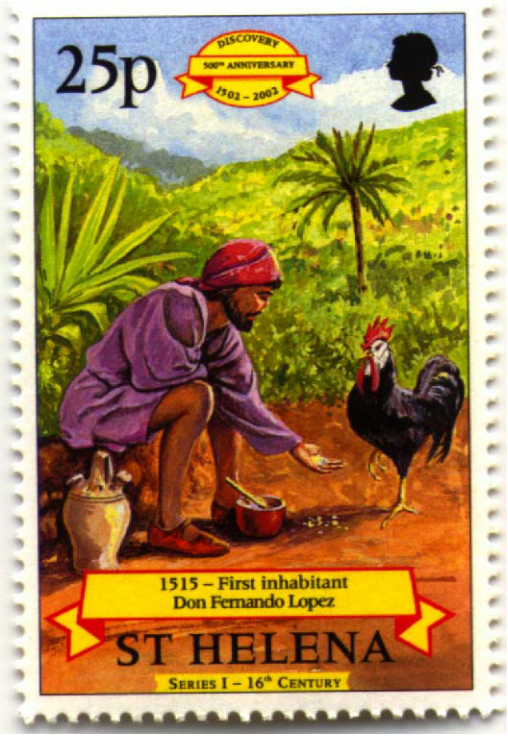


ST. HELENA THE HISTORIC

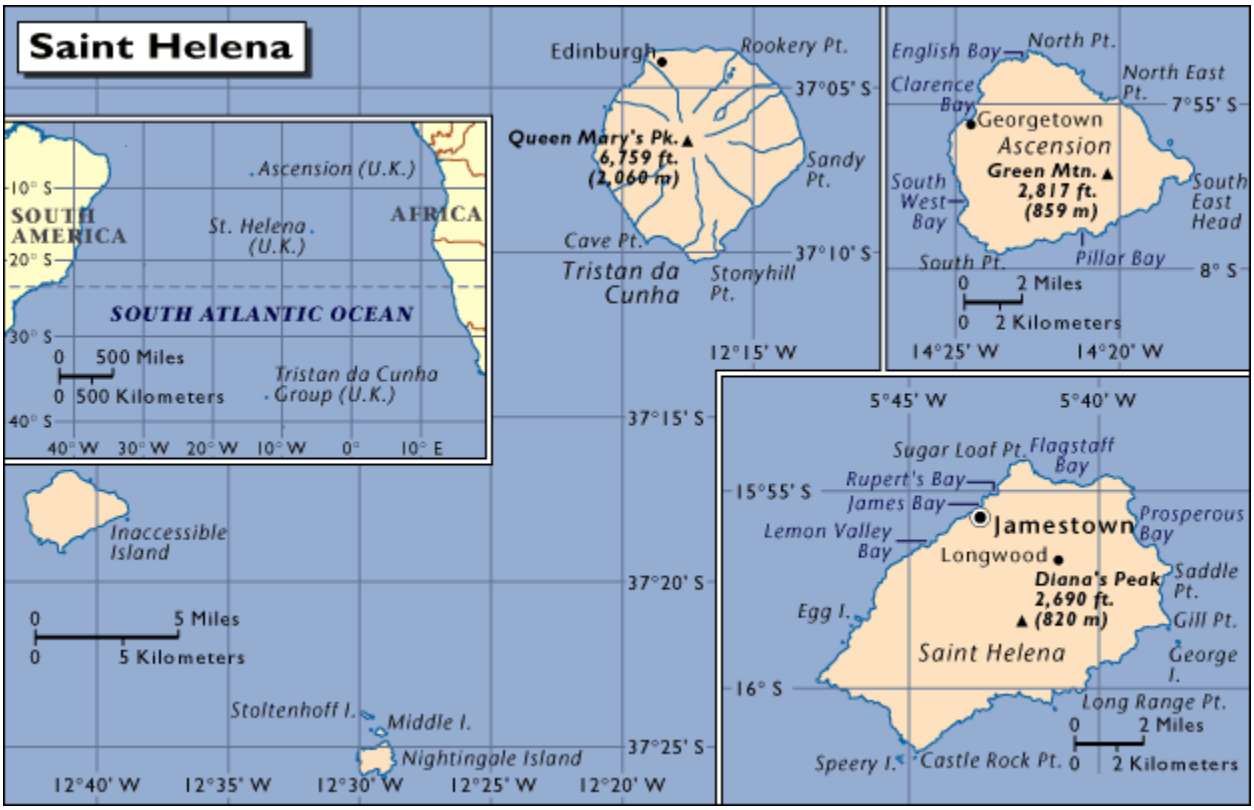
About a year had passed before another ship appeared. There is a contemporary account of this 1st encounter with the disfigured hermit of the island, in a Hakluyt Society journal:

> The crew was amazed when they saw the grotto and the straw bed on which he slept ... and when they saw the clothing they agreed it must be a Portuguese man.
> So they took in their water and did not meddle with anything, but left biscuits and cheeses and things to eat and a letter telling him not to hide himself the next time a ship came to the Rooster for no one would harm him.
> Then the ship set off, and as she was spreading her sails a cockerel fell overboard and the waves carried it to the shore and Lopez caught it and fed it with some rice which they had left behind for him.

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES



The cockerel became his sole companion. During the night it would roost above his head and during the day it would follow along behind him, coming if he called to it. He made himself useful around the growing settlement on the island, tending livestock, working the soil, and planting various fruit trees and grasses. After about a decade of this, Lopez agreed to return to Portugal to visit his family. He would have an audience with King João III and then travel to Rome for an audience with Clement VII in which the Pope would absolve him of his sin of apostasy. With that under his belt, he would return to St. Helena and his hermit existence.



DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.

1526

The initial African slaves were imported to labor in the canefields of Cuba.

A hurricane was recorded in St. Domingo.

At about this point, by command of King João III, Fernão Lopez returned to Portugal and visited his family of origin. Going to Rome, Pope Clement VII granted him an audience and forgave his Muslim apostasy. The maimed hermit then returned to St. Helena (the Pope hadn't given him back his ears).

Congolese king Mbemba Nzinga protested to King João III that Portuguese merchants were "taking every day our natives, sons of the land and sons of our noblemen and our vassals and our relatives." The king was a convert to Christianity and he alleged that the slavers were depopulating his country.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT

1545

The disfigured hermit Fernão Lopez died on St. Helena. Apart from a visit to Europe during which he had been allowed to confess his sin of apostasy directly to Pope Clement VII in Rome and be absolved, he had spent the remaining decades of his life in solitary penance on that island.

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

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

1625

Captain John Mason's map of Newfoundland and "Discourse" about his findings was published in William Vaughan's *CAMBRENSIUM CAROLEIA.*

HERMITS

The folks who had settled at *Wessaguscusset* (Weymouth) under Sir Ferdinando Gorges were ready to move elsewhere. The Reverend William Blaxton, their Anglican divine, however, was reluctant. He decided to stick it out, about 20 miles to the north, attempting a hermit existence upon the isolated peninsula known as *Shawmut* "Place Where You Find Boats" with its three connected drumlins, the peninsula which initially would be known to the white people as "Blaxton's Peninsula" and eventually would become known as "Trimontaine" or Boston town. He took with him seeds and his three Bibles, and multiple other volumes of use to hermits, and for five years would be living the life of a religious solitary.

PEOPLE O WALDEN

WALDEN: Sometimes, having had a surfeit of human society and gossip, and worn out all my village friends, I rambled still farther westward than I habitually dwell, into yet more unfrequented parts of the town, "to fresh woods and pastures new," or, while the sun was setting, made my supper of huckleberries and blueberries on Fair Haven Hill, and laid up a store for several days. The fruits do not yield their true flavor to the purchaser of them, nor to him who raises them for the market. There is but one way to obtain it, yet few take that way. If you would know the flavor of huckleberries, ask the cow-boy or the partridge. It is a vulgar error to suppose that you have tasted huckleberries who never plucked them. A huckleberry never reaches Boston; they have not been known there since they grew on her three hills. The ambrosial and essential part of the fruit is lost with the bloom which is rubbed off in the market cart, and they become mere provender. As long as Eternal Justice reigns, not one innocent huckleberry can be transported thither from the country's hills.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

Solitary? –Rather, of **white** people, only the Reverend would be present: as to whether there were Native Americans living anywhere on the Trimontaine peninsula at this time, or perhaps colonies of the harbor seals, the records simply make no mention. Thoreau, in CAPE COD, would toy with these historical silences, in recounting his study of a volume of the "Historical Collections" which offered that:

> CAPE COD: When the committee from Plymouth had purchased the territory of Eastham of the Indians, "it was demanded who laid claim to Billingsgate?" which was understood to be all that part of the Cape north of what they had purchased. "The answer was, there was not any who owned it. 'Then,' said the committee, 'that land is ours.' The Indians answered, that it was." This was a remarkable assertion and admission. The Pilgrims appear to have regarded themselves as Not Any's representatives. Perhaps this was the first instance of that quiet way of "speaking for" a place not yet occupied, or at least not improved as much as it may be, which their descendants have practiced, and are still practicing so extensively. Not Any seems to have been the sole proprietor of all America before the Yankees. But history says, that when the Pilgrims had held the lands of Billingsgate many years, at length "appeared an Indian, who styled himself Lieutenant Anthony," who laid claim to them, and of him they bought them. Who knows but a Lieutenant Anthony may be knocking at the door of the White House some day? At any rate, I know that if you hold a thing unjustly, there will surely be the devil to pay at last.

PEOPLE O
CAPE CO

LIEUTENANT ANTHONY
"NOT ANY"

The Reverend settled near a spring on the west slope of what is now termed Beacon Hill but then would have been becoming known as Sentry Hill, to begin his orchard and home and live in peace with his books.

(This would have been near where Beacon and Spruce streets now intersect in downtown Boston.)

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

"Of orthodox education at the University of Cambridge and an ordained priest in the Church of England, the young William Blaxton was not so much a latter-day St. Francis of Assisi as an earlier day Henry Thoreau, with somewhat more demanding tastes. It was no hut or lowly cabin that Blackstone fashioned there on his hill overlooking the Charles River. It was a comfortable, rambling cottage, multi-gabled and with small-paned windows, woodbine creeping over the walls and up into the eaves."

— Tourtellot, Arthur Bernon, THE CHARLES, NY: Farrar & Rinehart, 1941, pages 25-26

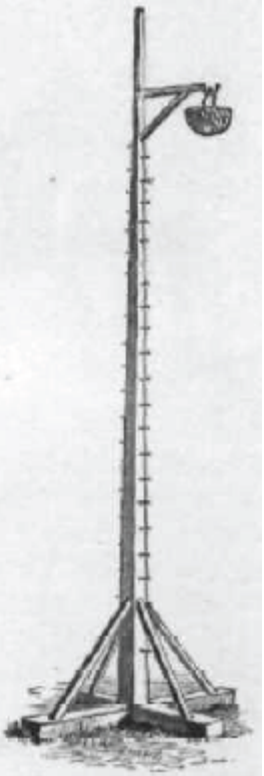
NO-ONE'S LIFE IS EVER NOT DRIVEN PRIMARILY BY HAPPENSTANCE

First House in Boston.

away from Boston, on the banks of picturesque river, which is now know as the Blackstone, named after him.

Ann Pollard, who lived to the rip old age of 105, is said to have bee the first white woman that landed i Boston. According to her story, sh came over in one of the first ship that reached Charlestown ; and a fe days afterwards a party of youn people rowed to Boston to get som good water. As the boat neared th shore, she, being a romping girl, declared that she would land first, an immediately jumped from the bow to the beach.

In 1630 the first general court of the colony was held in Boston. John Winthrop was the first governor elected by the colonists, and Thomas Dudley the deputy-governor. Had these two carried out their plan of fortifying " New-towne," the present Cambridge, the result would possibly have been, that either the latter, or some other town, would have become the New-England metropolis, instead of Boston. Winthrop, however, after he and others had built houses at New-towne, saw that Boston was the most promising site, and consequently abandoned the project, causing thereby the enmity of Dudley. This circumstance, possibly combined with jealousy, led to unfriendly disputes between those two magnates, which had to be settled by arbitrators. The old beacon, shown in all the early plans of the town, and which gave the name to Beacon Hill, was erected in 1634-5 to alarm the country in case of invasion. It stood near the present State House, the exact spot being the south-east corner of the reservoir on Temple Street. It was a tall mast, standing on cross timbers placed upon a stone foundation, supported by braces, and was ascended by treenails driven into it; and,



Beacon, Beacon Hi

1630

June 12, Saturday (Old Style; June 25, Tuesday on the modern Gregorian calendar): The *Arbella* bearing Simon Bradstreet and Anne Bradstreet entered Salem harbor. Old records fix this family as being initially in Salem, Charlestown, Boston, and Cambridge, then in Ipswich in 1636, and finally in North Andover in 1640.

The Massachusetts Bay Company, a group headed up by Governor John Winthrop, which initially had attempted to set up on the northern bank of the Charles River but had been unable to locate a good supply of water there, landed on what was then being referred to as "Blaxton's Peninsula" due to the Reverend William Blaxton's (Blackstone's) hermit cottage and orchard there, with its good water supply. During this their 1st year in their new "Boston" settlement they would annex Pullen Point, the mainland peninsula across Pudding Gut from Deer Island that eventually would become Chelsea.[1]

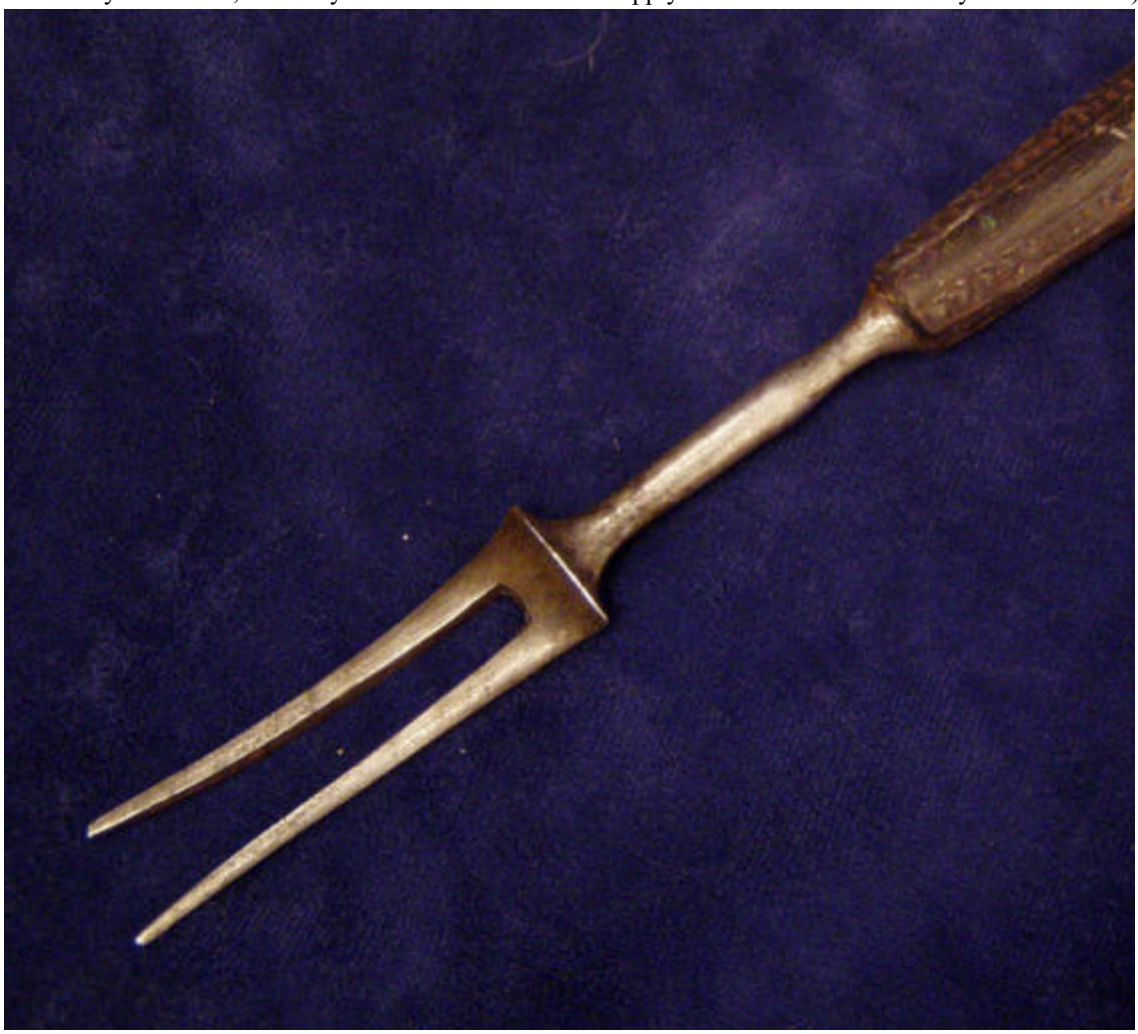
It was important that these guys had something to drink. When they had set sail for the New World, they had taken care to carry with them 42 tons of beer, 14 tons of water, and 10,000 gallons of wine. They were accustomed to a Europe in which it was not safe to drink ground water, due to extensive contamination — and expected without thinking much about it that the same conditions of contamination would of course prevail at their destination.

MASSACHUSETTS BAY

1. Folk etymology says that the point was "Pullen" and the gut was "Pudding" because the tide used to run so strong there that mariners, sailing against that tide, would have to leap out onto the beach with a line and pull their boats along. –That is, that "Pullen" and "Pudding" are degraded forms of "pulling" or "pull 'em." Whatever. This point would be renamed Point Shirley by real estate speculators in 1753 in honor of Governor William Shirley's going along with it being given to them to develop into a locale for their fancy summer beach cottages.

The Governor in place in Salem, John Endecott, found himself automatically superseded by this newly arrived Governor John Winthrop, who had already been elected governor before departure of that group from England.

It appears that this newly arrived governor had brought with him in the *Arbella* a new eating tool, the "forke" (at least, at the point of his death in 1649 a fork would be listed in the inventory of his estate, although it is also possible that he had not received this implement until 1633 in a case sent to him by E. Howes "containing an Irish skeayne or knife, a bodekyn & a forke for the useful applycation of which I leave to your discretion").



In a later timeframe, the Reverend William Hubbard would have his own imitable comments on this "lustre of years" in the history of New England.

CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE

READ HUBBARD TEXT

Winthrop was quick to figure out that "Salem, where we landed, pleased us not." They would attempt in the following six weeks or so to settle at what is now Charlestown, with some of them going on to start seven other townsites in the bay area. Nathaniel Hawthorne's great-great-great-grandfather William Hathorne (1607-1681) had arrived on the *Arbella*, settling first in Dorchester in New England and then moving to Salem. He would serve as a Major in wars against the Americans and become a Magistrate and Judge of the Puritans, and would have Friend Anne Coleman whipped out of the town for being a Quaker:

> naked from the waist upward, and bound to the tail of a cart, is dragged through the Main-street at the pace of a brisk walk, while the constable follows with a whip of knotted cords. A strong-armed fellow is that constable; and each time that he flourishes his lash in the air, you see a frown wrinkling and twisting his brow, and, at the same instant, a smile upon his lips. He loves his business, faithful officer that he is, and puts his soul into every stroke, zealous to fulfill the injunction of Major Hawthorne's warrant, in the spirit and to the letter. There came down a stroke that has drawn blood! Ten such stripes are to be given in Salem, ten in Boston, and ten in Dedham; and, with those thirty stripes of blood upon her, she is to be driven into the forest.... Heaven grant that, as the rain of so many years has wept upon it, time after time, and washed it all away, so there may have been a dew of mercy, to cleanse this cruel blood-stain out of the record of the persecutor's life!

The Covenant of Salem:

> *We, whose names are here underwritten, being by* [God's] *most wise and good providence brought together into this part of America, in the Bay of Massachusetts; and desirous to unite into one congregation or church, under the Lord Jesus Christ, our head, in such sort as becometh all those whom he hath redeemed, and sanctified unto himself, do hereby solemnly and religiously, as in his most holy presence, promise and bind ourselves to walk in all our ways according to the rule of the Gospel, and in all sincere conformity to his holy ordinances, and in mutual love and respect to each other, so near as God shall give us grace.*

To oversimplify perhaps, the town meeting solved the problem of enforcement by evading it. The meeting gave institutional expression to the imperatives of peace. In the meetings consensus was reached, and individual consent and group opinion were placed in the service of social conformity.

— Michael W. Zuckerman, ALMOST CHOSEN PEOPLE:

OBLIQUE BIOGRAPHIES IN THE AMERICAN GRAIN,
1993, page 59

Governor John Winthrop wrote his son John Winthrop, Jr. in England for ordinary suet or tallow, a material not available locally which he would presumably have needed for the making of candles. (One can see in his picture here, just how badly the governor was in need of those candles. :-)

For most nations, wars are about power and self-interest, but for Americans, they have always been about righteousness. American look at war as an epic struggle between good and evil. As Dubya recently put the matter, it is up to our nation "to defend the hopes of all mankind." This sort of attitude began long before we were a nation, for in this year Governor Winthrop planted a great Biblical aspiration on American soil: "We shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us." (His colonists would soon launch a war against Indian "devil worshippers." In the decisive battle, a Puritan militia would set fire to the Pequot village at Fort Mystic and kill hundreds of men and women as they ran out of the flames. The bodies of so many "frying in the fire," according to William Bradford, would seem "a sweet sacrifice to God." The anxieties of the Indian conflicts would led the society straight into internal hunts for "witches.")

"There is only one way to accept America and that is in hate; one must be close to one's land, passionately close in some way or other, and the only way to be close to America is to hate it; it is the only way to love America."

— Lionel Trilling

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

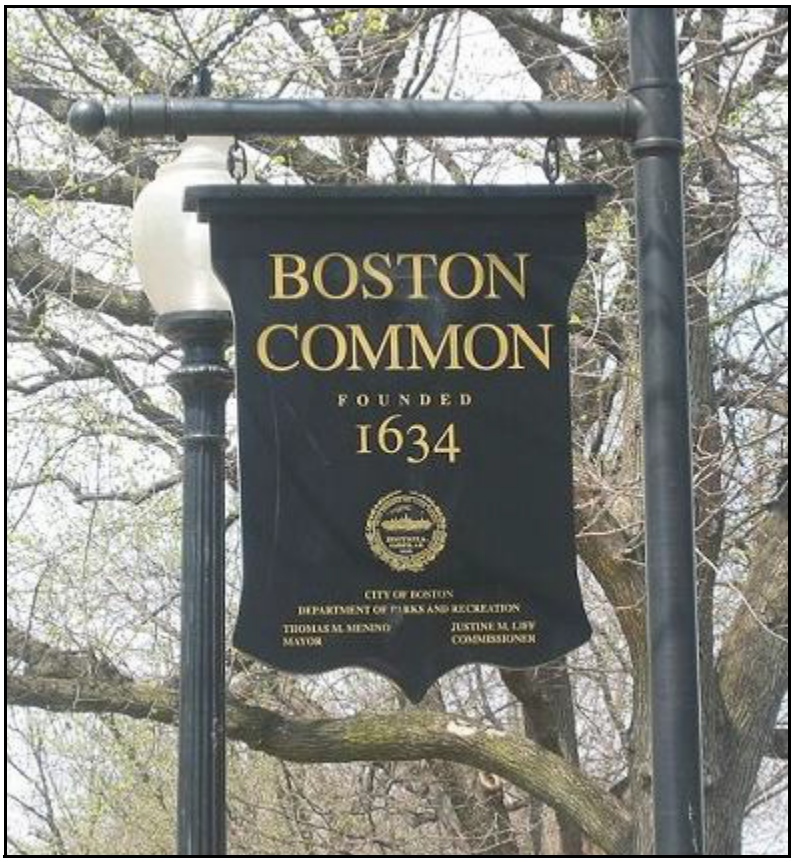
HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

1634

August: After being self-righteously harassed for over a year to see the light and become a Puritan like them,

> *I left England on account of the Bishops.... I fear that I may have to leave here on account of the Bretheren.*

the Reverend William Blaxton sold his hermit shack and his orchard on his remaining 49-acre plot (the other 15/16ths of his property having simply been expropriated) to the town of Boston for £30 sterling, each settler being assessed 6 shillings toward this sum,



so they could make for themselves a militia training field and cow pasture,[2] and went on down to Rhode Island Plantation, where he had reason to suspect that he would no longer be subjected to such religious harassment.

2. This Boston Common would become the first public park in the USA. The number of cows which each Bostonian was entitled to keep on the common would be reduced and reduced over the years, until now it would be difficult to reduce that number any further. But where have all the cows **gone**? Unfortunately, the number of soldiers recruited in the vicinity has not fallen by nearly so much. When will the soldiers be reduced to zero, like the cows? And then "Where have all the soldiers gone?"

For the initial period, the common would be quite barren of anything other than a powder house on a hill, a watch house at the base of that hill, an isolated elm tree (*Ulmus americana*) near that hill, and two elms contiguous to a burying place.

> THE SCARLET LETTER: Pearl accordingly ran to the bow-window, at the further end of the hall, and looked along the vista of a garden walk, carpeted with closely-shaven grass, and bordered with some rude and immature attempt at shrubbery. But the proprietor appeared already to have relinquished as hopeless, the effort to perpetuate on this side of the Atlantic, in a hard soil, and amid the close struggle for subsistence, the native English taste for ornamental gardening. Cabbages grew in plain sight; and a pumpkin-vine, rooted at some distance, had run across the intervening space, and deposited one of its gigantic products directly beneath the hall window, as if to warn the Governor that this great lump of vegetable gold was as rich an ornament as New England earth would offer him. There were a few rose-bushes, however, and a number of apple-trees, probably the descendants of those planted by the Reverend Mr. Blackstone, the first settler of the peninsula; that half mythological personage who rides through our early annals, seated on the back of a bull.

WILLIAM BLAXTON

Caleb H. Snow's HISTORY OF BOSTON would, when published in 1825, depict the reverend as riding upon an ox rather than a horse.

HERMITS

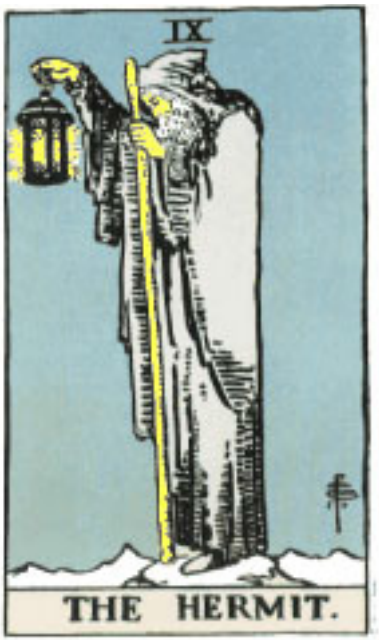
THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT

1689

In roughly this time period, a hermit of Braintree, Massachusetts called “Tom Revel” was being rumored to be a regicide, or holy man gone crazy. He lived with a pig, in a habitation that seemed to other residents of the area to resemble a pigsty. Whitney’s HISTORY OF QUINCY offered the tale that, when the man died, the Governor of the Province and other distinguished men came out from Boston and served as his pall-bearers. Several facts point to this being sheer fantasy: we know of no regicide of this name, we know that government officials could not have dared to display such public honor to one of the regicides, and we know that they would have been unwilling to show public honor to a mere hermit.

In what would become Windham, New Hampshire a mystery man named John Cates or Kates, who had been around New England at least since 1686, built the initial house. There has been a report that he had come to New England from Virginia, and it was considered possible that he had been the passenger from London who appeared under that name in the manifest of the ship *Safety* as of 1635. He withdrew from society, living for some time as a hermit in a cave near Windsor. There has been the idle speculation that he was one of the regicides, hiding out, but that seems implausible. The Boston genealogist James Savage has suggested that perhaps John Cates had been merely a “misanthropic humorist, perhaps had been a buccaneer, and thought seclusion his safest course.” We know now that he had not always been an isolate, as it would be discovered upon his death on July 16, 1697 that in his will, filed on May 5, 1696, he mentioned offspring in England. In this will he donated land for a community school, and for the poor of Windham, and money to the church

(the popular tale that he what he had donated to the church was a set of silver plate is not accurate).



The Sieur Raveneau de Lussan, apparently in debt to some creditors in Paris and unable to continue his fashionable life, had become involved in several buccaneering expeditions which had taken place in the West Indies and the Pacific coast of South America. In this year he published his *HISTOIRE DES FILIBUSTIERS DE LA MER DE SUD* which would later be translated into English as JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE INTO THE SOUTH SEAS IN 1684 AND THE FOLLOWING YEARS WITH THE FILIBUSTERS.

When French privateers threatened Block Island, a Captain Thomas Paine (later to become an associate of Captain William Kidd) sailed from Newport, Rhode Island and succeeded in driving them off.
But where was Captain Kidd himself? In this year he was a member of a privateer crew that commandeered a French ship and brought it to the English colony on the island of Nevis in the Caribbean. Governor Christopher Codrington renamed this ship *Blessed William* in honor of King William III and appointed Kidd to be its captain, with a privateer appointment to defend the island against the French and an agreement that to pay for

this service he would be entitled to anything he could seize from the French (it would be interpreting this commission very liberally that would get Kidd into beaucoup trouble as a pirate, and lead to his hanging in irons).

In Newport, the Quakers agreed that "the Yearly Men and Womens Meeting which useth to be at William Coddinton's shall be ye first part at ye Meeting House and later part for ye affayers of ye Church to be at Walter Newberry's." The meetinghouse referred to would presumably have been the repurposed residence that had been donated by the governor, Friend Nicholas Easton.

GREAT MEETINGHOUSE

In Rhode Island, Henry Bull was in charge. From this year into 1763, there would be intermittent colonial wars between England and France, a 75-year struggle for empire that would frequently involve this little colony's men, money, and ships.

1694

Fall: Drawing from theology and astrology, German prophet Johann Jacob Zimmerman had determined that the world would end in the autumn of 1694. He had gathered a group of 42 cultivated men who had agreed to become pilgrims and had made plans to go to the New World, where they would welcome Jesus back to Earth. However, he had died in February of this year on the very day of the group's departure. Johannes Kelpius, from a prominent family at Sieburgen in Transylvania, who had been a student of Dr. John Fabritius at Helmstadt, then took over leadership of this cult, "The Society of the Woman in the Wilderness," and with his leadership they had completed their journey to America. Needless to say, the cultists underwent profound disappointment in a New World that amounted more to a fresh beginning than to a final end (Daniel Cohen, PROPHETS OF DOOM, Brookfield CT: The Millbrook Press, 1999, pages 19-20). Among this group were three adherents of a peculiar Pietistic scheme of religion that had driven them from the universities of Germany, John Seelig, Barnard Kuster (or Coster), and Daniel Falkener, whose intention it was to consecrate themselves to a life of solitude. They would remain for awhile at Germantown, Pennsylvania and then settle in the wild, chiefly "on the Ridge" at nearby Roxborough. Johannes Kelpius would continue a correspondence with Maecken, in London, who was chaplain to the Prince of Denmark.

HERMITS

This is in fact a historic parallel to the "Heavens Gate" suicides in San Diego in 1997, for this group believed, as the group around Marshall Applewhite (Do) would believe centuries later, that the end of the world would coincide with the appearance of a comet, not of course the Hale-Bopp comet but one arriving in their year. However, the members of this group from the Palatinate did not commit suicide in order to "beam up" to their comet, and survivors of the disintegration of this group eventually would join others at Ephrata.

SKY EVENT

For the 1997 "Heavens Gate" mass suicide, consult the works of Robert W. Balch:

- 1976 (with David Taylor) "Salvation in a UFO." Psychology Today 10 (1976): 58-62, 66, 106.
- 1976 (with David Taylor) "Walking Out the Door of Your Life: Becoming a Member of a Contemporary UFO Cult. Missoula, MT: [by the authors], 1976. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the {Pacific Sociological Association}, San Diego CA
- 1977 (with David Taylor) "Seekers and Saucers: The Role of the Cultic Milieu in Joining a UFO Cult," American Behavioral Scientist 20:839-59.
- 1977 (with David Taylor) Becoming a Sect: A Study of Social Change in a UFO Cult. Missoula MO: [by the authors], 1977.
- 1977 (with David Taylor) "The Metamorphosis of a UFO Cult: A Study of Organizational Change." Missoula MT: [by the authors], 1977. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association, Sacramento CA
- 1978 (with David Taylor) "On Getting in Tune: Some Reflections on the Process of Making a Supernatural Contact. Missoula, MT: [by the authors]. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association, Spokane, Washington.
- 1979 Two Models of Conversion and Commitment in a UFO Cult. Missoula MT: [by the author], 1979. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the {Pacific Sociological Association}, Anaheim CA, 1979

- 1980 “Looking Behind the Scenes in a Religious Cult: Implications for the Study of Conversion.” Sociological Analysis 41:137-143.
- 1981 Bo and Peep: A Case Study of the Origins of Messianic Leadership. Missoula MT: [by the author], 1981.
- 1981 Conversion and Charisma in the Cultic Milieu: The Origins of a New Religion. Missoula MT: [by the author], 1981.
- 1982 “Bo and Peep: A Case Study of the Origins of Messianic Leadership.” In MILLENIALISM AND CHARISMA, edited by Roy Wallis. Belfast, Northern Ireland: The Queen’s University Press.
- 1982 “When the Light Goes Out, The Darkness Comes: A Study of Defection from a Totalistic Cult.” Missoula, MT: [by the author], 1982. Paper read at the 3rd International Conference on Religious Movements, May 6-9, 192, Orcas Island, Washington
- 1985 “When the Light Goes Out, The Darkness Comes.” Pp. 11-63 in RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS, edited by Rodney Stark. New York: Paragon House.
- 1995 “Waiting for the Ships: Disillusionment and the Revitalization of Faith in Bo and Peep’s UFO Cult.” In THE GODS HAVE LANDED: NEW RELIGIONS FROM OTHER WORLDS. Ed. James R. Lewis. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995.

MILLENNIALISM

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

1700

As early as this date, John Seelig, Johannes Kelpius, Bony, and Conrad Mathias were already living in the vicinity of Wissahickon and the Ridge near Germantown, Pennsylvania. They wore coarse garments and were hermits. They would become known among the locals as the "Society of the Woman in the Wilderness," after a figure in the BOOK OF REVELATIONS.

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT

1704

The hermits near Germantown, Pennsylvania, locally known as the “Society of the Woman in the Wilderness,” were joined by more recruits from Europe, among whom was a Swiss man named Conrad Mathias who eventually would become the last of the Ridge hermits, and Dr. Christopher Witt, a professor of medicine with pretensions to the supernatural. They anticipated that the millennium was close at hand, and Johannes Kelpius once told Alexander Mack, the first of the Germantown Tunkers, that it was going to come during his, Johannes’s, lifetime. The painting on the following screen, of Kelpius, by Dr. Witt, is generally regarded as the first oil painting to have been done in America and is at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania:

January: The Dampier expedition rounded the horn of South America (this was the second British ship to do so) and ventured into the “Spanish Lake,” that is to say, the Pacific Ocean. Soon they arrived at Más á Tierra Island in the Juan Fernández group 400 miles off the coast of Chile, which Captain Dampier had visited while with Captain John Cook in 1684. While in these waters there would be violent arguments aboard the vessel and they would fight naval engagements with French and Spanish vessels.[3] Finding the timbers of the ship full of worms, Alexander Selkirk became convinced that there was little chance that such a skipper and such a crew and such a hull would get him safely home, and consequently asked to be abandoned on Más á Tierra.

HERMITS
DANIEL DEFOE

3. A naval engagement, particularly if it was with a French vessel, would probably involve attempts to destroy enemy rope rigging and spars and sails by the firing of bar shot known as “doublehead.” Here is a contemporary sketch of the shot used, with a photo of a doublehead that has been found lying at the floor of the ocean:

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

October: As the longboat pulled away from the shore of Más á Tierra Island, Alexander Selkirk ran after it shouting. He was thinking about maybe changing his mind. His crewmates rested on their oars a moment, laughing at him, and then went back to their strokes.

HERMITS

And this fellow Selkirk, or Selcraig, was suddenly all alone as the undisputed monarch of all he surveyed.

WALDEN: My imagination carried me so far that I even had the refusal of several farms, -the refusal was all I wanted,- but I never got my fingers burned by actual possession. The nearest that I came to actual possession was when I bought the Hollowell Place, and had begun to sort my seeds, and collected materials with which to make a wheelbarrow to carry it on or off with; but before the owner gave me a deed of it, his wife -every man has such a wife- changed her mind and wished to keep it, and he offered me ten dollars to release him. Now, to speak the truth, I had but ten cents in the world, and it surpassed my arithmetic to tell, if I was that man who had ten cents, or who had a farm, or ten dollars, or all together. However, I let him keep the ten dollars and the farm too, for I had carried it far enough; or rather, to be generous, I sold him the farm for just what I gave for it, and, as he was not a rich man, made him a present of ten dollars, and still had my ten cents, and seeds, and materials for a wheelbarrow left. I found thus that I had been a rich man without any damage to my poverty. But I retained the landscape, and I have since annually carried off what it yielded without a wheelbarrow. With respect to landscapes,-

"I am monarch of all I *survey*,
My right there is none to dispute."

PEOPLE O WALDEN

HOLLOWELL FARM
ALEXANDER SELKIRK
WILLIAM COWPER

1705

Stephen Duck was born at Charlton, near Pewsey Vale in Wiltshire, England. He would teach himself to read, and to write verse, while working on a farm in his youth, and then go into seclusion on a mountain in Wales.[4]

4. Note that although the Reverend Duck lived for various periods as a hermit, he also married three times and was a father, and occasionally functioned acceptably as a minister.

1708

Johannes Kelpius's hut or house was near Germantown, Pennsylvania on a steep descending grassy hill, well exposed to the sun for warmth in the winter. He had dug a spring on the slope, in the shade of a very stout cedar tree. He was regarded as the leader of the hermits known locally as the "Society of the Woman in the wilderness." In this year he died in his garden at about age 35, "in the midst of his days," attended by the others of his faith community. The millennium which he had anticipated had, it turned out, not been so immediate as to come within his short lifetime. After his death many of the members of this society would begin to fall in with the world around them, and abandon their vow and doff their coarse garments, and marry. The scholar John Seelig, who had been the companion of Kelpius, would keep the costume and continue to believe that "the woman in the wilderness" mentioned in the BOOK OF REVELATIONS would deliver the church of Christ. She would "come up from the wilderness leaning on her beloved." Kelpius's hut would collapse and then the widow Phoebe Riter would shoo away the family of foxes that had made its den in the cellar and erect a log house on his foundation — this is presently on one of the trails in Wissahickon Park. Seelig would continue to collect the signs of the time, every meteor, every strange star, the colors of the sky, waiting and watching, living in anticipation of the great day to dawn. He held to a doctrine of three states of development: "the barren, the fruitful and the wilderness state of the elect of God." Perhaps, after forty years in the wilderness, he might be qualified to appear among men again, working signs and wonders and converting entire cities.

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.

1709

February 1, Tuesday (1708, Old Style): The hermit castaway Alexander Selkirk sighted the sails of the *Duke* and *Duchess* of Captain Woodes Rogers, two small British privateering vessels. He had been on Más á Tierra Island, husbanding his goats, for a lonely four years and four months.

NEVER READ AHEAD! TO APPRECIATE FEBRUARY 1, 1709 AT ALL ONE MUST APPRECIATE IT AS A TODAY (THE FOLLOWING DAY, TOMORROW, IS BUT A PORTION OF THE UNREALIZED FUTURE AND IFFY AT BEST).

February 2, Wednesday (1708, Old Style): Woodes Rogers reported that “Immediately our Pinnace return’d from the shore, and brought an abundance of Craw-fiſh, with a Man cloth’d in Goat-Skins, who Look’d wilder than the firſt Owners of them. He had been on the Iſland Four Years and four Months, being left there by Capt. Stradling In the Cinque-Ports; his name was Alexander Selkirk....”

HERMITS
ALEXANDER SELKIRK

1712

From 1708 until 1711, the privateer Captain Woodes Rogers had led an expedition which would circumnavigate the world while harassing Spanish shipping. William Dampier was his navigator.
The expedition was quite profitable, returning with stolen gold bullion, precious stones, and exotic silks.
Rogers at this point in London published about his voyage, in A CRUISING VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD: FIRST TO THE SOUTH SEAS, THENCE TO THE EAST INDIES, AND HOMEWARD BY THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE...CONTAINING A JOURNAL OF ALL THE REMARKABLE TRANSACTIONS...AN ACCOUNT OF ALEXANDER SELKIRK'S LIVING ALONE FOUR YEARS AND FOUR MONTHS ON AN ISLAND. It had been Woodes Rogers who after navigating through Cape Horn rescued the hermit castaway Alexander Selkirk from the island of Juan Fernandez.

1713

December 3, Thursday (Old Style): In an article in The Englishmen, #26, pages 121-4, one Richard Steele appraised the Alexander Selkirk story as "a memorable example, that he is happiest who confines his wants to natural necessities; and he that goes further in his desire, increases his wants in proportion to his acquisitions." Steele's article was titled "*Talia monstrabat relegens errata retrorum*." Actually, however, according to William Dampier's A NEW VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD, seaman Selkirk had been preceded on the island of Juan Fernandez off the coast of Chile by a native American man of the Moskito tribe, name unknown to me,

who had lived on goat's flesh and fish on that island for three years. Seaman Selkirk was the follow-on tenant, living there alone for four years and four months on goat's flesh, turnips, parsnips, and a kind of "cabbages that grew on trees." Of course Selkirk would get all the fame of having been able to confine his wants to natural necessities, since he had hermited 43% longer — and since even on a remote isle it is only a white man's suffering that is of any consequence. What they don't tell you is that Selkirk not only milked the goats, and ate them, and fashioned clothing and umbrellas from their hides, but also married (I think that's how you spell it) with them.

DANIEL DEFOE

1719

April 25, Saturday (Old Style): Daniel DeFoe's ROBINSON CRUSOE was published when its author was 60 (on the cigar box below, he's rather a young-looking 60).

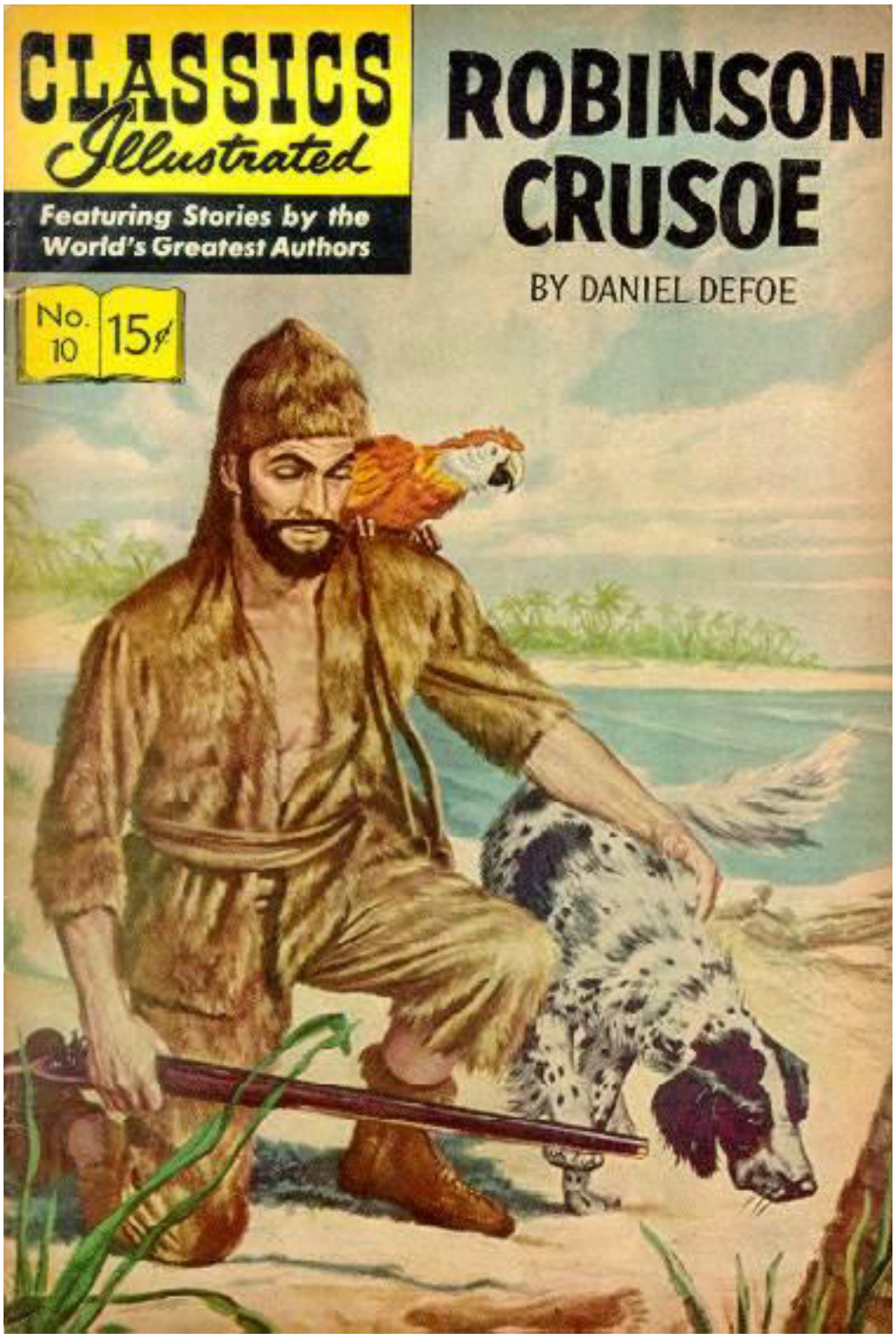
The historical original of the island hermit Robinson Crusoe is alleged to have been Alexander Selcraig, the 7th son of John Selcraig and Euphan Mackie, a sailor who had been born in 1676 in Largo, Scotland. He was sent to sea in 1695, changing his name to Selkirk, and on May 18, 1703 sailed in the *Cinque Ports* galley, 96 tons, 18 guns, and 63 men, Charles Pickering, Captain; Thomas Stradling, Lieutenant; and himself, Selkirk, Sailing Master. In that year they anchored at La Granda, Brazil, where Captain Pickering died, with the command falling upon Stradling. February of the following year saw them anchor at an uninhabited island off

the coast of Chile, Juan Fernandez, to take on food and water.

They left in pursuit of a French ship on February 29 but returned in September. During this time Selkirk had frequent quarrels with Stradling and ultimately felt that the ship was not sea-worthy. So when the *Cinque Ports* departed at the end of the month, all his effects, with additional supplies, were taken on shore and he remained alone on the island. Selkirk was recovered on February 2, 1709 by the *Duke* and *Duchess*, under the command of Captain Woodes Rogers. He was taken on as mate of the *Duke* and they sailed on February 12, arriving at Erith on the Thames, on October 14, 1711. The following year captain Rogers had published an account of his voyages in which he related the finding of Selkirk and how he had lived alone on the island "four years and four months". Another officer of the same expedition, Captain Edward Cooke, published a similar volume and stated on the title page "Wherein an Account is given of Mr. Alexander Selkirk, his manner of living and taming some wild Beasts during the four Years and four Months he lived upon the uninhabited Island of Juan Fernandez." After his time on the *Duke* Selkirk returned to Largo in 1712 and invested the money he had made. In 1717 he went to sea again and became a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy. He died at sea in 1723.

However, writing in the Sunday London Times for April 19, 1998, Christina Lamb reports that:

> The long-cherished belief that a Scottish adventurer inspired Robinson Crusoe, the castaway hero of the first great English novel, is under attack. A leading Portuguese historian claims Daniel Defoe stole the character from accounts of a 16th-century traitor from Lisbon who fled to a desert island. British school children are usually taught that Crusoe was based on Alexander Selkirk, who ran away to sea and was stranded on one of the uninhabited Juan Fernandez islands in the Pacific. Selkirk was rescued 10 years before the publication of Defoe's novel in 1719. According to Fernanda Durao Ferreira, however, Defoe's novel is strikingly similar to accounts of the life of Fernão Lopez, whose ears, nose, right hand and left thumb were cut off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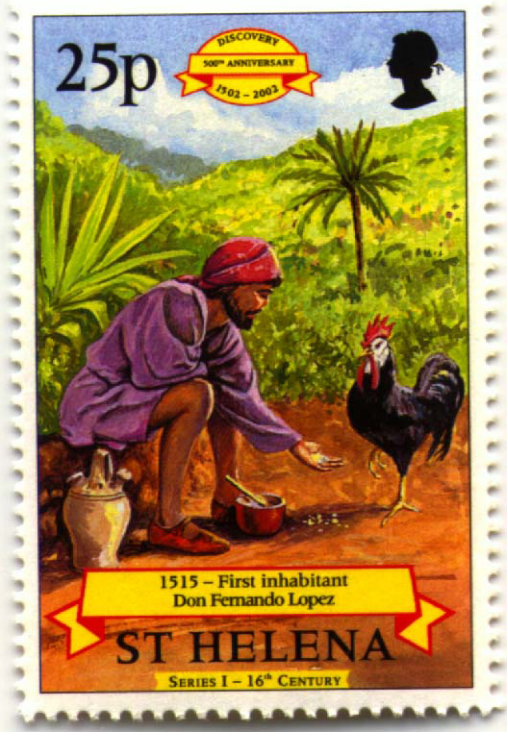
ROBINSON CRUSOE
BY DANIEL DEFOE

after he was accused of treason. He found refuge on St. Helena,

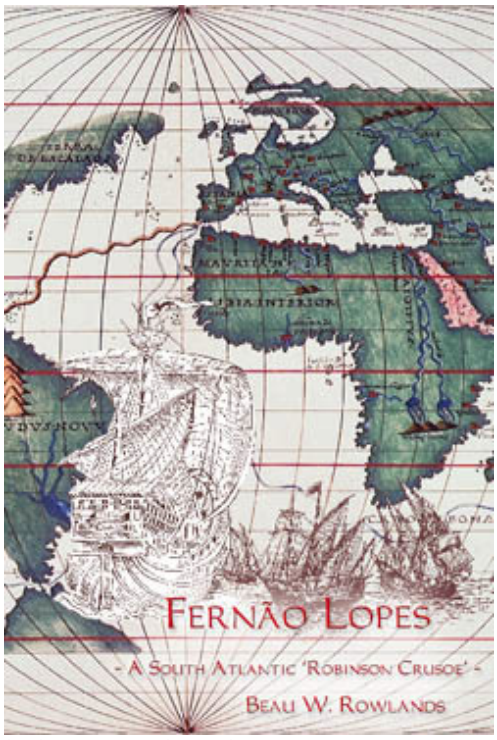
in the Atlantic, where he died in 1546. His constant companions, according to 16th-century travelogues, were a Javanese servant, like Man Friday, and a faithful cockerel which followed him

everywhere, just as Crusoe's parrot did.



"I've absolutely no doubt that Crusoe was Lopez," said Ferreira last week. "The structure of the book was Defoe's but the story is a complete patchwork of Portuguese travel literature." Ferreira's claims are made in a book, THE PORTUGUESE INSPIRATION FOR

ROBINSON CRUSOE. It is being published during a drive to emphasize



Portugal's maritime glories in the run-up to Expo, a £2 billion international exhibition in which the focus will be on oceans. The organizers of the event, which opens next month in Lisbon, want to emphasize that Portuguese explorers discovered and mapped two-thirds of the world.... "Portuguese travel literature was very much in vogue at that time, and Defoe was a personal friend of some of the translators," said Ferreira, an expert on the discoveries period. "The more I read and checked, the more I found things in Crusoe which were almost word-for-word copies of Portuguese travelogues of the 15th and 16th centuries." Defoe's description of Crusoe's island matches Portuguese accounts of the island of Goreia, off the coast of Senegal. An episode in which cannibals on Crusoe's island prepare to eat Spaniards on a ship laden with silver from South America resembles a description by Duarte Pacheco Pereira, a Portuguese writer, of an attack by cannibals on a boat laden with gold.... Ferreira believes Defoe deliberately left clues to Crusoe's true origin. After escaping from his Moroccan jail, Crusoe is saved by a Portuguese ship. When he reaches Europe, he arrives in Lisbon — and when he tries to salvage belongings from the shipwreck he manages to get "three Bibles and some Portuguese books...."[5]

ST. HELENA THE HISTORIC

5. I have silently corrected Fernão Lopes to Fernão Lopez to avoid confusion with the Portuguese historian Lopes.

Nevertheless, the Juan Fernandez group of islands 360 miles from Valparaiso, Chile now bear the names Isla Santa Clara, Isla Alejandro Selkirk, and Isla Robinson Crusoe, and there is a plaque:

IN MEMORY OF
ALEXANDER SELKIRK
MARINER.
A native of LARGO, in the County of FIFE, SCOTLAND,
who lived on this island, in complete Solitude,
For Four years and four months.
He was landed from the Cinque Ports galley, 96 tons,
18 guns, A.D. 1704, and was taken off in the
Duke, privateer, 12th. February, 1709.
He died Lieutenant of H.M.S. Weymouth,
A.D. 1723, aged 47 years.
This tablet is erected near Selkirk's lookout,
By COMMODORE POWELL, and his OFFICERS
of H.M.S. "TOPAZE", A.D. 1868.

Not only have we been supposing that Defoe based his story of the castaway Crusoe on Selkirk, when we do not have evidence that that was the case and when **it might well be otherwise**, but also, we have been supposing that Henry Thoreau read Defoe's story of the castaway Crusoe, when we do not have evidence that that was the case and when **it might well be otherwise**. For we do not actually know that Thoreau ever perused a printed edition of this story, and we do know that Thoreau studied a volume **about** the author Defoe, to wit the 1st of the three volumes of Walter Wilson, Esq.'s MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DANIEL DE FOE: CONTAINING A REVIEW OF HIS WRITINGS, AND HIS OPINIONS UPON A VARIETY OF IMPORTANT MATTERS, CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL (London: Hurst, Chance, and Co., 1830), and we do know that all the details of the story of which Thoreau was aware, **were present in that volume**.

DANIEL DE FOE

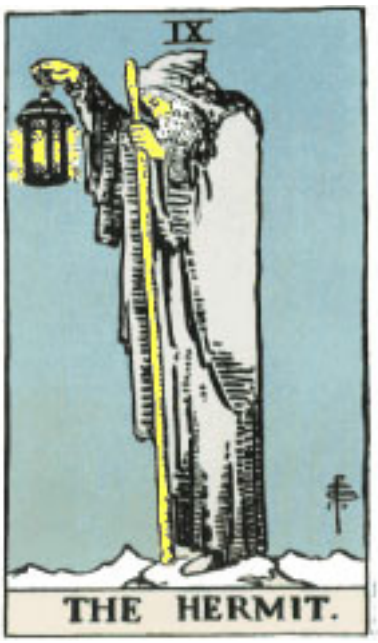
1735

November 15, Saturday (Old Style): According to The Craftsman (the author of the magazine's account may have been Henry Fielding), Queen Caroline installed a 30-year-old Welsh recluse, Stephen Duck, as her resident "hermit" in her "Merlin's Cave" at her Richmond Gardens:[6]

> Instead of a dark, and doleful Cavern upon the Mountains of Wales, inhabited by Fiends, He hath now a fine new Apartment erected for Him, upon one of the most beautiful Spots in England, where He is constantly visited by the Great, the Gay, and the Powerful, of both Sexes. Instead of the rattling of Chains, and the Groans of unhappy Sprights, his Ears are now feasted with the Melody of Birds, and other delightful Musick, both natural and artificial. The Works of the Learned surround Him, and the celebrated Mr. Stephen Duck is both his House-keeper, and his Poet-Laureat.

6. See THE DICTIONARY OF LITERARY BIOGRAPHY, Volume 95.

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES



1741

According to John F. Watson's ANNALS OF PHILADELPHIA AND PENNSYLVANIA,[7] the Philadelphia-area hermit Benjamin Lay, who had been characterized not only as an "eccentric person" but also as "the singular Pythagorean, cynical, Christian philosopher," and who had been dwelling in a cave on the York road at Branchtown, near Dr. De Benneville's, in this year left his hermit cave:

> and went to reside with John Phipps, near Friends' meeting house at Abington.

7. Watson, John Fanning. WATSON'S ANNALS OF PHILADELPHIA AND PENNSYLVANIA, A COLLECTION OF MEMOIRS, ANECDOTES, AND INCIDENTS OF THE CITY AND ITS INHABITANTS AND OF THE EARLIEST SETTLEMENTS OF THE INLAND PART OF PENNSYLVANIA FROM THE DAYS OF THE FOUNDERS INTENDED TO PRESERVE THE RECOLLECTIONS OF OLDEN TIME, AND TO EXHIBIT SOCIETY IN ITS CHANGES OF MANNERS AND CUSTOMS, AND THE CITY AND COUNTRY IN THEIR LOCAL CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS. Written between 1830 and 1850, published 1857

1756

The hermit Stephen Duck drowned himself on some date between March 30th and April 2d.

1762

Mary Collier (1690?-*circa* 1762)'s POEMS, ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, BY MARY COLLIER, AUTHOR OF THE WASHERWOMAN'S LABOUR, WITH SOME REMARKS ON HER LIFE (Winchester: Printed by Mary Ayres; for the Author. 1762) included an elegy for the Welsh poet, the Reverend Stephen Duck, who at one point, in 1735, had been captivated by Queen Caroline in a cutesy hermit abode in her Kew estate garden:

An Elegy Upon Stephen Duck.

In murmuring Strains, I lately heard it Said,
The Muse's Darling, Reverend Duck is dead.
Impartial Death by one untimely blow
Has snatch'd away from Mortals here below,
That wond'rous Man, in whom alone did join
A Thresher, Poet, Courtier, and Divine.
And while a Labourer of mean degree,
The Ornament, and Grace of Poverty:
Upon that State in high and lofty Rhyme,
Bravely attempts Parnassus's Hill to Clime;
And quickly after by Fame's loud Report,
Remov'd from his lowly Cot and call'd to Court.
A Gracious Queen being charm'd with the Lyre,
While Noble Peers his Nat'ral parts Admire;
Advanc'd, caress'd, and favour'd more and more,
Nor ceased till the Rev'rend Gown he wore.
Immortal Duck how happy hadst thou been
Belov'd by Lords Respected by a Queen?
How doubly Blest couldst thou have kept with thee,
The sweet companion of thy Poverty?
That true content and inward peace of mind,
Which in thy humble Cottage thou didst find.
Which oft doth to the poor and mean retreat
But seldom dwells among the Rich, or Great.
The want of wit thy pleasure turnd to pain,
Thy Life a Burthen, and thy Death a Stain.
So have I Seen in a fair Summers Morn,
Bright Phoebus's Beams the Hills and Dales adorn,
With Flow'rs and Shrubs their fragrant Sweets display,
And Warbling Birds foretell a Chearfull Day:
When on a Sudden some dark Clouds arise,
Obscures the Sun and overspreads the Skies;
The Birds are Silent, plants contract their bloom,
The Glorious Day ends in a dismal gloom.

1769

James Madison, Jr. matriculated at the College of New Jersey. This college's American Whig Debating Society was formed.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

In this year or in the following one, Robert Voorhis was born in Princeton, New Jersey "as was my mother (who was of African descent,) in bondage; although my father, as has been represented to me, was not only a pure white blooded Englishman, but a gentleman of considerable eminence." He would be included in his infancy as a slave "in the patrimonial portion of my master's oldest daughter, on her marriage to a Mr. JOHN VOORHIS, by birth a German."

HERMITS

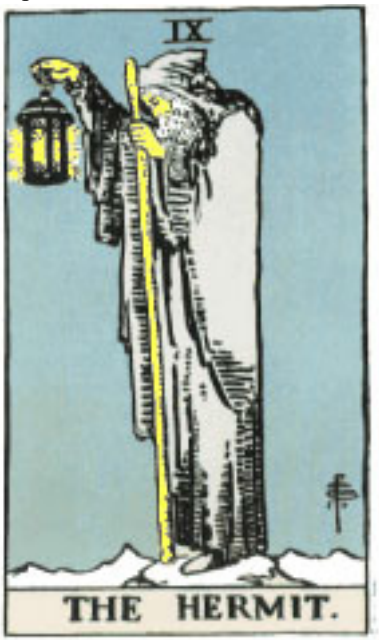
1774

While but four years of age, the mulatto Robert Voorhis was “conveyed by my master to Georgetown (District of Columbia,) to which place he removed with his family, and never have I since been enabled to learn the fate of my poor mother or sister, whom, it is not very improbable, death has long since removed from their unjust servitude.”

HERMITS

1778

July 4, Saturday midnight: A silent boat illumined with torches made its way across a lake in the Park of Ermenonville, an elaborately laid out "English garden" just to the northeast of Paris. The boat bore toward its prepared tomb the body of the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who had died at the park two days earlier. Each such period park, to be authentic, needed not only its ordered herbage and its graceful paths lined with stones inscribed with inspirational messages, but also a "hermitage" dwelling at the remote far end, and each such period stone hut required its resident hermit or wise man or nature sage. Rousseau had earlier in the year been located, living in destitution in Paris, and had been induced to take the job of resident hermit to this particular English garden, the most elaborate and the best maintained in France. He had in addition agreed to free room and board in return for music tutoring for members of the proprietor's family. His death as resident hermit gave the management an opportunity to stage an interesting ritual and to add to the park's decoration scheme one white marble hermit's cenotaph bearing a famous name.[8] Don't miss the Temple of Philosophy, which of course, as is symbolically appropriate, has been left in an unfinished condition.



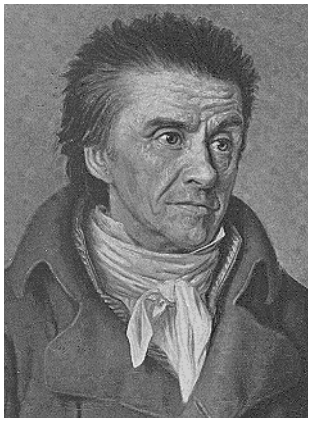
8.His body is not entombed there: it has since been removed to the Panthéon in Paris. However, you can visit the original stone *Cabane* which Rousseau briefly lived in as resident hermit, as it has been relocated stone by stone to the Abbey of Chaâlis nearby.

Here is a snuffbox that would be crafted in approximately 1790:

The logo reads “NATURE ET VERITE.” The image is that of Rousseau. On the base of the box is a view of Rousseau’s island tomb surrounded by tall trees, inscribed “TOMBEAU DE JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU ... MORT A L’AGE DE 66 ENTERRE 4 JUILLET 1778.”

1780

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi's THE EVENING HOUR OF A HERMIT, containing his philosophical principles.



1784

In this year or in the following one, at the age of 14 or 15, Robert Voorhis was apprenticed by his owner John Voorhis to a shoemaker. His progress at this art would be found unsatisfactory, and he would be returned to the plantation at Georgetown.

SLAVERY
HERMITS

1789

At the age of 19, Robert Voorhis became emotionally attached to "an agreeable young female (an orphan) by the name of ALLEY PENNINGTON, a native of Cecil county, (Maryland)—she first expressed her attachment to me, and a willingness to become my partner for life, provided I could obtain my freedom, nor can I say that I felt less attachment for one with whom I was confident I could spend my life agreeably—she was indeed the object of my first love, a love which can only be extinguished with my existence; and never at any period previous was the yoke of bondage more goading, or did I feel so sensibly the want of that freedom, the deprivation of which, was now the only barrier to my much wished for union with one I so sincerely and tenderly loved. As my master had uniformly expressed an unwillingness to grant me my freedom, on any other terms than receiving a suitable compensation therefor, my only alternative now to obtain it, was to apply to one with whom I was most intimately acquainted, and to whom I thought I could safely communicate my desires, as he had in more than one instance, expressed much regard for me, and a willingness to serve me—to him I proposed that he should pay to my master the stipulated sum (Fifty Pounds.) demanded for my freedom, and that the bill of sale should remain in his hands, until such time as I should be enabled by the fruits of my industry to repay him, principal and interest, and allow him suitable compensation therefor for his trouble—to this proposal he readily assented, and not only expressed his willingness but his approbation of my much desired union with my beloved ALLEY. My request was immediately complied with, the Fifty Pounds were paid by my good friend (as I then supposed him,) to whom I was by bond transfered as his lawful property, and by whom I was given to understand that I might then seek business for myself, and turn my attention to any that I should conceive the most profitable, and consider myself under no other bondage than as a debtor, to the amount paid for my freedom. The name of one who had manifested so much what I supposed real and disinterested friendship for me, but who finally proved the author of almost all the wretchedness, which I have since endured, ought not to be concealed—it was JAMES BEVENS." Robert and Alley would marry and over the next few years would have two children, while James was busy earning the £50 that, it had been promised, would gain him his precious manumission papers. He would of course be cheated by the white man he had trusted.

HERMITS
SLAVERY

1792

At the age of 22, Robert Voorhis was betrayed by James Bevens, the white man he had trusted, who had loaned him £50 so that this slave could obtain his manumission papers and marry and have a family: “It was late one evening, an evening never to be forgotten by me, while sitting in the midst of my innocent and beloved family, amused with the prattle of my eldest child, and enjoying all the felicity which conjugal love and parental affections are productive of, that this monster in human shape (Bevins) accompanied by another, entered, seized and pinioned me! And gave me to understand that I was intended for a Southern market!! It is impossible for me to describe my feelings or those of my poor distracted wife, at that moment! It was in vain that I intreated, in vain that I represented to Bevins that he had already received a very great proportion of the sum paid for my freedom—to which the ruffian made no other reply, than pronouncing me a liar, dragged me like a felon from my peaceable domicil— from my beloved family—whose shrieks would have pierced the heart of any one but a wretch like himself!” He was shipped to Charleston in irons and there he was sold in the slave auction.

HERMITS

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

1795

Stephen Smith was born to Nancy Smith as a slave at Paxtang near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 15 years after Pennsylvania had legislated gradual abolition.

By this point (possibly already in the previous year), Robert Voorhis, the man who would wind up his life as a hermit in Rhode Island, had escaped from his enslavement in Charleston, South Carolina by hiding away on a ship that had a Quaker master. He made it from Boston to Charlestown, Massachusetts to Lynn to Salem, where he enlisted as a common seaman aboard a ship bound for India. He would be a seaman for approximately the following 9 years. During this time, while in home port, he evidently would get a girl in the family way and would need to marry with her, for he would say in regard to his marriage before Justice Putnam of Danvers that he was being "strongly urged so to do by those who undoubtedly had the authority to use compulsory means had I declined." –However, upon his return from his next voyage, to and from Canton, China, for whatever reasons his bride would no longer feel affection for him.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

1800

William Wordsworth wrote THE RECLUSE, Book I ("Home at Grasmere," not published until 1888; as described in his Preface to THE EXCURSION, published 1814, THE PRELUDE, THE EXCURSION, and THE RECLUSE were to be three parts of a projected masterwork).[9]

HERMITS

Between this year and 1803, Dorothy Wordsworth would be putting out THE GRASMERE JOURNAL.

9. Wordsworth also wrote the famous Preface to the 1800 (2d) edition of LYRICAL BALLADS.

1803

Francis Abbott was born in England.

HERMITS

An addition was made to Kingston, Rhode Island's stone jail.

In this year or in the following one, the mulatto Robert Voorhis went to work in the packet trade, on ships sailing up and down Long Island Sound between Providence and New-York.

HERMITS

1804

A visitor to the cave of Sarah Bishop on the border between New York and Connecticut found that she had cleared half an acre and had planted a few peach trees, cucumbers, beans, and potatoes. There were also in the vicinity wild grape vines. She seemed timid when approached, but was considered "to be of a sound mind, a religious tune of thought, and entirely happy in her situation." Apparently she was not totally a recluse, for it seems she attended religious services on the New York side of West Mountain:

> Sarah kept several dresses of rich silk and satin at the home of Jared Hoyt, which she would change into from her cave clothes in order to attend the Lower Salem Presbyterian Church. She was skilled at knitting, sewing and spinning, and would visit members of the congregation often spending the night but saying little. When her brother finally found her she refused to return home with him.

HERMITS

September 22, Saturday: The Democrat of Boston reprinted an essay about Sarah Bishop, "The Hermitess of North Salem," which it claimed to be copying from a newspaper in Poughkeepsie, New York:

> Sarah Bishop, (for this was the name of this Hermitess) is a person of about fifty years of age. About thirty years ago she was a young lady of considerable beauty, a competent share of mental endowments, and education; She was possessed of a handsome fortune, but she was of a tender of delicate constitution, and enjoyed but a low degree of health; and could hardly be comfortable without constant recourse to medicine, and careful attendance; and added to this, she always discovered an unusual antipathy to men; and was often heard to say that she had no dread of any animal on earth but man. Disgusted with them, and consequently with the world, about twenty-three years ago, she withdrew herself from all human society...

HERMITS

1810

Winter: After a visit to neighbors in the valley, Sarah Bishop went back toward her snowy ridge and evidently died of exposure on the way up. The supposition was that she slipped while clambering over some rocks. The body would be discovered, and interred without a marker at the Episcopal Church cemetery in North Salem, New York.

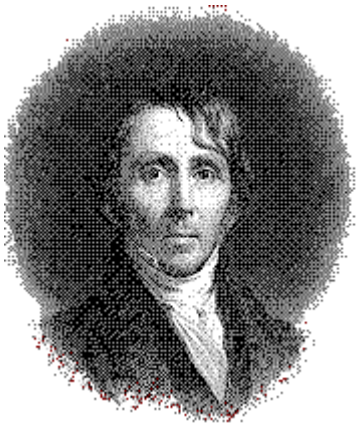
HERMITS

1811

Washington Allston painted the portrait of the 31-year-old abolitionist Unitarian clergyman, the Reverend William Ellery Channing, who would become famous in Thoreauvian circles for having an eponymous nephew who lived in Concord and chummed around with Henry Thoreau. The reverend was the painter's brother-in-law.
[Apparently it would be concluded by some, that if Henry had a friend who was an eponymous nephew of a famous Unitarian reverend, then Henry himself must have been a Unitarian — for instance, there happens to be a Unitarian worship group in Irvine CA, meeting in the upstairs room of a shopping center near the UCI campus, that has actually named itself in honor of "the Reverend Henry Thoreau."]

For instance, according to page 83 of a just-published volume out of HarperCollins press –publishers of some little reputation– by one Richard Shenkman, while Thoreau was staying at his cabin on Walden Pond "William Ellery Channing, the antislavery clergyman, stayed with him for two weeks."[10]

How chummy of the right Rev, who had been dead for some time before Henry began to build his shanty!



Samuel F.B. Morse, one of Allston's art pupils, in this year accompanied his master to Europe (after traveling throughout western Europe, Allston would settle in London).

10. The title of this curious 1991 volume which places a prominent Unitarian clergymen in Walden Wood is, *sic*, "I LOVE PAUL REVERE WHETHER HE RODE OR NOT"* *WARREN HARDING. A carefully edited work of original scholarship, this treatise also alleges –evidently in an effort to prove that as in the hermit category Thoreau was something of a fraud– that "Every Saturday his mother and sisters visited. On Sundays Bronson Alcott came." And it goes on, on page 84, to explain that "The lament that 'the mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation' is regarded as one of Thoreau's keenest insights, and it was. But few realize it was Thoreau who was desperate. That's why he went into the woods. A Harvard College graduate, he never adopted a regular profession, was a disappointment to his mother, felt inferior to his gregarious brother, and long regarded his life as something of a failure. The one woman he loved he lost. He never married. When his brother died from lockjaw, Thoreau immediately came down with the same symptoms and was bedridden for months though doctors found nothing wrong with him. A psychobiographer has suggested Thoreau secretly felt he must –somehow– have been to blame for his brother's death."
Then the author got on his horse and tilted some, at more weighty topics.

(By the way –potential commentators take careful note– Henry began to build his shanty at Walden Pond during Spring 1845, and at that point the Reverend Channing had been in his grave for some two and a half years.)

1812

At about this point Cato Pearce, who had been working on a farm in Rehoboth, Massachusetts, signed on as a crewmember aboard a schooner belonging to a Captain Rogers of New London, Connecticut, on a cruise to the Caribbean. On his return in about 1815, after spending his wages, he would hire himself out to James Rhodes of Providence, Rhode Island.

In approximately this year Robert Voorhis was building his hut on Fox Point,

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

a peninsula of uninhabited land about a mile south of Providence Bridge in Rhode Island, and would reside there for a number of years, until obnoxious construction work began in that vicinity. What had made this escaped-mulatto-slave-become-seaman resolve to become a hermit? —he said that had sneaked back down south via Baltimore to Georgetown in a fruitless attempt to recover his first wife and their children:

> Feeling a strong inclination once more to visit the shores of the south, where I had not only been unjustly deprived of my liberty, but where I was inhumanly forced from my beloved wife and two darling children, I took passage (about fifteen years since) on board a sloop for Baltimore, and from thence proceeded direct to Georgetown. As twenty years had elapsed since I there left all that I held most dear in life — and so great a change had time effected in my personal appearance, I felt little or no apprehension that I should be recognized or molested by any, if living, who once professed a claim to me. In this I was not mistaken, for indeed as regarded the town, inhabitants, &c. so great a change had the twenty years produced, that I walked the streets at mid-day unnoticed and unknown. My old master (Voorhis and his wife had been some years dead, and the survivors of the family had removed to parts unknown— Bevins, the wretch by whom I was unjustly deprived of my liberty, and thereby forever seperated [*sic*] from my unfortunate family, had a few years

previous emigrated to the west— but, the principle object of my visit was not answered— of my wife and children I could obtain no satisfactory information— all that I could learn, was, that soon after my disappearance, their sufferings and deprivations became so great, that my poor wife in a fit of desparation [*sic*], as was supposed, put an end to her existence, and that her helpless children did not long survive her!— this was enough! yea more than enough, to fill to the brim the bitter cup of my afflictions!— afflictions which had more less attended me through life!—I then felt but little desire to live, as there was nothing then remaining to attach me to this world— it was at that moment that I formed the determination to retire from it— to become a recluse, and mingle thereafter as little as possible with human society.

1814

September 17, Saturday: The Rarotonga group of islands of the Cook Islands, which would eventually become the home of Thomas Francis Neale, was officially discovered by the Russian ship *Suvarov*.

HERMITS

The main island of Suwarrow atoll was, when first sighted by the whites, covered with a tall forest of mostly banyan trees.

Prussian Chancellor Prince Karl August von Hardenberg arrived in Vienna to attend the Congress.

Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

> *7th day 17 of 9 M 1814 / Altho I have been very buisily occupied this Week in Assessing the Town Poor Tax, Yet I can say with a degree of humble gratitude that there has been but few weeks perhaps in my whole life when my mind has been more favord with peace & quiet within. & tho' there is much stir among the people of the Town in moving away there goods & their persons to avoid apprehended danger, & rumors of great Battles that have been fought within the once peaceful & very happy States of America. Yet amid all I have not been moved & on this ground I greatly crave to remain that when we are put to the test & an hostile foe may present at our doors, faith & good resolution may not forsake me. -In this event I feel much for my dear Wife & little*

son, having no where for them to flee for refuge - but having in the course of my life many times seen ways opened both for preservation & escape from dangers, tho' not of the Magnitude which now appears to threaten & means provided for a lively hood when the close of the Year has left me allmost with out resource - I have no reason to distrust that Almighty Power which is over all his Works & sees & knows what is best for us. —
This evengs Mail brings an account of a great Battle having been fought at Baltimore. - & Plattsburgh Oh! Oh! when will the Art of War cease & All men love like Brethren —

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1817

June 13, Friday: Timothy Leonard, the hermit of Hermit Pond in New Marlborough, Massachusetts, died alone in about his 70th year (New Marlborough is about 20 miles from Lenox).

Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

> *6th 13th of 6th M 1817 / This may be considered the beginning of Yearly Meeting. — A number of Friends have come - this Afternoon Jesse Kersey & several others came with a letter from OBrown to me requesting my attention to them — by previous arrangement I conducted Jessey & his companion to David Buffums & a young man from Philada to D Williams. - We have heard much tell of Jessey Kersey as a great preacher & good man. & I ma acknowledge that his looks are prepossessing —*
>
> RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1820

August 7, Monday: Potatoes were 1st planted in the Hawaiian Islands.

Marie Anne Elisa Bonaparte, a sister of Napoléon Bonaparte, died at the age of 43.

Ellen Kilshaw Fuller was born to Margaret Crane Fuller and Timothy Fuller.

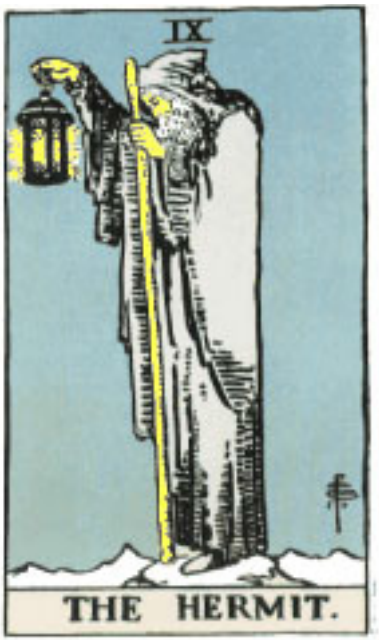
In the United States of America, this was the 4th national Census Day. Exceedingly few were living alone. In Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, for instance, the census turned up only two such individuals: a solitary Mary Garfield, a spinster who spun for her neighbors but did not get along well with her kin and who was being referred to as “old Moll Garfield the witch,” and a solitary Jonas Stone, an “insane person” who rejected all attempts at help and was in the process of being coerced by town authorities.

HERMITS

1822

During about this period, Tristam Brugiss granted to the hermit Robert Voorhis permission to use a small plot of land two miles from Providence Bridge, and take up his solitary existence again “in a thick pine grove, which threw its luxurious foliage over the brow of Arnold’s Hill,” a few rods east of the Seekonk River on the very border but within the state of Massachusetts rather than within the state of Rhode Island.

HERMITS



HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Table of Altitudes

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

Deng Xiaoping	5 ' 0 "
Dred Scott	5 ' 0 " (±)
Captain William Bligh of HMS *Bounty*	5 ' 0 " (±)
Harriet Tubman	5 ' 0 " (±)
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (2)	5 ' 0 " (±)
John Brown of Providence, Rhode Island	5 ' 0 " (+)
John Keats	5 ' 3/4 "
Debbie Reynolds (Carrie Fisher's mother)	5 ' 1 "
Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher)	5 ' 1 "
Bette Midler	5 ' 1 "
Dudley Moore	5 ' 2 "
Paul Simon (of Simon & Garfunkel)	5 ' 2 "
Honoré de Balzac	5 ' 2 "
Sally Field	5 ' 2 "
Jemmy Button	5 ' 2 "
Margaret Mead	5 ' 2 "
R. Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller	5 ' 2 "
Yuri Gagarin the astronaut	5 ' 2 "
William Walker	5 ' 2 "
Horatio Alger, Jr.	5 ' 2 "
length of older military musket	5 ' 2 "
the artist formerly known as Prince	5 ' $2^{1}/_{2}$"
typical female of Thoreau's period	5 ' $2^{1}/_{2}$"
Francis of Assisi	5 ' 3 "
Voltaire	5 ' 3 "
Mohandas Gandhi	5 ' 3 "
Kahlil Gibran	5 ' 3 "
Friend Daniel Ricketson	5 ' 3 "
The Reverend Gilbert White	5 ' 3 "
Soviet First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev	5 ' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5 ' 3 "
William Laws Calley, Jr.	5 ' 3 "
Truman Capote	5 ' 3 "
Kim Jong Il (North Korea)	5 ' 3 "
Stephen A. "Little Giant" Douglas	5 ' 4 "
Francisco Franco	5 ' 4 "
President James Madison	5 ' 4 "
Iosef Vissarionovich Dzugashvili "Stalin"	5 ' 4 "
Alan Ladd	5 ' 4 "
Pablo Picasso	5 ' 4 "
Truman Capote	5 ' 4 "
Queen Elizabeth	5 ' 4 "
Ludwig van Beethoven	5 ' 4 "

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

Typical Homo Erectus	5 ' 4 "
typical Neanderthal adult male	5 ' 4 1/2 "
Alan Ladd	5 ' 4 1/2 "
comte de Buffon	5 ' 5 " (-)
Captain Nathaniel Gordon	5 ' 5 "
Charles Manson	5 ' 5 "
Audie Murphy	5 ' 5 "
Harry Houdini	5 ' 5 "
Hung Hsiu-ch'üan 洪秀全	5 ' 5 "
Marilyn Monroe	5 ' 5 1/2 "
T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia"	5 ' 5 1/2 "
average runaway male American slave	5 ' 5-6 "
Charles Dickens	5 ' 6? "
President Benjamin Harrison	5 ' 6 "
President Martin Van Buren	5 ' 6 "
James Smithson	5 ' 6 "
Louisa May Alcott	5 ' 6 "
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	5 ' 6 1/2 "
Napoleon Bonaparte	5 ' 6 1/2 "
Emily Brontë	5 ' 6-7 "
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	5 ' ? "
average height, seaman of 1812	5 ' 6.85 "
Oliver Reed Smoot, Jr.	5 ' 7 "
minimum height, British soldier	5 ' 7 "
President John Adams	5 ' 7 "
President John Quincy Adams	5 ' 7 "
President William McKinley	5 ' 7 "
"Charley" Parkhurst (a female)	5 ' 7 "
Ulysses S. Grant	5 ' 7 "
Henry Thoreau	5 ' 7 "
the average male of Thoreau's period	5 ' 7 1/2 "
Edgar Allan Poe	5 ' 8 "
President Ulysses S. Grant	5 ' 8 "
President William H. Harrison	5 ' 8 "
President James Polk	5 ' 8 "
President Zachary Taylor	5 ' 8 "
average height, soldier of 1812	5 ' 8.35 "
President Rutherford B. Hayes	5 ' 8 1/2 "
President Millard Fillmore	5 ' 9 "
President Harry S Truman	5 ' 9 "
President Jimmy Carter	5 ' 9 1/2 "

Herman Melville	5 ' $9^{3}/_{4}$"
Calvin Coolidge	5 ' 10"
Andrew Johnson	5 ' 10"
Theodore Roosevelt	5 ' 10"
Thomas Paine	5 ' 10"
Franklin Pierce	5 ' 10"
Abby May Alcott	5 ' 10"
Reverend Henry C. Wright	5 ' 10"
Nathaniel Hawthorne	5 ' $10^{1}/_{2}$"
Louis “Deerfoot” Bennett	5 ' $10^{1}/_{2}$"
Friend John Greenleaf Whittier	5 ' $10^{1}/_{2}$"
President Dwight David “Ike” Eisenhower	5 ' $10^{1}/_{2}$"
Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots	5 ' 11"
Sojourner Truth	5 ' 11"
President Stephen Grover Cleveland	5 ' 11"
President Herbert Hoover	5 ' 11"
President Woodrow Wilson	5 ' 11"
President Jefferson Davis	5 ' 11"
President Richard Milhous Nixon	5 ' $11^{1}/_{2}$"
Robert Voorhis the hermit of Rhode Island	< 6 '
Frederick Douglass	6 ' (-)
Anthony Burns	6 ' 0 "
Waldo Emerson	6 ' 0 "
Joseph Smith, Jr.	6 ' 0 "
David Walker	6 ' 0 "
Sarah F. Wakefield	6 ' 0 "
Thomas Wentworth Higginson	6 ' 0 "
President James Buchanan	6 ' 0 "
President Gerald R. Ford	6 ' 0 "
President James Garfield	6 ' 0 "
President Warren Harding	6 ' 0 "
President John F. Kennedy	6 ' 0 "
President James Monroe	6 ' 0 "
President William H. Taft	6 ' 0 "
President John Tyler	6 ' 0 "
Captain John Brown	6 ' 0 (+)"
President Andrew Jackson	6 ' 1"
Alfred Russel Wallace	6 ' 1"
President Ronald Reagan	6 ' 1"
Venture Smith	6 ' $1^{1}/_{2}$"
John Camel Heenan	6 ' 2 "

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

June: This appeared in the Literary Cadet in regard to Robert Voorhis, the hermit who was living at the bridge on the border between Massachusetts and Rhode Island:

“Beneath a mountain’s brow, the most remote
And inaccessible by Shepherds trod,
In a deep cave, dug by no mortals hands
An Hermit lived,—a melancholy man
Who was the wonder of our wand’ring swains:
Austere and lonely—cruel to himself
They did report him—the cold earth his bed,
Water his drink, his food the Shepherd’s alms.
I went to see him, and my heart was touched
With reverence and pity. Mild he spake,
And entering on discourse, such stories told,
As made me oft re-visit his sad cell.”
Homes’ Douglas.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

1823

July 10, Thursday: Gaol chaplains had existed for some time, but on this day they were made universal. They were obliged to receive the license of their bishop previous to assuming their office, and obligated to perform divine service on Sunday, Christmas-day, and Good Friday, and to keep a journal of their transactions with prisoners for the inspection of the justices.

John B. Smith was born in Perth, Scotland as a son of Robert Smith, a marine in the service of the crown. His mother would soon expire and he would be reared by his aged grandmother. He would be visited by his father, whom he would remember as unaffectionate, only twice.

HERMITS

In Newport, Rhode Island, Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

> *5th day 10 of 7 M / A solid good meeting - Father Rodman was engaged in a sweet & I apprehend a lively & well authorized testimony*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

ESSENCE IS BLUR. SPECIFICITY,
THE OPPOSITE OF ESSENCE,
IS OF THE NATURE OF TRUTH.

1828

The 2d series of Sir Walter Scott's TALES OF A GRANDFATHER.

In about this year in Scotland, at the completion of his allowed 3-year period of education in reading, writing, and arithmetic, upon his entry into self-sufficiency at the age of 15, John B. Smith was granted 2 suits of clothing and 6 pounds in money. He invested 5 pounds of this in cheap jewelry, knives, and the like and became a itinerant peddler. As he sold off his initial kit of goods, which was heavy, he would fill out his peddler's pack with dry goods because they were considerably lighter. While on his rounds he would meet a young woman named Betsey. However, the path of true love would not wend smooth, for this girl would run off to England with a cattle-dealer, and before her father could catch up with her, had been spoiled and needed to get married with her seducer. Smith would move into the city of Edinburgh and in response to a newspaper advertisement join the "Red and White Guild," an association of professional hermits with broken hearts (a professional hermit was a man who hired himself out to landed gentry to occupy some hovel at the edge of their rural property and entertain their visitors either by remaining completely silent, or by delivering lectures and stories about nature and whatever). Such a private-garden hovel would always feature a modest altar, for the concept was to emulate famous religious isolates such as Peter, Simon Stylites, and Benedict. To qualify for the tradition such a private-garden hermit would be simply attired and dirty, would not shave, would allow his hair to grow long, and would allow his fingernails to lengthen. Smith's initial such employment was at Lovet's Castle, the proprietor of which was of the Catholic faith, and he would remain there for about 4 years. When he would be visited by Lady Hays, who employed a hermit at Black-Heath near her mansion who was unsatisfactory because a Catholic, she would inquire whether he would, since like her he was Protestant, be willing to supplant her existing garden ornament. He would remain with this Protestant lady for 6 years. When Lady Hays went on a tour of Eastern travel, Smith would begin to act the part of a hermit in various theatrical

plays in the city of Inverness, but would discover this to be too much for him. A performance was viewed by Lord Fief, who would hire Smith as his personal hermit. Lord Fief did not have many visitors, and Smith would suffer in his garden from neglect. Finally he would meet Lord McDugald, of the islands to the north of Scotland, and be hired as that gentleman's personal hermit. He remained in the cold climate of those northern isles with Lord McDugald for more than 6 years. Then he would be hired away by the Marquis Breadalbane of Kenmore Castle and his wife Lady Kenmore. Lady Kenmore was an open communion Baptist as was Smith himself, and the climate at Kenmore Castle was more pleasant. He would remain there for 3 years, until the death of the Marquis. On his own again, Lady McDonald of Keppeth Castle would offer him a job as her gardener, but only on condition of his conversion to Catholicism. This he would decline. In all Smith would remain in that trade in Scotland for several decades, sometimes receiving in the course of a year some hundred dollars in presents.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE HISTORIAN TYPICALLY SUPPOSES NOW TO BE THE WHY OF THEN. THE REALITY IS VERY MUCH TO THE CONTRARY, FOR NOW IS NOT THE WHY OF THEN: INSTEAD, THEN WAS THE HOW OF NOW. ANOTHER WAY TO SAY THIS IS THAT HISTORIANS WHO ANTICIPATE OFFEND AGAINST REALITY. A HISTORY WRITTEN IN THE LIGHT OF SUBSEQUENT EVENTS AMOUNTS TO SPURIOUS MAKE-BELIEVE. TO DO A GOOD JOB OF RECORDING HISTORY, ONE MUST BECOME IGNORANT (OR FEIGN IGNORANCE) OF EVERYTHING THAT WE NOW KNOW TO HAVE FOLLOWED.

1829

January 31, Saturday: LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF ROBERT, THE HERMIT OF MASSACHUSETTS, WHO HAS LIVED 14 YEARS IN A CAVE, SECLUDED FROM HUMAN SOCIETY. COMPRISING, AN ACCOUNT OF HIS BIRTH, PARENTAGE, SUFFERINGS, AND PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPE FROM UNJUST AND CRUEL BONDAGE IN EARLY LIFE — AND HIS REASONS FOR BECOMING A RECLUSE. TAKEN FROM HIS OWN MOUTH, AND PUBLISHED FOR HIS BENEFIT. (Providence, Rhode Island: Printed for H. TRUMBELL — 1829; Price 12 1-2 Cents[11]

HERMITS

From the Concord Yeoman's Gazette:

> CONCORD LYCEUM. — The first Lecture before this society was given in the Court House on Wednesday Evening last, by Rev. BERNARD WHITMAN, of Waltham. The subject was "POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS," and was treated in a very instructive and interesting manner. The meeting was well attended; we should think full three hundred hearers were present, some of whom came from adjoining towns. The President announced, that a second Lecture would be given, by Dr. HORATIO ADAMS, on Wednesday evening next, at the same place.

June: Francis Abbott moved into the tiny log cabin, that had been abandoned by a previous pioneer family, in the woods of Goat Island above the "horseshoe" of Niagara Falls. He had with him a guitar, a violin, and some flutes, and lived with a dog and a cat. He would be in the habit of entertaining tourists by doing hours-long balancing acts on a wooden pier leading to Terrapin Tower that ended in a 12-foot beam 10 inches in width that projected above the rim of the falls. He would hang off the end of this beam for perhaps 15 minutes, kicking his feet into the plunging torrent. (Presumably he would leave a hat on the bridge to be filled by coins by the tourists?) He was said to write in Latin although the papers that would be found in his abode would be entirely blank. The locals would report that before making of himself such a tourist-trade "hermit" they supposed him to have toured Egypt, Palestine, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and France. After his eviction from the island by Peter and Augustus Porter, power investors, he would construct for himself another such cabin below the falls.

11. We have in Providence two life-story books which were published in order to create an income for a needy elderly man of color. One is this 1829 publication done for the benefit of Robert Voorhis, and the other is an 1883 publication by and for William J. Brown. Did this one at least in part inspire that one?

1830

In an "Address to Parents" at the beginning of THE CHILDREN'S ROBINSON CRUSOE, Mrs. Eliza Ware Rotch Farrar noted that Daniel Defoe's work had been "exactly what it purports to be, the narrative of a profane, ill-educated, runaway apprentice of the 17th century," and therefore had been in need of being expurgated before it could conceivably be offered as part of a properly guarded education for our tender innocent children: "Can such a tale, though perfect in itself, be suited to children who have been carefully guarded from all profaneness, vulgarity, and superstition?" She not only elided Crusoe's "disobedience to his parents, and his inordinate love of adventure," replacing such negatives with such positive traits as: "industry, perseverance, resignation to the will of God." Friday she altered to make him be your perfect colored servant: "of a mild, affectionate, and tractable nature." Deliberately, she wove into the narrative "as much information about domestic arts as could well be interwoven with the story."

Walter Wilson, Esq.'s MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DANIEL DE FOE: CONTAINING A REVIEW OF HIS WRITINGS, AND HIS OPINIONS UPON A VARIETY OF IMPORTANT MATTERS, CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL (London: Hurst, Chance, and Co.).[12]

DANIEL DE FOE

12. Of the 3 volumes of this Henry Thoreau would check out only the 1st.

THE MAINE WOODS: Setting out on our return to the river, still at an early hour in the day, we decided to follow the course of the torrent, which we supposed to be Murch Brook, as long as it would not lead us too far out of our way. We thus travelled about four miles in the very torrent itself, continually crossing and recrossing it, leaping from rock to rock, and jumping with the stream down falls of seven or eight feet, or sometimes sliding down on our backs in a thin sheet of water. This ravine had been the scene of an extraordinary freshet in the spring, apparently accompanied by a slide from the mountain. It must have been filled with a stream of stones and water, at least twenty feet above the present level of the torrent. For a rod or two, on either side of its channel, the trees were barked and splintered up to their tops, the birches bent over, twisted, and sometimes finely split, like a stable-broom; some, a foot in diameter, snapped off, and whole clumps of trees bent over with the weight of rocks piled on them. In one place we noticed a rock, two or three feet in diameter, lodged nearly twenty feet high in the crotch of a tree. For the whole four miles, we saw but one rill emptying in, and the volume of water did not seem to be increased from the first. We travelled thus very rapidly with a downward impetus, and grew remarkably expert at leaping from rock to rock, for leap we must, and leap we did, whether there was any rock at the right distance or not. It was a pleasant picture when the foremost turned about and looked up the winding ravine, walled in with rocks and the green forest, to see, at intervals of a rod or two, a red-shirted or green-jacketed mountaineer against the white torrent, leaping down the channel with his pack on his back, or pausing upon a convenient rock in the midst of the torrent to mend a rent in his clothes, or unstrap the dipper at his belt to take a draught of the water. At one place we were startled by seeing, on a little sandy shelf by the side of the stream, the fresh print of a man's foot, and for a moment realized how Robinson Crusoe felt in a similar case; but at last we remembered that we had struck this stream on our way up, though we could not have told where, and one had descended into the ravine for a drink. The cool air above, and the continual bathing of our bodies in mountain water, alternate foot, sitz, douche, and plunge baths, made this walk exceedingly refreshing, and we had travelled only a mile or two, after leaving the torrent, before every thread of our clothes was as dry as usual, owing perhaps to a peculiar quality in the atmosphere.

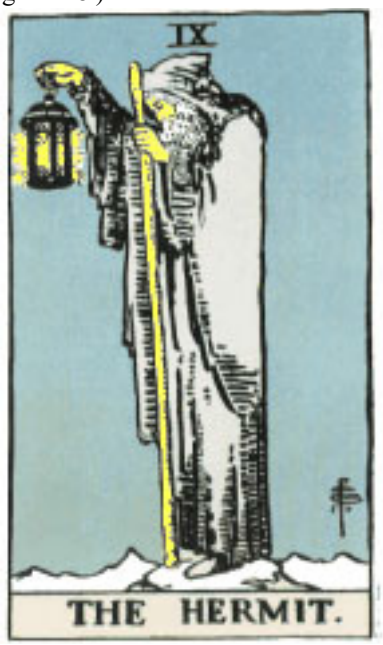
ROBINSON CRUSOE

1831

In this year or possibly in the preceding one, Thomas Cole painted the Niagara Falls being foregrounded by a couple of Indians in the Wilderness:

Were the Indians sublimed by the experience? The painting does not tell us.

(It's really unfortunate that the painter hadn't foregrounded instead Francis Abbott, who lived in a log cabin near the famous falls and was generally regarded as the "hermit of the falls" — because dying is even more associated with these famous falls than wildness, and while bathing during this year, the hermit drowned or committed suicide at about the age of 28.)



June 10, Friday: When Field Marshal Baron Ivan von Diebitsch, commander of Russian forces in Poland, died of cholera, this temporarily halting the Russian advance.

At about 2PM a passing ferryman witnessed Francis Abbott, "hermit of Niagara Falls," enter the water below the American Falls. He appeared to be bathing, but after he went beneath the surface of the water, the ferryman did not again see him. His clothing would be found neatly folded.

Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

> *6th day engaged in preparing for Y Meeting - In the Steam Boat came passengers our English friends Jonathon & Hannah Backhouse - who took quarters at David Buffums Elisha Bates & Doctor William Carey took quarters at Our house as we shared*[?] *with Aunt Nancy Carpenter & have the use of the rooms of the part of the house we hire of her & occupy when in Newport. Jeremiah Hubbard & his wife went to Job Shermans- & found all who came got quarters pretty readily which considering the state of things was a favour. —*

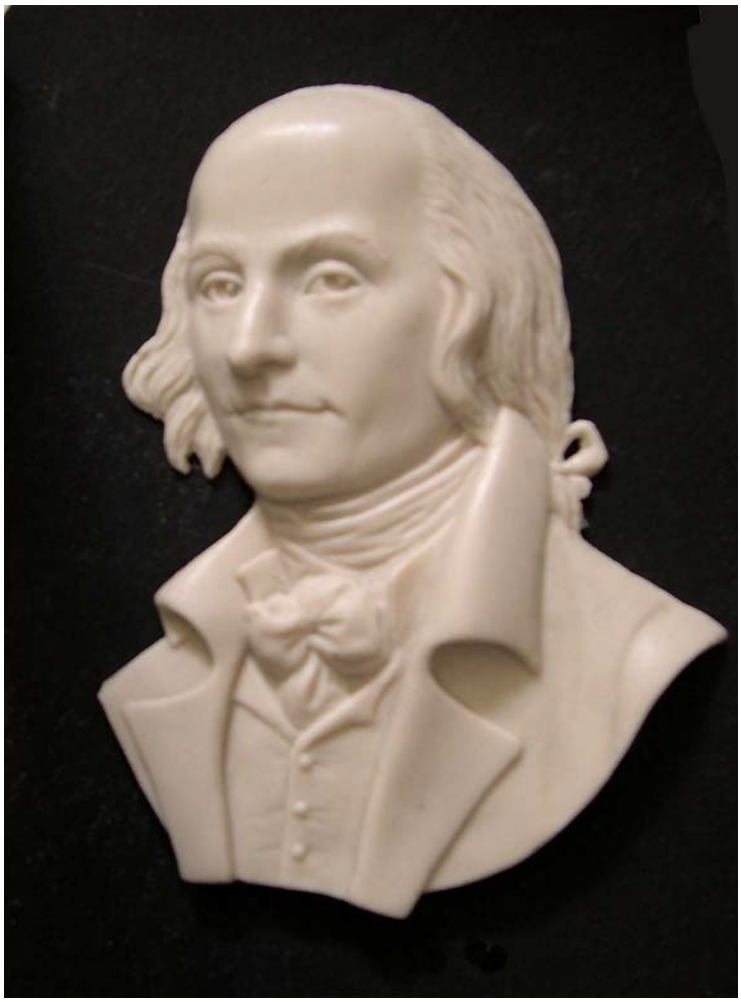
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

In New-York, Alexis de Tocqueville met with community leaders and had a conversation with Albert Gallatin concerning the ideals of American men and women in regard to chastity and adultery:

I. Is it true, as I am told, that morals are pure?

He. Conjugal fidelity is admirably kept. It's not always thus with virtue before marriage. It very often happens in the country (not in our cities) that the extreme liberty enjoyed by the young people of both sexes has its drawbacks. The savage peoples who surround us carry disregard for chastity before marriage even further. They do not regard it as a moral obligation.

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES



ALBERT GALLATIN

June 21, Tuesday: Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

> *3rd day 21 of 6 M / Engaged pretty much as yesterday, & among others we had the company of our interesting young friend Sarah H Jenkins from Hudson who being an aquaintance of our Son John we took the opportunity of writing to him by her & fowarding a few things which will be interesting to him. —*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

The body of Francis Abbott, "hermit of Niagara Falls," came to the surface on the eastern bank of the Niagara River at the point where it debouches into Lake Ontario near Fort Niagara. The corpse would be placed in Oakwood Cemetery (later, the Porter brothers who had evicted him from Goat Island would also find their way to this cemetery, although not to the section reserved for indigents). On a piece of the dolomitic limestone of tiny Luna Island between Bridal Veil Falls and American Falls, possibly chiseled by him, would be found the following inscription:

ALL IS CHANGE
ETERNAL PROGRESS
NO DEATH

1832

April 1, Sunday: Robert Voorhis, the hermit at the bridge on the border between Massachusetts and Rhode Island, died.

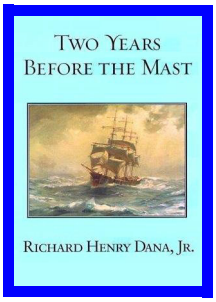
1835

A coastal vessel, the *Peor es Nada* (Worse Than Nothing), stopped by San Nicolàs Island off the California coast, because a mountain man named Bill Williams needed a squaw. As an act of mercy the vessel transported to the mainland those native Americans who had survived the massacre of the 1820s (by the Inuit crew of a Russian whaling vessel). One mother, however, stayed behind, looking for a lost child. She would become known as the "Lone Woman" of San Nicolàs Island. Thus we can know that when a personage such as Richard Henry Dana, Jr., in his journal which became TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST, recording an incident of late in this year of 1835, informs us that

> The second day after our arrival, a full-rigged brig came round the point from the northward, sailed leisurely through the bay, and stood off again for the south-east, in the direction of the large island of Catalina. The next day the *Avon* got under weigh, and stood in the same direction, bound for San Pedro. This might do for marines and Californians, but we knew the ropes too well. The brig was never again seen on the coast, and the *Avon* arrived at San Pedro in about a week, with a full cargo of Canton and American goods. This was one of the means of escaping the heavy duties the Mexicans lay upon all imports. A vessel comes on the coast, enters a moderate cargo at Monterey, which is the only custom-house, and commences trading. In a month or more, having sold a large part of her cargo, she stretches over to Catalina, or other of the large uninhabited islands which lie off the coast, in a trip from port to port, and supplies herself with choice goods from a vessel from Oahu, which has been lying off and on the islands, waiting for her. Two days after the sailing of the *Avon*, the *Loriotte* came in from the leeward, and without doubt had also a snatch at the brig's cargo.

what this temporary sailor means by "the large uninhabited islands which lie off the coast" is islands uninhabited by people worth taking into consideration, which is to say, white people in significant quantity.

HERMITS



1837

In 1834 the US Senate had censured President Andrew Jackson.

ANDREW JACKSON

In this year, with Jacksonian Democrats having come into control of the Senate, black lines were drawn around the record of that censure and, superimposed over it, the inscription “Expunged by order of the Senate” was written. Jackson retired to his “Hermitage” plantation upon the beginning of the presidency of Martin Van Buren.

HERMITS

During President Van Buren’s tenure the shower stalls in the East Wing of the White House were improved and several copper bathtubs were added to the two that had been brought there under President Jackson. Portable tin tubs had long been used for bathing in the bedrooms and dressing rooms upstairs, with servants bringing the water in buckets up the little service stair from water heaters in the kitchen. There would not be running water upstairs for many years to come. The bathing room below was spruced up with compartments and wardrobes in the interest of privacy and convenience and was probably used only by the President and other men of the family, with the women continuing to rely on tin tubs in their bedrooms.

During President Van Buren’s tenure at the White House, also, the Sultan of Oman would send him a pair of

tiger cubs. Rather than allow these animals to roam the executive mansion and its grounds, and mature, the Congress would require the President to pack them off to the Washington DC zoo.

At the age of 24, Benjamin Day sold his The Sun newspaper to his brother-in-law, Moses Beach, and retired on his profits.

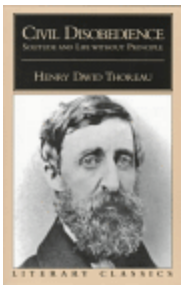
The Jacksonian journal United States Magazine and Democratic Review published out of New-York by J.& H.G. Langley would begin publication with its October 1837 issue and would continue until its October 1859 issue. Its financing began with campaign funds the Democratic party made available during the 1836 presidential campaign in which their candidate was Van Buren — although after he came into the White House, Van Buren threw his party's patronage instead to the Washington Globe. Cornell University Library has the entire series of 43 volumes, with the exception of Volume 39. All the issues except those in that missing Volume 39 have been disbound and OCR-scanned and Volumes 1-3 have been made available for on-line viewing at:

http://moa.cit.cornell.edu/MOA/MOA-JOURNALS2/USDE.html

This new magazine would carry on its masthead the motto

"The Best Government Is That Which Governs Least."

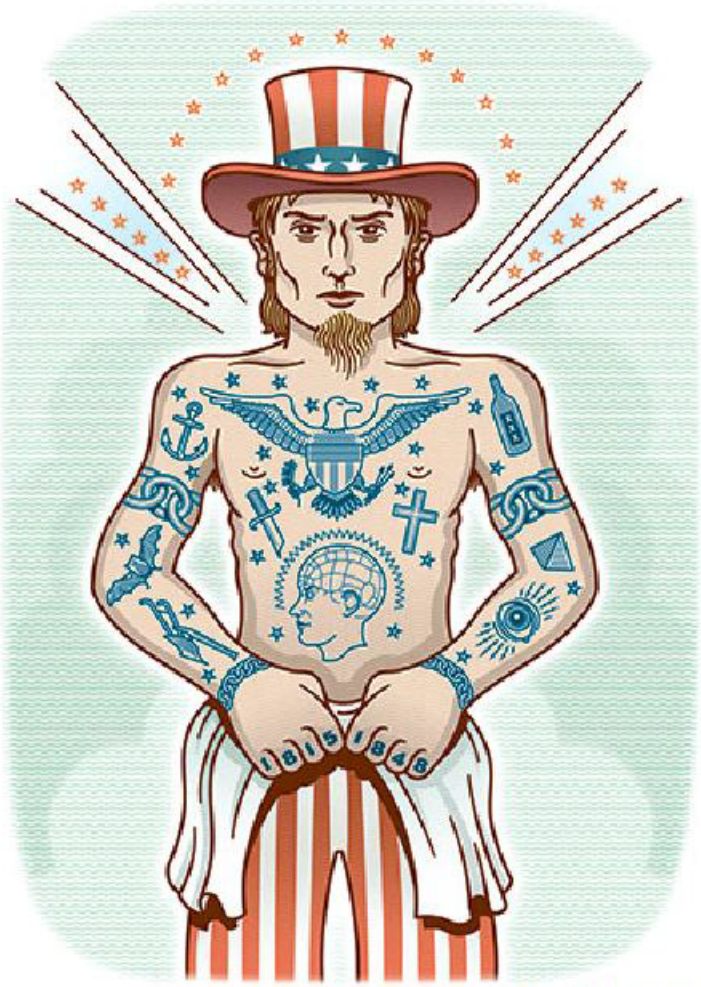
This appeared in an article titled "Introduction: The Democratic Principle — The Importance of Its Assertion and Application" which appeared on page 6 in the initial issue: "The best government is that which governs least. No human depositories can, with safety, be trusted with the power of legislation upon the general interests of society so as to operate directly or indirectly on the industry and property of the community." Although the article was unsigned, the editor –John Louis O'Sullivan– almost certainly was the author that Thoreau would adapt. Sullivan had derived this, of course, from President Thomas Jefferson, who had opinioned that "That government is best which governs the least, because its people discipline themselves." The publication would, however, support the administration of Democratic president Polk, and it would support imperialism, and it would support war upon Mexico. Hence the 1st sentence of Henry Thoreau's essay on civil disobedience can only be characterized as ironic, and cannot be said to have derived directly from anything that President Jefferson had said or thought.[13]



Interestingly, when in Chapter 37 of THE AGE OF JACKSON, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. would attempt to render this political mag's motto, he would produce it as "That government is best which governs least" — which instead of being the historical masthead was instead Thoreau's more famous adaptation.

13. Lee A. Pederson, "Thoreau's Source of the Motto in 'Civil Disobedience,'" Thoreau Society Bulletin 67

The New York Times October 26, 2008



Peter and Maria Hoey

1839

The New England Gazetteer expanded upon previous reports about the hermitess Sarah Bishop:

> She lived on Long Island at the time of the Revolutionary war. Her father's house was burned by the British, and she was cruelly treated by a British officer. She then left society and wandered among the mountains near this part of the state: she found a kind of cave near Ridgefield, where she resided till about the time of her death, which took place in 1810.

This sort of tale of course expands and expands. Later elaborations would have her forced to service the entire crew of a British privateer. Linda Grant DePauw's SEAFARING WOMEN would portray her as a rape survivor and, perhaps, subject to PTSD, the "post-traumatic stress" syndrome. (There never being enough of a good thing, some websites now list her among female pirates.)

HERMITS

1843

June 10, Saturday: Henry Thoreau was being written to by Waldo Emerson. The letter would be posted with a note added on the 15th.

Concord, 10 June 1843
Dear Henry,
It is high time that you had some token from us in acknowledgment of the parcel of kind & tuneful things you sent us, as well as of your permanent rights in us all. The cold weather saddened our gardens & our landscape here almost until now but todays sunshine is obliterating the memory of such things. I have just been visiting my petty plantation and find that all your grafts live excepting a single scion and all my new trees, including twenty pines to fill up interstices in my "Curtain," [Emerson had had a shield of pines planted in the angle of the roads to the east of his home, to protect it from prevailing winds.] *are well alive. The town is full of Irish & the woods of engineers with theodolite & red flag singing out their feet & inches to each other from station to station. Near Mr. Alcott's* [this was the Hosmer Cottage] *the road is already begun.* [The Fitchburg railroad was crossing the highway near that point.]— *From Mr A. & Mr Lane at Harvard we have yet heard nothing. They went away in good spirits having sent "Wood Abram" & Larned & Wm Lane before them with horse & plough a few days in advance of them to begin the spring work. Mr Lane paid me a long visit in which he was more than I had ever known him gentle & open, and it was impossible not to sympathize with & honour projects that so often seem without feet or hands. They have near a hundred acres of land, which they do not want, & no house, which they want first of all. But they account this an advantage, as it gives them the occasion they so much desire of building after their own idea. In the event of their attracting to their company a carpenter or two, which is not impossible, it would be a great pleasure to see their building which could hardly fail to be new & beautiful. They have 15 acres of woodland with good timber. Ellery Channing is excellent company and we walk in all directions He remembers you with great faith & hope thinks you ought not to see Concord again these ten years, that you ought to grind up fifty Concords in your mill & much other opinion & counsel he holds in store on this topic. Hawthorne walked with me yesterday P.m. and not until after our return did I read his "Celestial Railroad" which has a serene strength which one cannot afford not to praise,–in this low life.*
Our Dial thrives well enough in these weeks. I print W.E.C.'s "Let-

ters" or the first ones, [an unfinished Youth of the Poet and Painter which praised the scenery of the Merrimac River and the Artichoke River near Newbury, while satirizing Cambridge and Boston.] *but he does not care to have them named as his for a while. They are very agreeable reading, & their wisdom lightened by a vivacity very rare in the D.—* [S. G.] *Ward* [at that time a Boston banker] *too has sent me some sheets on architecture, whose good sense is eminent. I have a valuable manuscript – a sea voyage, from a new hand, which is all clear good sense, and I may make some of Mr Lane's graver sheets give way for this honest story, otherwise I shall print it in October. I have transferred the publishing of the Dial to Jas. Munroe & Co. Do not, I entreat you, let me be in ignorance of any thing good which you know of my fine friends Waldo & Tappan Tappan writes me never a word. I had a letter from H. James, promising to see you, & you must not fail to visit him. I must soon write to him, though my debts of this nature are perhaps too many. To him I much prefer to talk than to write. Let me know well how you prosper & what you meditate. And all good abide with you!*
R.W.E.
15 June— Whilst my letter has lain on the table waiting for a traveller, your letter & parcel has safely arrived. I may not have place now for the Winter's Walk in the July Dial which is just making up its last sheets & somehow I must end it tomorrow — when I go to Boston. I shall then keep it for October, subject however to your order if you find a better disposition for it.— I will carry the order to the faithless booksellers [Bradbury & Soden]. *Thanks for all these tidings of my friends at N. Y. & at the Island.— & love to the last. I have letters from Lane at "Fruitlands" & from Miss Fuller at Niagara. Miss F. found it sadly cold & rainy at the Falls.*

Margaret Fuller later, in SUMMER ON THE LAKES, IN 1843, attributed some thoughts about the Niagara Falls to this date:

> Niagara, June 10, 1843.
> Since you are to share with me such foot-notes as may be made on the pages of my life during this summer's wanderings, I should not be quite silent as to this magnificent prologue to the, as yet, unknown drama. Yet I, like others, have little to say, where the spectacle is, for once, great enough to fill the whole life, and supersede thought, giving us only its own presence. "It is good to be here," is the best, as the simplest, expression that occurs to the mind.
> We have been here eight days, and I am quite willing to go away. So great a sight soon satisfies, making us content with itself, and with what is less than itself. Our desires, once realized, haunt us again less readily. Having "lived one day," we would depart, and become worthy to live another.

We have not been fortunate in weather, for there cannot be too much, or too warm sunlight for this scene, and the skies have been lowering, with cold, unkind winds. My nerves, too much braced up by such an atmosphere, do not well bear the continual stress of sight and sound. For here there is no escape from the weight of a perpetual creation; all other forms and motions come and go, the tide rises and recedes, the wind, at its mightiest, moves in gales and gusts, but here is really an incessant, an indefatigable motion. Awake or asleep, there is no escape, still this rushing round you and through you. It is in this way I have most felt the grandeur, — somewhat eternal, if not infinite.

At times a secondary music rises; the cataract seems to seize its own rhythm and sing it over again, so that the ear and soul are roused by a double vibration. This is some effect of the wind, causing echoes to the thundering anthem. It is very sublime, giving the effect of a spiritual repetition through all the spheres.

When I first came, I felt nothing but a quiet satisfaction. I found that drawings, the panorama, &c. had given me a clear notion of the position and proportions of all objects here; I knew where to look for everything, and everything looked as I thought it would.

Long ago, I was looking from a hill-side with a friend at one of the finest sunsets that ever enriched, this world. A little cowboy, trudging along, wondered what we could be gazing at. After spying about some time, he found it could only be the sunset, and looking, too, a moment, he said approvingly, "That sun looks well enough"; a speech worthy of Shakespeare's Cloten, or the infant Mercury, up to everything from the cradle, as you please to take it.

Even such a familiarity, worthy of Jonathan, our national hero, in a prince's palace, or "stumping," as he boasts to have done, "up the Vatican stairs, into the Pope's presence, in my old boots," I felt here; it looks really *well enough*, I felt, and was inclined, as you suggested, to give my approbation as to the one object in the world that would not disappoint.

But all great expression, which, on a superficial survey, seems so easy as well as so simple, furnishes, after a while, to the faithful observer, its own standard by which to appreciate it. Daily these proportions widened and towered more and more upon my sight, and I got, at last, a proper foreground for these sublime distances. Before coming away, I think I really saw the full wonder of the scene. After a while it so drew me into itself as to inspire an undefined dread, such as I never knew before, such as may be felt when death is about to usher us into a new existence. The perpetual trampling of the waters seized my senses. I felt that no other sound, however near, could be heard, and would start and look behind me for a foe. I realized the identity of that mood of nature in which these waters were poured down with such absorbing force, with that in which the Indian was shaped on the same soil. For continually upon my mind came, unsought and unwelcome, images, such as never haunted it before,

of naked savages stealing behind me with uplifted tomahawks; again and again this illusion recurred, and even after I had thought it over, and tried to shake it off, I could not help starting and looking behind me.

As picture, the falls can only be seen from the British side. There they are seen in their veils, and at sufficient distance to appreciate the magical effects of these, and the light and shade. From the boat, as you cross, the effects and contrasts are more melodramatic. On the road back from the whirlpool, we saw them as a reduced picture with delight. But what I liked best was to sit on Table Rock, close to the great fall. There all power of observing details, all separate consciousness, was quite lost.

Once, just as I had seated myself there, a man came to take his first look. He walked close up to the fall, and, after looking at it a moment, with an air as if thinking how he could best appropriate it to his own use, he spat into it.

This trait seemed wholly worthy of an age whose love of *utility* is such that the Prince Puckler Muskau suggests the probability of men coming to put the bodies of their dead parents in the fields to fertilize them, and of a country such as Dickens has described; but these will not, I hope, be seen on the historic page to be truly the age or truly the America. A little leaven is leavening the whole mass for other bread.

The whirlpool I like very much. It is seen to advantage after the great falls; it is so sternly solemn. The river cannot look more imperturbable, almost sullen in its marble green, than it does just below the great fall; but the slight circles that mark the hidden vortex seem to whisper mysteries the thundering voice above could not proclaim, — a meaning as untold as ever.

It is fearful, too, to know, as you look, that whatever has been swallowed by the cataract is like to rise suddenly to light here, whether uprooted tree, or body of man or bird.

The rapids enchanted me far beyond what I expected; they are so swift that they cease to seem so; you can think only of their beauty. The fountain beyond the Moss Islands I discovered for myself, and thought it for some time an accidental beauty which it would not do to leave, lest I might never see it again. After I found it permanent, I returned many times to watch the play of its crest. In the little waterfall beyond, Nature seems, as she often does, to have made a study for some larger design. She delights in this, — a sketch within a sketch, a dream within a dream. Wherever we see it, the lines of the great buttress in the fragment of stone, the hues of the waterfall copied in the flowers that star its bordering mosses, we are delighted; for all the lineaments become fluent, and we mould the scene in congenial thought with its genius.

People complain of the buildings at Niagara, and fear to see it further deformed. I cannot sympathize with such an apprehension: the spectacle is capable of swallowing up all such objects; they are not seen in the great whole, more than an earthworm in a wide field.

The beautiful wood on Goat Island is full of flowers; many of the fairest love to do homage here. The Wake-robin and May-apple are in bloom now; the former, white, pink, green, purple, copying the rainbow of the fall, and fit to make a garland for its presiding deity when he walks the land, for they are of imperial size, and shaped like stones for a diadem. Of the May-apple, I did not raise one green tent without finding a flower beneath.

And now farewell, Niagara. I have seen thee, and I think all who come here must in some sort see thee; thou art not to be got rid of as easily as the stars. I will be here again beneath some flooding July moon and sun. Owing to the absence of light, I have seen the rainbow only two or three times by day; the lunar bow not at all. However, the imperial presence needs not its crown, though illustrated by it.

General Porter and Jack Downing were not unsuitable figures here. The former heroically planted the bridges by which we cross to Goat Island and the Wake-robin-crowned genius has punished his temerity with deafness, which must, I think, have come upon him when he sunk the first stone in the rapids. Jack seemed an acute and entertaining representative of Jonathan, come to look at his great water-privilege. He told us all about the Americanisms of the spectacle; that is to say, the battles that have been fought here. It seems strange that men could fight in such a place; but no temple can still the personal griefs and strifes in the breasts of its visitors.

No less strange is the fact that, in this neighborhood, an eagle should be chained for a plaything. When a child, I used often to stand at a window from which I could see an eagle chained in the balcony of a museum. The people used to poke at it with sticks, and my childish heart would swell with indignation as I saw their insults, and the mien with which they were borne by the monarch-bird. Its eye was dull, and its plumage soiled and shabby, yet, in its form and attitude, all the king was visible, though sorrowful and dethroned. I never saw another of the family till, when passing through the Notch of the White Mountains, at that moment glowing before us in all the panoply of sunset, the driver shouted, "Look there!" and following with our eyes his upward-pointing finger, we saw, soaring slow in majestic poise above the highest summit, the bird of Jove. It was a glorious sight, yet I know not that I felt more on seeing the bird in all its natural freedom and royalty, than when, imprisoned and insulted, he had filled my early thoughts with the Byronic "silent rages" of misanthropy.

Now, again, I saw him a captive, and addressed by the vulgar with the language they seem to find most appropriate to such occasions, — that of thrusts and blows. Silently, his head averted, he ignored their existence, as Plotinus or Sophocles might that of a modern reviewer. Probably he listened to the voice of the cataract, and felt that congenial powers flowed free, and was consoled, though his own wing was broken.

The story of the Recluse of Niagara interested me a little. It is

wonderful that men do not oftener attach their lives to localities of great beauty, — that, when once deeply penetrated, they will let themselves so easily be borne away by the general stream of things, to live anywhere and anyhow. But there is something ludicrous in being the hermit of a show-place, unlike St. Francis in his mountain-bed, where none but the stars and rising sun ever saw him.

There is also a "guide to the falls," who wears his title labelled on his hat; otherwise, indeed, one might as soon think of asking for a gentleman usher to point out the moon. Yet why should we wonder at such, when we have Commentaries on Shakespeare, and Harmonies of the Gospels?

And now you have the little all I have to write. Can it interest you? To one who has enjoyed the full life of any scene, of any hour, what thoughts can be recorded about it seem like the commas and semicolons in the paragraph, — mere stops. Yet I suppose it is not so to the absent. At least, I have read things written about Niagara, music, and the like, that interested *me*. Once I was moved by Mr. Greenwood's remark, that he could not realize this marvel till, opening his eyes the next morning after he had seen it, his doubt as to the possibility of its being still there taught him what he had experienced. I remember this now with pleasure, though, or because, it is exactly the opposite to what I myself felt. For all greatness affects different minds, each in "its own particular kind," and the variations of testimony mark the truth of feeling.[14]

I will here add a brief narrative of the experience of another, as being much better than anything I could write, because more simple and individual.

"Now that I have left this 'Earth-wonder,' and the emotions it excited are past, it seems not so much like profanation to analyze my feelings, to recall minutely and accurately the effect of this manifestation of the Eternal. But one should go to such a scene prepared to yield entirely to its influences, to forget one's little self and one's little mind. To see a miserable worm creep to the brink of this falling world of waters, and watch the trembling of its own petty bosom, and fancy that this is made alone to act upon him excites — derision? No, — pity."

As I rode up to the neighborhood of the falls, a solemn awe imperceptibly stole over me, and the deep sound of the ever-hurrying rapids prepared my mind for the lofty emotions to be experienced. When I reached the hotel, I felt a strange indifference about seeing the aspiration of my life's hopes. I lounged about the rooms, read the stage-bills upon the walls, looked over the register, and, finding the name of an acquaintance, sent to see if he was still there. What this hesitation arose from, I know not; perhaps it was a feeling of my unworthiness to enter this temple which nature has erected

14. "Somewhat avails, in one regard, the mere sight of beauty without the union of feeling therewith. Carried away in memory, it hangs there in the lonely hall as a picture, and may some time do its message. I trust it may be so in my case, for I *saw* every object far more clearly than if I had been moved and filled with the presence, and my recollections are equally distinct and vivid." Extracted from Manuscript Notes of this Journey left by Margaret Fuller. — ED.

to its God.

At last, slowly and thoughtfully I walked down to the bridge leading to Goat Island, and when I stood upon this frail support, and saw a quarter of a mile of tumbling, rushing rapids, and heard their everlasting roar, my emotions overpowered me, a choking sensation rose to my throat, a thrill rushed through my veins, "my blood ran rippling to my fingers' ends." This was the climax of the effect which the falls produced upon me, — neither the American nor the British fall moved me as did these rapids. For the magnificence, the sublimity of the latter, I was prepared by descriptions and by paintings. When I arrived in sight of them I merely felt, "Ah, yes! here is the fall, just as I have seen it in a picture." When I arrived at the Terrapin Bridge, I expected to be overwhelmed, to retire trembling from this giddy eminence, and gaze with unlimited wonder and awe upon the immense mass rolling on and on; but, somehow or other, I thought only of comparing the effect on my mind with what I had read and heard. I looked for a short time, and then, with almost a feeling of disappointment, turned to go to the other points of view, to see if I was not mistaken in not feeling any surpassing emotion at this sight. But from the foot of Biddle's Stairs, and the middle of the river, and from below the Table Rock, it was still "barren, barren all."

Provoked with my stupidity in feeling most moved in the wrong place, I turned away to the hotel, determined to set off for Buffalo that afternoon. But the stage did not go, and, after nightfall, as there was a splendid moon, I went down to the bridge, and leaned over the parapet, where the boiling rapids came down in their might. It was grand, and it was also gorgeous; the yellow rays of the moon made the broken waves appear like auburn tresses twining around the black rocks. But they did not inspire me as before. I felt a foreboding of a mightier emotion to rise up and swallow all others, and I passed on to the Terrapin Bridge. Everything was changed, the misty apparition had taken off its many-colored crown which it had worn by day, and a bow of silvery white spanned its summit. The moonlight gave a poetical indefiniteness to the distant parts of the waters, and while the rapids were glancing in her beams, the river below the falls was black as night, save where the reflection of the sky gave it the appearance of a shield of blued steel. No gaping tourists loitered, eyeing with their glasses, or sketching on cards the hoary locks of the ancient river-god. All tended to harmonize with the natural grandeur of the scene. I gazed long. I saw how here mutability and unchangeableness were united. I surveyed the conspiring waters rushing against the rocky ledge to overthrow it at one mad plunge, till, like toppling ambition, o'er-leaping themselves, they fall on t' other side, expanding into foam ere they reach the deep channel where they creep submissively away.

Then arose in my breast a genuine admiration, and a humble adoration of the Being who was the architect of this and of all. Happy were the first discoverers of Niagara, those who could

> come unawares upon this view and upon that, whose feelings were entirely their own. With what gusto does Father Hennepin describe "this great downfall of water," "this vast and prodigious cadence of water, which falls down after a surprising and astonishing manner, insomuch that the universe does not afford its parallel. 'Tis true Italy and Swedeland boast of some such things, but we may well say that they be sorry patterns when compared with this of which we do now speak."

October 1, Sunday: Henry Thoreau wrote from Staten Island to Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau in Concord, telling of his publication effort at The United States Magazine and Democratic Review:

> As for Eldorado that is far off yet. My bait will not tempt the rats; they are too well fed. The Democratic Review is poor, and can only afford half or quarter pay —which it will do— and they say there is a Lady's Companion that pays — but I could not write anything companionable.... The Mirror is really the most readable journal here. I see that they have printed a short piece which I wrote to sell in the Dem. Review, and still keep the review of Paradise that I may include in it a notice of another book by the same author, which they have found, and are going to send me.

"PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED"

(John L. O'Sullivan's magazine was currently at its October issue.)

US MAG & DEM. REV.

Contrary to the very thing that every person on the street thinks they know about Thoreau, he never lived the life of a hermit. At Walden Pond, a retired place but open and public, he set up an inn for all pilgrims without distinction, being himself the landlord, a "spheral" man, "a man of such universal sympathies, and so broad and genial nature, that he would fain sacrifice the tender but narrow ties of friendship, to a broad, sunshiny, fair-weather-and-foul friendship for his race; who loves men, not as a philosopher, with philanthropy, nor as an overseer of the poor, with charity, but by a necessity of his nature, as he loves dogs and horses; and standing at his open door from morning till night, would fain see more and more of them come along the highway, and is never satiated." Not considering himself to be a man of genius, but instead a genial man, he could afford to live without privacy:

DOG

> The man of genius, like a dog with a bone, or the slave who has swallowed a diamond, or a patient with the gravel, sits afar and retired, off the road, hangs out no sign of refreshment for man and beast, but says, by all possible hints and signs, I wish to be alone -good-bye -farewell.

Staten Island Oct 1st 43

Dear Mother,
I hold together remarkably well as yet, speaking of my outward linen and wool-

en man, no holes more than I brought away, and no stitches needed yet. It is marvellous. I think the Fates must be on my side, for there is less than a plank between me and–Time, to say the least. As for Eldorado that is far off yet. My bait will not tempt the rats; they are too well fed. The Democratic Review is poor, and can only afford half or quarter pay–which it will do–and they say there is a Lady's Companion that pays — but I could not write anything companionable. However, speculate as we will, it is quite gratuitous, for life never the less, and never the more, goes steadily on, well or ill fed and clothed, somehow, and "honor bright" withal. It is very gratifying to live in the prospect of great successes always, and for that purpose, we must leave a sufficient foreground to see them through. All the painters prefer distant prospects for the greater breadth of view, and delicacy of tint.— But this is no news, and describes no new condition. Meanwhile I am somnambulic at least – stirring in my sleep – indeed, quite awake. I read a good deal and am pretty well known in the libraries of New York. Am in with the Librarian, one Dr Forbes, of the Society Library–who has lately been to Cambridge to learn liberality, and has come back to let me take out some un-take-out-able books, which I was threatening to read on the spot. And Mr Mackean, of the Mercantile Library, is a true gentleman – a former tutor of mine – and offers me every privilege there. I have from him a perpetual stranger's ticket, and a citizen's rights besides – all which privileges I pay handsomely for by improving.

H. S. McKEAN

A canoe-race "came off" on the Hudson the other day, between Chippeways and New Yorkers, which must have been as moving a sight as the buffalo hunt which I witnessed. But canoes and buffaloes are all lost, as is everything here, in the mob. It is only the people have come to see one another. Let them advertise that there will be a gathering at Hoboken – having bargained with the ferry boats, and there will be, and they need not throw in the buffaloes.

I have crossed the bay 20 or 30 times and have seen a great many immigrants going up to the city for the first time–Norwegians who carry their old fashioned farming tools to the west with them, and will buy nothing here for fear of being cheated.— English operatives, known by their pale faces and stained hands, who will recover their birth-rights in a little cheap sun and wind, – English travellers on their way to the Astor House, to whom I have done the honors of the city.— Whole families of imigrants cooking their dinner upon the pavements, all sun-burnt–so that you are in doubt where the foreigner's face of flesh begins — their tidy clothes laid on, and then tied to their swathed bodies which move about like a bandaged finger–Caps set on the head, as if woven of the hair, which is still growing at the roots–each and all busily cooking, stooping from time to time over the pot, and having something to drop into it, that so they may be entitled to take something out, forsooth. They look like respectable but straightened people, who may turn out to be counts when they get to Wisconsin–and will have this experience to relate to their children.

Seeing so many people from day to day one comes to have less respect for flesh and bones, and thinks they must be more loosely {MS torn} of less firm fibre,

than the few he had known. It must have a very bad influence upon children to see so many human beings at once–mere herds of men.

HENRY BIGELOW

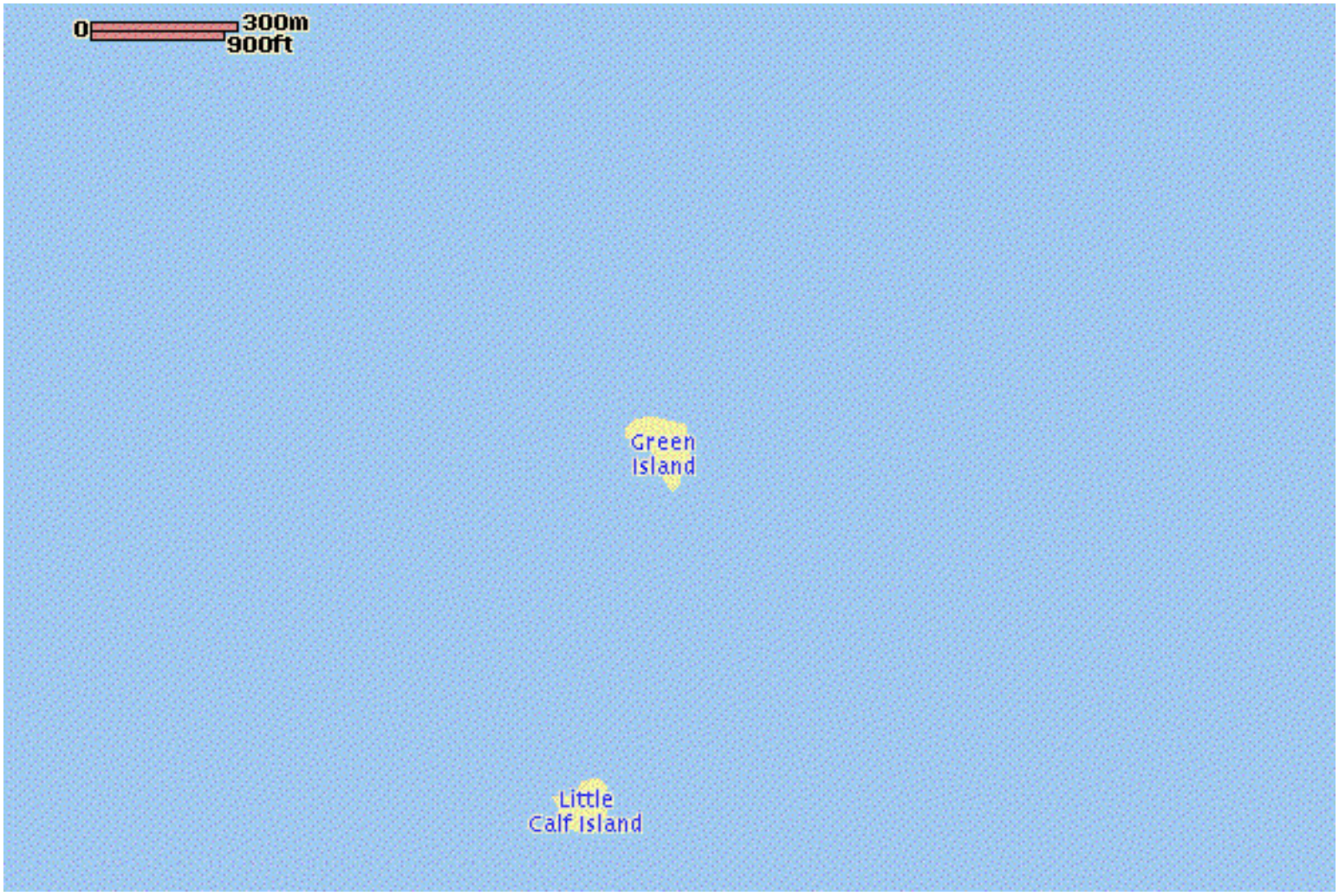
I came across Henry Bigelow a week ago, sitting in front of a Hotel in Broadway, very much as if he were under his father's own stoop. He is seeking to be admitted into the bar in New York, but as yet, had not succeeded. I directed him to Fuller's store, which he had not found, and invited him to come and see me, if he came to the island. Tell Mrs & Miss Ward that I have not forgotten them, and was glad to hear from George, with whom I spent last night, that they had returned to C.— Tell Mrs Brown that it gives me as much pleasure to know that she thinks of me and my writing as if I had been the author of the piece in question; but I did not even read the papers I sent. The Mirror is really the most readable journal here. I see that they have printed a short piece which I wrote to sell in the Dem. Review, and still keep the review of Paradise that I may include in it a notice of another book by the same author, which they have found, and are going to send me.— I dont know when I shall come home— I like to keep that feast in store— Tell Helen that I do not see any advertisement for her–and I am looking for myself— If I could find a rare opening, I might be tempted to try with her for a year till I had payed my debts; but for such I am sure it is not well to go out of N. Eng. Teachers are but poorly recompensed even here.— Tell her and Sophia (if she is not gone) to write to me— Father will know that this letter is to him as well as to you— I send him a paper which usually contains the news–if not all that is stirring–all that has stirred–and even draws a little on the future. I wish he would send me by and by the paper which contains the results of the Cattleshow. You must get Helen's eyes to read this–though she is a scoffer at honest penmanship — yr affectionate son Henry D. Thoreau

1844

Margaret Fuller recollected Francis Abbott some 13 years after he had drowned near his log cabin below Niagara Falls while bathing, observing that "there is something ludicrous in being the hermit of a show-place." (Come on, Margaret — what's the point in being a hermit if you can't get the tourists to look at you?)

1845

At the age of 49 or 50, Samuel Choate began 20 years of hermit isolation on Green Island.
Named for the merchant Joseph Green who had owned it during colonial times, this is a one-or-two-acre island in the outer Boston Harbor, consisting of an outcropping covered with shrubs and grasses. It is surrounded by the swift currents of Hypocrite Channel.[15]



15. Although Slate Island was normally uninhabited, a hermit is said to have been in residence there as well, at one or another point during the 19th Century.

1847

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

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

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

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

THOREAU ON THE IRISH

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

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

when it was initially printed in The Atlantic Monthly:

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

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

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

[Professor Louis Agassiz] *will ere long commence his lectures in the zoological department — a Chemistry Class has already been formed, and is under the direction of* [Professor Eben N. Horsford] — *A new and adequate building for these purposes is already being erected.*

Concord Nov 14th 1847.
Dear Friend,
I am but a poor neighbor to you here — a very poor companion am I— I understand that very well — but that need not prevent my writing to you now. I have almost never written letters in my life, yet I think I can write as good ones as I frequently see, so I shall not hesitate to write this such as it may be, knowing that you will welcome

anything that reminds you of Concord.
I have banked up the young trees against the winter and the mice, and I will look out in my careless way to see when a pale is loose, or a nail drops out of its place. The broad gaps at least I will occupy. I heartily wish that I could be of good service to this household — but I who have used only these ten digits so long to solve the problem of a living — how can I? This world is a cow that is hard to milk—

Life does not come so easy — and ah! how thinly it is watered ere we get it— But the young bunting calf — he will get at it. There is no way so direct. This is to earn one's living by the sweat of his brow. It is a little like joining a community –this life– to such a hermit as I am — and as I dont keep the accounts I dont know whether this experiment will succeed or fail finally. At any rate, it is good for society –& I do not regret my transient– nor my permanent share in it.
Lidian and I make very good housekeepers — she is a very dear sister to me— Ellen & Edith & Eddy & Aunty Brown keep up the tragedy & comedy & tragi-comedy of life as usual. The two former have not forgotten their old acquaintance — even Edith carries a young memory in her head, I find. Eddie can teach us all how to pronounce. If you should discover any new and rare breed of wooden or pewter horses I have no doubt he will know how to appreciate it. He occasionally surveys mankind from my shoulders as widely & wisely as ever Johnson did. I respect him not a little, though it is I that lift him up there so unceremoniously— And sometimes I have to set him down again in a hurry, according to his "mere will & good pleasure." He very seriously asked me the other day— "Mr Thoreau — will you be my father?" I am occasionally Mr Rough-and-Tumble with him — that I may not miss <u>him</u>, and lest he should miss you too much — so you must come back soon, or you will be superseded. Alcott has heard that I laughed & so set the people a laughing at his arbor, though I never laughed louder than when on the ridge pole. But now I have not laughed for a long time, it is so serious. He is very grave to look at. But not knowing all this I strove innocently enough the other day to engage his attention to my mathematics. "Did you ever study geometry?"— "The relation of straight lines to curves — the transition from the finite to the infinite?"— "Fine things about it in Newton & Leibnitz."— But he would hear none of it.—

Men of taste preferred the natural curve— Ah! he is a crooked stick himself. He is getting on now so many <u>knots</u> an hour— There is one knot at present occupying the <u>point</u> of highest elevation —the present highest point— and as many knots as are <u>not</u> handsome, I presume, are thrown down & cast into the pines. Pray show him this if you meet him anywhere in London, for I cannot make him hear

much plainer words here. He forgets that I am neither old, nor young, nor anything in particular, and behaves as if I had still some of the animal heat in me. As for the building I feel a little oppressed when I come near it, it has so great a disposition to be beautiful. It is certainly a wonderful structure on the whole, and the fame of the architect will endure as long— —as it shall stand. I should not show you this side alone if I did not suspect that Lidian had done ample justice to the other.

Mr Hosmer has been working at a tannery in Stow for a fortnight, though he has just now come home sick— It seems that he was a tanner in his youth—& So he has made up his mind a little at last. This comes of reading the New Testament. Was'nt one of the apostles a tanner? Mrs Hosmer remains here, and John looks stout enough to fill his own shoes and his father's too.

Mr. Blood and his company have at length seen the stars through the great telescope, and he told me that he thought it was worth the while. Mr Peirce made them wait till the crowd had dispersed (it was a Saturday evening) & then was quite polite. He conversed with him & showed him the Micrometer &c— He said that Mr B's glass was large enough for all ordinary astronomical work. Mr Frost & Dr Bartlett seemed disappointed that there was no greater difference between the Cambridge glass and the Concord one. They used only a power of four hundred. Mr B tells me that he is too old to study the Calculus or higher mathematics

They think that they have discovered traces of another satellite to Neptune— They have been obliged to exclude the public altogether at last — the very dust which they raised "which is filled with minute crystals &c &c" as professors declare, having to be wiped off the glasses, would ere long wear them away. It is true enough. Cambridge college is really beginning to wake up and redeem its character & overtake the age. I see by the new catalogue that they are about establishing a Scientific school in connexion with the University — at which any one above eighteen, on paying one hundred dollars annually — (Mr Lawrence's 50000 will probably diminish this sum) may be instructed in the highest branches of Science — in Astronomy theoretical and practical, with the use of the instruments — so the great Yankee Astronomer may be born without delay — in Mechanics and Engineering to the last degree— Agassiz will ere long commence his lectures in the zoological department — a Chemistry Class has already been formed, and is under the direction of Prof. Horsford— A new and adequate building for these purposes is already being erected. They have been foolish enough to put at the end of all this earnest the old joke of a diploma. Let every sheep keep but his own skin, I say.

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

I suppose you will like to hear of my book — though I have nothing worth writing about it — indeed for the last month or two I have forgotten it — but shall certainly remember it again. Wiley & Putnam — Munroe — The Harpers — & Crosby & Nichols — have all declined printing it with the least risk to themselves — but

Wiley & Putnam will print it in their series — and any any of them anywhere at my risk. If I liked the book well enough I should not delay, but for the present I am indifferent. I believe this is after all the course you advised — to let it lie.

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

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

— Hugh.
As I walked over Conantum the other afternoon I saw a fair column of smoke rising from the woods directly over my house that was, as I judged, and already began to conjecture if my deed of sale would not be made invalid by this. But it turned out to be John Richardson's young wood on the S E of your field— It was burnt nearly all over & up to the rails and the road. It was set on fire no doubt by the same Lucifer that lighted Brooks' lot before. So you see that your small lot is comparatively safe for this season, the back fires having been already set for you.
They have been choosing between John Keyes & Sam Staples if the world wants to know it as representatives of this town — and Staples is chosen. The candidates for Governor –think of my writing this to you– were Gov. Briggs & Gen Cushing — & Briggs is elected, though the Democrats have gained. Aint I a brave boy to know so much of politics for the nonce? but I should'nt have known it if Coombs[16] had'nt told me. They have had a Peace meeting here— I should'nt think of telling you of it if I did'nt know that anything would do for the English market, and some men —Dea Brown at the head– have signed a long pledge swearing that they will "treat all mankind as brothers" henceforth. I think I shall wait and see how they treat me first. I think that nature meant kindly when she made our brothers few. However, my voice is still for peace.

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

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

1848

December 23, Saturday: James Cowles Prichard died.

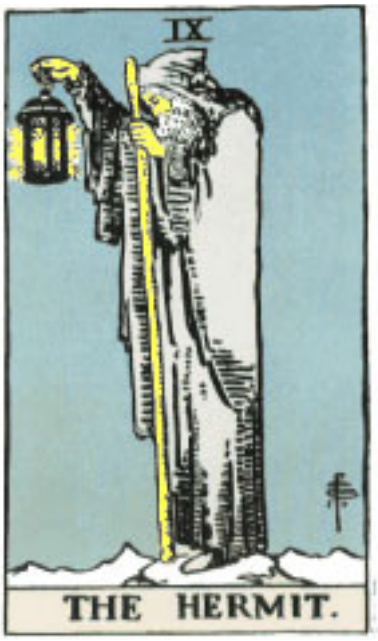
Charlotte Brontë wrote to Ellen Nussey in regard to her sister Emily Brontë, a tuberculosis victim: "Emily [Brontë] suffers no more from pain or weakness now. She will never suffer more in this world. She is gone, after a hard, short conflict. She died on Tuesday, the very day I wrote to you. I thought it very possible she might be with us still for weeks, and a few hours afterwards she was in eternity...."

The Salem Observer reported on Henry Thoreau's lyceum lecture of the previous Wednesday evening in

Gloucester:

> To illustrate his theory, he gave a humorous account of his doings, during a period of more than two years, spent in seclusion, on the shores of a pond in Concord. This sketch of a hermit's life was highly entertaining, being interspersed with beautiful descriptions of natural scenery, well told anecdotes, many philosophical digressions, and quaint sentiments[.] He proved by his experiment that a man can build a house with his own hands, in a few months, that will afford him all the shelter, warmth and comfort a mortal actually needs, at an expense of only about twenty-five or thirty dollars; that good, wholesome food, sufficient for one hermit can be procured for four cents a week; that to pay all the needful expenses of such a life, it is necessary to labor only six weeks in a year. The remainder of his time may be devoted to reading, and the development of his moral and intellectual nature.

HERMITS



1849

April 14-19: The Philadelphia North American and U.S. Gazette and the Washington D.C. Daily National Intelligencer editorialized about Henry Thoreau as nothing more than a self-centered idler, a would-be hermit "laboring no more than barely to maintain his own single, selfish existence":[17]

> At first blush this strange life seems beautiful in itself and worthy of imitation; but like the scenery of the stage it is better when regarded at a distance than when closely approached ….
>
> The would-be hermit of Concord may or may not be a worldly-disappointed man: better for him that he were, than that he should deliberately sit down in the woods, a Timon without a cause, to reject and despise the common charities and duties, the pleasures and the pains of life, among his fellow men ….
>
> What is such solitary life, after all, but a voluntary abandonment of civilization and return to barbarism?
>
> Reason this subject as they may, those who encourage such economic and philosophic perversion of life, encourage idleness and the most egoistic meanness, and the exemplification is given by the young student himself.

HERMITS

17. In regard to this newspaper's deployment of the concept of **perversion**, please note that this term had formally entered out medical terminology some seven years earlier, when it was defined in Dunglison's MEDICAL LEXICON as being one of the four modifications of function in disease, the other three modifications of function being **augmentation**, **diminution**, and **abolition**.

1850

A coastal vessel stopped by San Nicolàs Island off the California coast, at the request of the padre of the mission on the mainland, to look for the native American isolate known as the "Lone Woman" left over from a massacre of the 1820s by the Inuit crew of a Russian whaling vessel. Evidently she was hiding with great determination, as they found no trace.

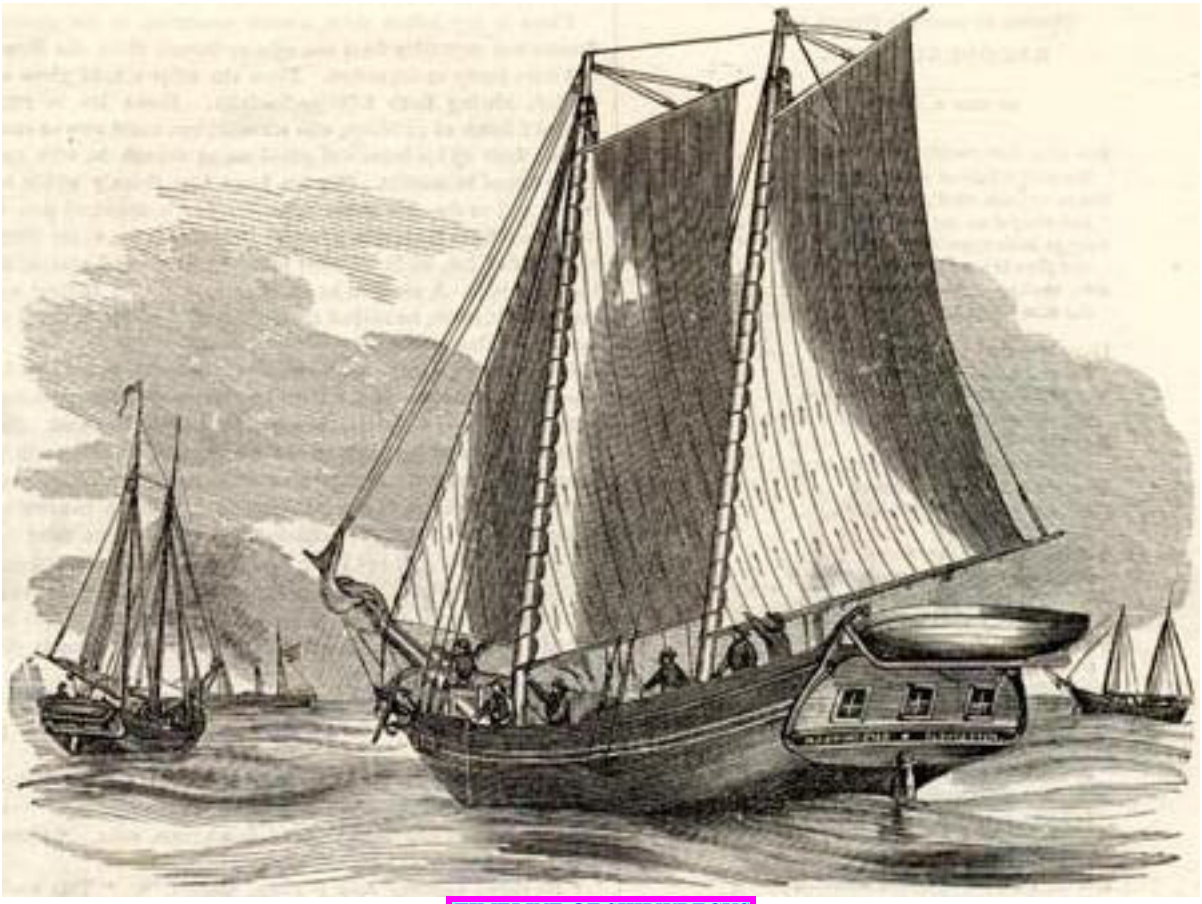
HERMITS

1851

The fog cannon at Boston Light on Little Brewster Island was replaced, initially by a bell and later by various foghorns.

The American Lighthouse Service had been popularly considered to be only slightly less corrupt than the Office of Indian Affairs, but in this year there was a congressional investigation which would in the following year bring about a reformed Lighthouse Board.

October 3, Friday evening: At Prince Edward Island, the afternoon had been warm and still under a heavily clouded sky, and then, to the north and northwest, about sunset, the sky had seemed to have a lurid, glassy appearance. A violent gale and wind then arose out of the East-North-East that would continue for two terrifying days. Before this blow was over, the New England fleet fishing off the shores of this island would be devastated — nearly a hundred vessels would be wrecked or stranded, and hundreds of fishermen would be drowned. Homes would be opened to the chilled and exhausted survivors, and the local graveyards would contain the bones of many washed-up corpse. For many years wreckage would dot the shores, some of these wrecks of fishing craft surviving well into the 20th Century.

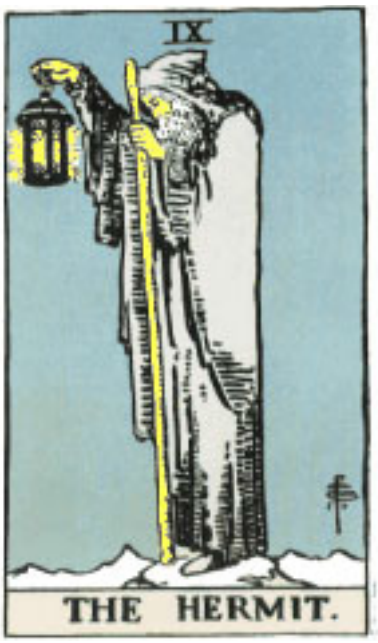


TIMELINE OF SHIPWRECKS

While the high tides of the great storm[18] were beating the lighthouse on Minot's Ledge to pieces and dashing to death the two lighthouse keepers within it, a pilot boat went over to Green Island and removed temporarily for his own safety the hermit Samuel Choate who had been out there on that tiny rock outcropping alone since

18. Observing a great white oak which had gone down, during April, Thoreau would hypothesize that it had been taken down by the same storm "which destroyed the lighthouse."

1845.[19]



What follows is a selection from the local presses of the time:

THE YANKEE GALE

From Hazard's Gazette of Tuesday last. [October 7, 1851]

On the night of Friday last, and throughout the whole of Saturday and the following night, we were visited with a gale of unusual violence, from the E.N.E., and violent storm of rain, almost unparalleled in the history of this Island; from the loss of ships accompanying it, and altogether so far as loss of life which has taken place. Owing to the difficulty of procuring accurate information from all the Districts on the North side, we are unable to give anything like a correct account of the extent of havoc occasioned by this terrific visitation, but as far as we have been able to do so, will give the results of our enquiries.

THE ISLANDER, Friday, October, 10, 1851.

Violent Gale

On Friday night, the 3rd inst., a most violent gale of wind and rain arose from the E.N.E., which continued

19.The American Lighthouse Service had been popularly considered to be only slightly less corrupt than the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but in this year there was a congressional investigation which would in the following year bring about a reformed Lighthouse Board.

varying at intervals, the following two days. The loss of life and property among the shipping is almost incredible. The whole of the coast on the north side of the Island is strewed with wrecks and dead bodies! Our present number contains a list of some of the wrecked vessels. We are unable as yet to give a correct account of the whole; indeed there are many that will never be heard of, having ran into each other and foundered at sea. The wrecks are chiefly American vessels fishing on the North side of the Island.

DISASTROUS GALE!

Dreadful loss of Lives, Vessels, etc., etc.

From 100 to 150 vessels supposed to be stranded on the Coast of this Island, besides a large number foundered at sea. Nearly 100 dead bodies already found!!!

Georgetown, October 9, 1851.

Mr. Ings:
Sir — The following vessels which have arrived here since the late gale, wished to be reported in the Island papers. Some of the Captains say, that they have been thirty years at sea, and never experienced such a gale before.
Yours etc.,
A Subscriber.

Schooner *Vulture*, Watts, of Newbury Port, U.S., in the gale of the 3rd inst., lost a man overboard, named Jas. Everett of Nova Scotia; also lost her boat, flying jib and jib-boom.

Schooner *Empire*, Dixon, of U.S., lost her jib boom and had her sails split.

Schooner *John*, R. Perkins, of Gloucester, U.S. lost her boat, had her sails split and deck swept of everything.

Schooner *Matamora* had her sails torn, reports that she passed an American vessel on her beam ends, with two men in the mast heads, but was unable to render them any assistance owing to the loss of her sails and the heavy sea which was running.

Schooner *Ocean*, Reed, master, from Booth Bay, U.S., had her bowsprit broken off by a sea while her jib was stowed, lost four bbls. mackerel and everything else which she had on deck at the time, also lost an anchor.

Schooner *Guess*, McKellie, master, from Westpoint, U.S., lost her boat.

Schooner *Hero*, of Lubec, Fergusson, master, lost both

anchors at the Magdalen islands, was in company with five other vessels who also lost their anchors.

Schooner *Sarah*, Brooks, lost flying jib.

Several other vessels which called here, had lost some of their sails and went off again to the Gut of Canso to get new ones.

Schooner *Cadmus*, Elliot, master, arrived in 7 days from Boston, reports that the gale did not extend beyond Cape Sable. Saw a number of American vessels passing through the Gut, all more or less damaged, one the *Telegraph*, had lost two men overboard by the main boom striking them while jibing the sail, and Captain Attwood severely hurt, heard in the Gut that there were 75 sail of vessels ashore on the Island.

Extract of a letter from Darnley, October 6, 1851.
You will please give immediate notice that a number of American fishing vessels have been driven ashore, in the Harbour of Richmond Bay and the coast on the 4th inst., to the number of from 40 to 50 sail, and a great many lives lost. A number of the vessels are to be sold on Friday next, and perhaps before that time. There are two at Park Corner, near New London, to be sold on Wednesday next.

Extract from a letter from Rustico, October 7, 1851.
There is a schooner ashore on Robinson's Island called the *Shipjack*, from Liverpool, N. S. She is loaded with mackerel and salt — water logged. I have taken out 30 barrels of mackerel, besides salt and empty barrels; but the worst comes last — we took four dead bodies out of her on Monday last and Tuesday six more, which I think is her full crew.

Vessels on Shore at Tignish, etc.

American schooner *Commerce*, of Harwich, Mass., U.S., John Allen, master, ashore at Tignish near the North Cape. Crew saved. To be sold on Tuesday next, 14 of October.

The *Jenny Lind*, from Nova Scotia. Crew saved.

The *Rival*, of Truro, U.S. Crew saved.

The *W.R. Burnham*, U.S. Crew saved.

The *Golden Rule*, of Gloucester, U.S. Crew saved.

The *Mary Scotchburn*, of Newburyport, U.S. Crew saved.

American schooner *Pow Hatten*, of Gloucester, U.S., John Ross, master, ashore at Tignish, near the North Cape. Crew saved. To be sold on Monday next, the 13th inst.

American schooner *Bloomfield*, of Boston, Joseph

McDonald, master, ashore at Tignish. Crew saved.

Capt. McDonald of the schooner *Bloomfield*, informs us a Brigantine was lost on the North Cape of this Island — that all hands perished — and that she has gone to pieces. He states that she was a British-built vessel, 70 feet long on deck, 22 feet beam, cedar timbers, softwood plank and beams — supposed to be Canada built, apparently four years old. A number of empty Puerto Rico sugar hogsheads with spruce heads came on shore from her. The number on the head of one of them was 28 E. 1206 (red chalk) and on the other end 1 / (black paint). The name of the vessel could not be discovered, but the stern of a boat supposed to belong to her came on shore with the name *Veloce*, *Mouraska* on it. Her bow sails, chains, anchors and windlass were found to the west of the N.W. reef.

Capt. McDonald and others also inform us that there are 20 to 30 vessels on shore between Malpec and North Cape — and that in Richmond Bay and on Hog Island, there are some 40 or 50 more. It is currently reported that some sixty or seventy bodies have been interred on Hog Island during the past week.

A vessel came on shore at Brackley Point on Monday last — 10 dead bodies were found on board — they were interred on Wednesday.

A large Bark, in ballast, from Europe, bound to Richibucto, is on shore at Cable Head.

We hear that a number of vessels are to be seen in the Gulf riding at their anchors, swept of everything, and all hands supposed to be dead.

N.Y. DAILY TIMES, October 9, 1851.
TREMENDOUS GALE AND LOSS OF LIFE

Boston, Wednesday October 8.
A dispatch received Fast evening by the collector of this port, from B. Hammett, U.S. Consul at Pictou, states that the north-west coast has been swept by a terrible and destructive gale and that 100 fishing vessels were ashore on the north side of Prince Edward's Island. It is estimated that 300 persons have perished in the wrecks, and many bodies have already drifted ashore. Mr. Norton will proceed at once to relieve the

distress and render such aid as he can.

N.Y. DAILY TIMES, October 9, 1851.

Further as to the Storm at Prince Edward's Island.
No news has yet been received from the west part of Prince Edward's Island, where further loss is feared. Thirty vessels are piled on the beach at Melpome harbor. The dispatch gives account of the safety of the schooners *Florence* of Gloucester; *John*, of do; *Hannah Grant* of Newburyport; *Lady*, of Cohasset; *O'Conner* of Hingham MA; *Sarah Brooks*, of Scituate, and *Vulture*, of Newburyport. The vessels lost had many of them full freights of mackerel. Further particulars are promised tomorrow.

THE ISLANDER, Friday, October 10, 1851.

SHIPWRECKS

The schooner *James*, a fishing vessel of Newburyport, Currier, master, is cast away near McNally's Mills, Egmont Bay — advertised to be sold on 11th inst.

The schooner *Mount Hope*, a fishing vessel of Hingham MA, near Boston, is stranded at Cavendish — advertised to be sold on Friday next.

The schooner *Caledonia*, (fishing vessel), Joseph York, master, of Portland, U.S., lies near John Shaw's, Brackley Point, advertised to be sold on Friday next. She was cast away on Sunday morning at 11 o'clock, having lost her masts and rigging, she was left to the mercy of the waves. All the crew safely landed by a rope and by the assistance of the people on shore.

The schooner *Union*, of St. Andrews, N.B., Luther Matthews, master, is stranded near Mr. John Shaw's, Brackley Point — advertised to be sold on Friday next. She went on shore on Sunday morning at one o'clock. At 12 o'clock at night she was struck by a sea, which carried away the main sail, the only sail left, she then became unmanageable and drifted for the shore. On the receding of the tide at day — light all the crew got safe to land.

The wreck of a vessel grounded to the westward of Cove Head Harbour, and immediately went to pieces, and it is conjectured all on board must have perished. About 60 barrels of flour came on shore, and some other articles of dry goods.

American schooner *Triumph*, of Cape Elizabeth, Maine,

Frederick Hanniford, master, drove on shore about two miles west of St. Peter's Harbour, on Sunday morning.

American schooner *Alms*, of Newburyport, John Aylwood, master, came into Charlottetown this morning in distress.

American schooner *Banner*, of Hingham MA, Mass., Isaac Marshall, master, split her foresail, arrived in Charlottetown this morning.

American schooner *Constitution*, of Gloucester, Mass., towed into Charlottetown Harbour

American schooner *C.E. Haskell*, L. Haskell, master, which vessel was found dismasted between the North and West Capes of this Island.

American schooner *Naiad Queen*, of Cohasset, Mass., Sampson Hunt, master, drove on shore at Tracadie Harbour.

American schooner *Nettle*, of Truro, Mass., Hopkins, master, wrecked on the North side of this Island.

American schooner *Duroc*, of Amesbury MA, William Johnson, master, drove from her anchors in Tracadie Harbour.

American schooner *Henry Knox*, of Cohasset, Mass., Perio Turner, master, ashore about four miles to the Eastward of Tracadie Harbour.

American schooner *Charles Augustus*, of Cohasset, Mass., Joseph Edwards, master, went on shore at St. Peter's Harbour.

American schooner *Harriet Newell*, Thomas Burgess, master, of Harwick, Mass., cast away at Tracadie — two hands lost.

American schooner *Lyon*, of Castine, Maine. Master, mate and six hands lost, five of the crew landed at Cavendish.

American schooner *Forrest*, Page, master, of Newburyport, cast away at St. Peter's.

American schooner *Mary Moultan*, belonging to Castine, all hands lost — nothing found but a box containing the Register, case, etc.

With respect to the loss of life, correct results cannot possibly be obtained until returns shall have been made from the several harbors. The Coroner of Queen's County started early yesterday morning for Cavendish to enquire into the death of 12 persons whose bodies had been washed ashore at that settlement. Several have also come ashore at Rustico Island, etc. In proportion of those lost between New London and Rustico, the total

loss would exceed one hundred lives. We have heard that some hundreds of vessels succeeded in safely entering the various harbors from Richmond Bay to St. Peter's.

N.Y. DAILY TIMES, October 10, 1851.
The Late Gale at Prince Edward's Island, etc.

Halifax, Wednesday, October 8.
A letter from Charlottetown, P.E.I., dated the 7th, gives an account of the recent fearful gale, which commenced on Friday night, the 3rd inst., and continued till Sunday night. The intelligence received is only from New London and Rustico, where it is estimated that at least 100 sail are ashore, and from 300 to 400 lives were lost, and it is feared that accounts further westward will be equally distressing. A great many bodies have been taken from the holds and cabins of the stranded vessels.

N.Y. DAILY TIMES, October 11, 1851.
The Late Gale at Prince Edward's Island
Melancholy Suicide.

Boston, Friday Oct. 10.
No particulars have yet been received as to the late destructive gale at the East. The most intense excitement prevails at all the Fishing towns, as all are uncertain whether their friends are dead or living. From Newburyport and vicinity 70 vessels are out. The wife of the captain of the schooner *Martha*, upon hearing a rumor that her husband's vessel was lost with all on board, committed suicide, leaving a large family of young children.

N.Y. DAILY TIMES, October 13, 1851.
Further Particulars of the Storm and Marine disasters on the Coast of Nova Scotia

The latest telegraphic despatches from Pictou, and letters from the scene of the late fearful storm in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and along the coast of Prince Edward's Island, state that the whole shore is strewed with wrecks of vessels and the dead bodies of their crews.
At the village of Cavendish, (P.E.I.) the bodies of twelve persons had floated ashore. The body of a man with a boy lashed to his back came ashore at Rustico.

There is reason to believe that over 100 bodies have already floated to the beach.
Between three and four hundred sail of American vessels succeeded in getting safely into harbor just before or during the gale.
The schrs. *Florence* of Gloucester, *Oceana* of Hingham MA, *Lake* of Cohasset and *Hannah Branch* of Newburyport, arrived at Pictou subsequent to the storm to repair damages. One and all give the most dismal accounts of the storm.
(Here our correspondent gives the names of a large number of "vessels ashore — crews saved," which vary from previous accounts only in a slight degree) he, however, adds to the list, the following: "*Golden Gate*, of Kennebec; *Forest*, of Newburyport; *Triumph*, of Cape Elizabeth."
In the list of Vessels ashore, with loss of life," our correspondent says: "A vessel grounded to the westward of Cohead [Covehead], and immediately after, went to pieces. All on board perished. Sixty barrels of flour and some dry-goods floated ashore from the wreck."
Two vessels were sunk, near Stanhope — names unknown; crews, doubtless, all perished. Five of the crew of the schooner *Harriet*, of Castine, were saved — six lost.
The schooner *Franklin Dexter*, of Dennis, lost her crew of ten men. Subsequently, five persons, perfectly naked were picked off her sides.

N.Y. DAILY TIMES, October 15, 1851.
LATER FROM THE FISHING GROUNDS
MORE FAVORABLE NEWS

By an arrival at Gloucester from the Bay of St. Lawrence, we have additional intelligence from the scene of the late disastrous shipwrecks. The schooner *Telegraph* of Boston, before reported as having lost 18 men in the gale, lost in fact only two.
The *Flirt* of Gloucester, said to have lost 14 hands, was seen standing off the land, during the height of the gale, and it is thought all her crew are safe.
There are reports, not yet authenticated, however, that the crews of both the *Forest* and *Statesman*, of Newburyport, before reported lost, are also safe.
These if they all turn out to be true would give a total of nearly 60 men alive, who had been reported dead.

Another Dispatch:
Gloucester, Oct. 14, 1851
Captain Cannay of schooner *Atlantic*, which arrived here this morning from Prince Edward Island, reports the

safety of the following vessels at the Gut of Canso: Schooners *Mary S. Niles* and *Yorktown* of Gloucester; "*Thirkeen*", and *Science*, of New London, and about 30 others.
A ship and 2 brigs are reported ashore near Rustico.

N.Y. DAILY TIMES, October 16, 1851.
The Gale at Prince Edwards Island
Further Particulars

From the Boston Advertiser.
Information continues to be received from various sources, giving particulars of a large fleet of American fishermen, who were in the vicinity of Prince Edwards Island during the late destructive gale. The information is gratifying inasmuch as it shows that many individual vessels are safe, some of which had been reported lost; and that the violence of the gale was confined to that part of Prince Edwards Island from which the most disastrous news was first received. So great was the havoc in a space so limited, that it was not to be wondered at that those who knew how large a fleet were in the immediate vicinity, should have had little hopes of their safety, and should regularly set down as lost any vessel which might have been reported so upon authority however slight.
A telegraphic dispatch from Mr. Eben S. Smith, of Provincetown, dated Eastport, Oct. 14, says: "I learn from an Ipswich man, just arrived from P.E. Island, that schrs. *Dacid*, *Lombard*, *R.B. Rhodes*, *J.A. Paine*, *Arrow*, *Julia*, and *Mary J. Elliot* are all safe. Schr. *Millona*, of Provincetown, is supposed to be lost. Schr. *Eisineur*, of the same place, is lost. The fate of their crews is unknown. Schrs. *Richard* and *E.M. Shaw*, of Truro, is lost; crew taken off. I am in hopes that the fate of the Provincetown fleet will be favorable."
The Gloucester correspondent of the Merchants' Exchange reports the arrival at that place, on Monday, of schr. *C. and N. Rogers*, from the Bay of St. Lawrence. She reports leaving the Gut of Canso, 8th inst. and experienced the late gale severely, having lost foresail and jib. The also reports leaving at the Gut the schr. *Telegraph*, of Boston, with loss of two men. Capt. Atwood, of the *T.* had his leg broken. Also at the Gut, schrs. *Mary Niles*, Davis, and *Diligent*, Bailey, of Gloucester. Capt. Davis had his jaw broken. The C. and N. Rogers reports other vessels at the Gut, but gives no names.
An Extra from the Gloucester Telegraph informs us that a public meeting was held at Gloucester on Saturday evening; which filled the Town Hall to overflowing. Benj. Kellough, Jr. was appointed chairman. A committee

was appointed to prepare a plan of action, to be submitted to a subsequent meeting to be called by the committee. Money was raised to procure information by telegraph; and a finance committee chosen to provide funds to be placed in the hands of the business committee if required.

The Telegraph also states, in relation to Gloucester vessels lost, that schooner *Golden Rule* was insured at the Gloucester Mutual Insurance office for $3300, and the *Constitution* for $2700. Schooner *Garland* was insured for $3500 at the Marine office and $300 on outfits at the Mutual. Schooner *Lucy Pulcifer* was insured at the Mutual for $3466. Schooner *Powhatan* was partly owned at Annisquam, partly in Portland. The Maine office had $1200 on her.

THE ISLANDER, Friday, October 17, 1851.
THE LATE GALES

American schooner *Cohannett* of Dennis, Mass., Josiah Chase, master, cast away inside of Tracadie Harbour, near the *Naiad Queen*, dragged her anchors. She is expected to be got off.

British schooner *Shipjack*, belonging to Liverpool, N.S., came on shore at Island on Sunday, and embedded in the sand. Ten bodies were taken from her. She had mackerel on board. It is supposed she had upset.

An American schooner came on shore near Darnley on Sunday morning. Crew saved. Part of the deck of another schooner, windlass, etc., came on shore at the same place.

American schooner *Fair Play*, Zekiel Cushing, belonging to Portland, Maine, 11 hands on board, was wrecked on the night of the gale, all hands perished. Part of the wreck came on shore a mile East of Tracadie Harbour. The vessel's papers were found and a letter addressed to a person on the Island. Capt. Cushing was a son-in-law to Mr. Morrow, East Point.

The schooners *Greyhound* and *Charles Roberts*, of Gloucester, U.S., report the loss of the schooner *Flirt*, of Gloucester. about four miles from the Rustico Capes — demasted and water logged — all hands supposed to be lost — 16 crew. Another supposed to be the *Brothers*, of St. Andrews, NB., is now on the Cove Head Bar — three dead bodies were taken out of her on Saturday, the 11th. and another on the 12th.

The *Cambrien* from Rustico, belonging to W. Hodges. Esq.,

was lost near Cascumpec — all hands saved.

N.Y. DAILY TIMES, October 17, 1851.
The Late Gale At Prince Edward's Island

Telegraphic advices received in Boston yesterday from the United States Consul at Pictou, dated October 14, states that Mr. Wade, the agent of the Insurance Companies, has arrived, in sixty hours from Boston, and sends the names of the following vessels ashore, with all hands safe:
Schooners *Martha Ann*, of Castine; *Enterprise* of Hingham MA; *Gentile*, *Index*, *Blossom*, *Good Intent*, *Spray*, *Franklin*, and *Forest*, of Newburyport, *Wanderer* of Beverly; *Ruby*, *Sophronia*, *Commerce*, *New Haven*, and *Leo*, of Frankfort; *George*, of Deer Island; *Henry Clay* of Tremont; *John Murray*, *Fair Play*, and *William of*___

The following are ashore, with all hands lost:
Schooners *Portland*, and *Regulator*, of Portland, *Reward*, *Lucinda*, *Martha Ann*, "not known" (so reads the dispatch); *Montano*, of Hingham MA; *Grafton*, of Dennis; *America*, of Newbeck; *Bloomfield* of Boston.

The following vessels are ashore, but will be got off:
Schooners *Belle*, of Beverly; *Seth Hill*, of Dennis; *Garland*, of Gloucester; *Bell*, of Dennis; *Tammer*, *Lena*, and *Belverian*, of Portsmouth.

Schooner *E.E. Haskell* has been towed into Charlottetown dismasted. Schooners *Banner* and *Oasis* of Hingham MA, repairing. A number of vessels are supposed to have sunk outside, and all hands lost. The coast is strewed with wrecks.

Schooner *Telegraph*, (of Boston) Capt. Atwood, arrived at this port yesterday, from the Gut of Canso, 8th inst., via Wellfleet. She reports the schooner *Sarah E. Lewis* safe at Port Hood. Saw in the Gut, bound home, schooner *Edwin*, of Newburyport. At Souris, schooners *Æuniata*, and *R.E. Cook*, of Provincetown. Some fifty sail went into Tracaty [Tracadie] the night previous to the gale. A number of vessels also got into Malpacque. [Malpec, Malpeque]

The following vessels all belonging to Gloucester, are reported safe; Schooners *Denmark*, *Montezuma*, *Ohio*, *Leader*, *Centurion*, *Orazimbo*, *Virgin*, *W.P. Doliver*, *St. Lawrence*, *Ocean Lodge*, *Pacific*.

A slip from the Newburyport Herald, dated 15th, 10 A.M., says: A letter from Capt. William C. Page, dated Charlottetown, Oct. 7, states the *Forest* to be lost — all hands SAVED. Reports being in company with schooners

Mary A. Ames, *Fulton* and *Paragon*, the evening the gale commenced, and thinks, as they are superior vessels, they are SAFE. Capt. Page thinks there are about fifty vessels lost — three hundred in the different harbors, and the remainder of the fleet at sea.

N.Y. DAILY TIMES, October 21, 1851.
THE GALE AT PRINCE EDWARD'S ISLAND

The Gloucester Telegraph states that the schr. *Win. P. Dolliver* was at Charlottetown, having split her sails in weathering North Cape. Schooners *Ocean Queen* and *Orinoco* were safe at Tracadie. Schooner *Baltic* was also reported safe. Schr. *Progress* of Baltimore, was safe at Souris during the gale. Schr. *Constitution*, of Gloucester, before reported at Charlottetown, has sails somewhat injured. She towed into Charlottetown schr. *C.E. Haskell*. Forty-seven Gloucester vessels remained to be heard from, and a few which have been reported heard from remain in some doubt. Schr. *Northern Light*, Hall, arrived at Belfast 14 inst., with 300 bbls. Mackerel. Left the Gut of Canso during the gale, had decks swept, and lost bowsprit. Was in company with several Belfast fisherman, whom she left when the gale sprung up.

A slip from the Register office, Yarmouth, dated 18th inst., states that a letter has been received from Capt. Josiah Chase, of schooner *Cohasset*, of South Dennis, dated Charlottetown, Oct 9, states that his vessel got into the harbour of Tracadie before the gale commenced, but dragged ashore; all his crew safe. The *J.P. Merriam*, of Harwich was safe in the harbor. Capt. C. reports the following Dennis and Harwich captains as safe, (names of vessels not given): Remark Wixon, Daniel Doane, Ebenezer Marshall, (vessel of Hingham MA,) Simeon Wixon, Sears Kelley, Caleb Kelley, Elijah Smith, Elisha Rogers. Schooner Captain Sampson Hunt, ashore near close by the Cohanet. Schooner *Harriet Newell*, ashore, as before reported with loss of two men, Mr. Judah Gage of Harwich, and a Portuguese vessel a total wreck and condemned. Schooner *Grafton*, Capt. Grafton Sears, before reported ashore with all hands lost, is ashore, but her crew are all saved! Schooner ___, Capt. Isiah Kelley, of Harwich, and ___, Capt. Job Wixon, ashore — crews saved, but vessels a total loss. Capt. Bush, Capt. Lorenzo Baker, Capt. Josiah C. Eldridge, were in Malpeck harbor, but came off safe. The loss of the *Franklin Dexter*, of Dennis, with all her crew is confirmed. A great number of other vessels are ashore at the east end

of the island with great loss of life.

N.Y. DAILY TIMES, October 25, 1851.
THE GALE AT PRINCE EDWARD'S ISLAND

We continue to receive further particulars of the disastrous gale. The Newburyport Committee who went to Prince Edward's Island on behalf of the Owners of fishing vessels, belonging to that port, returned on Wednesday night, and brought accounts from all the Newburyport vessels, except two, from which nothing has been heard, when they left the Island on Saturday last. Capts. Bayley and Knight furnish the following statement. Of vessels belonging to Newburyport, 44 are safe, 19 lost, and the *Actor*, and *Augustus*, not heard from.

NEWBURYPORT VESSELS SAFE

Native American, (lost one man overboard belonging to Nova Scotia, and 57 bbls. fish off deck,) *Cypress*, *Sarah Jane*, *Charles Appleton*, *Herzon*, *Harbinger*, *Atlas*, *Vulture*, (lost one man,) *Palm*, *Rizpah*, *Pioneer*, *Tyro*, *Gen. Cushing*, *Paragon*, *Mary Frances*, *Go Ahead*, *Freedom*, *Mary*, *Victory*, *Hannah Grant*, *Reindeer*, *Edwin*, *Elizabeth*, *Independence*, *Thistle*, *Lion*, *Mary Clark*, *Equator*, *Empire*, *Angelina*, *Mary C. Ames*, *Martha*, *Gem*, *Pearl*, *William*, *Mary Felker*, *Ada*, *Mory*, *Albion*, *Ellen*, *Warren*, *Herald*, *Elvira*, *Alms*. Total 44.

NEWBURYPORT VESSELS LOST

James, *Traveller*, *Gentile*, *Mary Scotchburn*, *Statesman*, (crew of ten men lost,) *Duroc*, *Blossom*, *Forest*, *Franklin*, *Index*, *Hingram*, *Spray*, *Good Intent*, *Lucinda*, *Fulton*, *Ocean*, *Ruby*, *Atlantic*, *Enterprise*, Total 19.

NOT HEARD FROM

Actor, *Augustus* — 2.

The masters of schrs. *Fulton*, *Ruby*, *Montano* and *Grafton*, had chartered an English brig for $1650 to bring up their fish.

The Committee estimate that although some vessels have undoubtedly lost at sea with all their crews, the whole number of vessels ashore and lost, will not exceed 75, and the number of lives lost will not exceed 150. The following is a list of the lives thus far known to be lost, and the names of the vessels to which they

belonged:

Vessels Men Lost

Statesman, Fowler, of Newburyport 10

Traveller, F. Currier, of Newburyport 8

Balema, of Portsmouth 10

Lion, of Castine 6

Franklin Dexter, of Dennis 10

Nettle, of Truro 4

Harriet Newell, of Harwich 2

Fair Play, of Portland 11

Flirt, of Gloucester 13

Mary Moulton, of Castine 12

Vulture, of Newburyport 1

Native American, of Newburyport 1

America, of Lubec 9

Total 97

Several unknown vessels it is supposed foundered at sea, the crews of were of course lost. The committee visited the wreck of one about 80 or 90 tons, a mile outside Malpec harbor, but could not ascertain her name. She had an eight-square bowsprit, and from this they judged she was either a Gloucester or Provincetown vessel. She appeared to have foundered at her anchors.

The following is a list of vessels lost on the Island, and crews saved, belonging to other ports:

Schrs. *Reward*, of Deer Isle; *William*, of Portland; *Regulator*, do; *Montano*, Hingham MA; *Leo*, Castine; *Martha Ann*, Vinalhaven; *Triumph*, Cape Elizabeth; *Mount Hope*, Hingham MA; *Oscar Coles*, Portsmouth; *Golden Grove*, Kennebunk; *Garland*, Gloucester; *Eleanor*, do; *Belle*, Beverly; *Seth Hall*, Dennis; *Grafton*, of do; *Naiad Queen* of ___; *Chomet* of___; *Henry Knox*, Cohasset; *Caledonia*, Portland; *Melrose*, Provincetown; *Charles Augustus*, Cohasset; *Commerce*, Harwich; *Hickory*, Portland; *Governor*, Boston; *Wanderer*, Beverly; *Belle*, Dennis; *George*, Castine; *Bloomfield*, Boston; *C.E. Haskell*, Gloucester, (dismasted); *Norma*, Deer Isle; *Eliza*, Lubec; *Tickler*, New London. Total 32.

THE MASSACHUSETTS GLOUCESTER NEWS, October 23, 1851.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND — We mentioned in our last, that

the Lieut. Governor of Prince Edward Island, had issued a proclamation directing all officers of the Revenue, Magistrates, and other subjects of Her Majesty, to render all aid in their power to the unfortunate fishermen of the United States who were wrecked on the Northern coasts of that Island, and especially to exert themselves for the preservation of property, and its restoration to the rightful owners; but it appears from what we learn of our fishermen who have returned from the scene of the late disaster, that the proclamation, though evincing the generous humanity of the Lieut. Governor, was unnecessary; for they all speak in the warmest terms of gratitude, for the universal hospitality and kindness they and all the ship-wrecked men received at the hands of these generous and humane Islanders. In the midst of the storm they were on the beach to render every aid in their power to save life. After it had abated they cheerfully offered their services to assist in the preservation of property. They bore from the wrecks the bodies of those who had perished, at their own expense prepared them for the grave, and administered to them the last sad rites of humanity. Nor was this all; they opened their doors to those who had no shelter, fed and clothed the destitute, and bestowed upon the sufferers generally every possible assistance which could alleviate their misfortune, and every possible attention that humanity could devise. At the instance of many of our returned townsmen, our exchanges in Halifax, and the P.E. Island papers are requested to make known to their readers the feelings of grateful remembrance in which the wrecked fishermen of Gloucester will always hold the generous hospitality extended to them in their misfortunes.

THE ISLANDER, October 31, 1851.
REVIEW OF THE GREAT GALE

Now that men's minds have recovered from the shock communicated by the unparalleled destruction of life and property on our North Shore, they begin to investigate the cause of the catastrophe. It has been mainly owing to bad vessels badly managed. The storm continued an unusual length of time, but it was not severe, and the mischief was consummated within a few hours from its commencement. On our Northern Capes, not a rickety out-house has been injured that we have heard of, not hardly a breach made in the still more rickety snake-fences, although exposed to the closest sweep of the blast. In short, we have heavier gales and higher tides almost every year without loss. Nevertheless, it

seems probable that several American schooners capsized and foundered, besides what were driven ashore.

We have been informed that some are very cranky, and that others are broad, short, and low, and very unlikely to live in a heavy sea. It was, perhaps, a knowledge of the untrusty character of their vessels that induced so many Americans to court destruction by rushing towards unlighted harbours before a gale of wind mingled with a blinding rain. The following case presumes the probability that with ordinary good management, not a single life, nor a single vessel need have been sacrificed.

Donald Morrison, Esq., an enterprising merchant of New London, had a well equipped and ably commanded schooner fishing amongst the Americans, the night of the disaster and happened to be aboard himself. But Capt. Bell, instead of groping his way blindfolded to shore when the wind rose, judiciously stood out to sea. When day-light broke he made for New London Harbour, but when near the bar, he considered the land marks were even then so obscured by haze as to render the attempt to run too hazardous. He, therefore shaped his course for North Cape, which he doubled, without having tacked from leaving New London. He then ran down the coast and anchored under West Point, until the wind abated, in water as calm as a mill-pond.

As the American fishing fleet is always in land-locked positions, not one vessel should be considered insurable without a marine barometer on board. Another nocturnal storm preceded by a flattering afternoon, and a repetition of the late disaster may be anticipated on this or some other shore.

Schooner *Mary* of St. Andrews, N.B., has been lost on Hog Island in the late gale, and all hands lost; three dead bodies having been taken out of the forecastle.

N.Y. HERALD, November 11, 1851.
DISASTROUS GALE

Mr. E. Smith, of Provincetown, who has returned from Prince Edward Island reports: — That Schrs. *Grafton* and *Cohannet*, of Harwich; *Naiad Queen*, and *Charles Augustus* of Hingham MA, have all been got offshore, and the last named sailed for home 20th ult.; Schr. *Rival* of Truro, had also been got off Schr. *Melrose* of Princetown remained ashore at St. Peter's, and a contract was made with Gifford's Screw and Lever Company of Provincetown, to get her off and deliver her at home for $775. The knight heads and forward part of a schr. with chain attached, came ashore on Hog Island, after the gale,

name, etc., unknown. Appeared to be a small vessel. The chain was of three different pieces, from half an inch to seven-eights of an inch. Had a five inch stay; the jib was 16 feet on the luff, had no bonnet, and had one reef in it. Schr. *Eleanor M. Shaw*, of Truro, which was seen at Malpeque during the gale, has not since been heard from. Mr. Smith reports that a part of the stern of a vessel, much broken, came ashore on Hog Island, having *Eleanor* on it. Mr. S. visited schr. *Eleanor*, of Gloucester, ashore about 5 miles from the place where the plank was picked up, and ascertained that it did not come from the Gloucester vessel, which remained unbroken. A schr. is sunk near Tignish; had two topmasts, and the heads of the masts were above water. Seven or eight schrs. are sunk off the coast, between Cavendish and St. Peter's, whose names are unknown.
Schr. *Princetown*. — No tidings have yet been received from the missing schr. *Princetown*, of Gloucester, and it is feared is feared she must be reckoned in the list of vessels lost off the coast of P.E. Island in the late gale.

ROYAL GAZETTE, December 8, 1851.

The body of a man, supposed to be an American fisherman, was found near Tracadie Harbour, about three weeks since, with a mark on his right shin bone, about six inches above the ancle, supposed to have been caused by the blow of an axe. Two other bodies came on shore at Savage Harbour, on or about the 28th ult., on the arm of one of them was marked, in black ink, William Wallace and Mary Wallace. They were both decently interred in the Presbyterian Churchyard at St. Peter's, by order of James Coffin, Esq., J.P.
On the 14th inst.(sic), the body of a man was discovered on the beach on the North side of Malpeque Harbour, by Messers. Andrew and Benjamin Bell, who brought it across in their boat to Malpecque side, where they requested Benj. Bearisto, Esq., to take charge, and he having done so, caused it to be conveyed to a house near the Burial—ground, where he made arrangements to have it decently interred as soon as possible. — There were no marks by which deceased could be identified; the flesh was altogether gone off his hands and face; the supposition by all who saw him, was that he was an American seaman, as was his clothing, shoes, etc., were all of that kind.

ROYAL GAZETTE, December 15, 1851.

Picked up at Dead Man's Cove, Harding's Capes, New

London, on Sunday the 30th ult., by Mr. Hugh Macleod, a Body supposed to be that of an American Fisherman, drowned in the gale of October last. The body was destitute of clothes, excepting a pair of boots and socks. On the inside of the boots was marked 8-27. The socks worsted, clouded, blue and white. The body was carefully examined by J. Pidgeon, Esq., J.P. and the only marks visible were a cross on the back of the left arm near the wrist, and on the inside thereof the letter T, and further towards the wrist was what appeared to be an anchor, but the flesh being off above the wrists, together with the hands and head, no other marks could be distinguished. He appeared to be about 20 years of age, and 5 feet 8 inches in height. A coffin was made by Mr. McLeod and George M'Kenzie, and the body wrapped in a sheet, was placed therein, and on Tuesday following interred by the inhabitants in the Church-yard at New London Harbour.

On Thursday the 4th instant, another Body was picked up by Mr. John Macleod, about a Quarter of a mile westward of Cape Tryon. There was on the body when found, a pair of American homespun trowsers, white flannel drawers, twilled striped cotton shirt, and red flannel do., new with about four inches joined to the bottom on both sides, a pair of coarse boots, with sparrowbills around the toes, and a pair of blue and white socks, cotton and worsted. The body was much mutilated, all the flesh being off the head, together with the lower jaw, hands also off by the wrists, and the flesh off the arms halfway to the elbows, no marks visible. He also appeared to be an American, about 35 years of age, and 5 feet 7 inches high. A coffin was made by Messrs. Mcleod and the body placed therein on the shore, having been previously wrapped in a sheet provided by Mrs. J. Mcleod, and then hoisted up the cliff by means of ropes. The body was interred the same evening, in the before mentioned church-yard by the side of his fellow fisherman. In both instances, the burial service was read by Mr. Pidgeon.

ROYAL GAZETTE, December 15, 1851.

MEMORANDA

A letter dated GASPE, Oct. 29,185 1, and addressed to the Postmaster, Charlottetown, has been handed us, wherein it is stated, that the Schr. *Barbeanne*, (*Barbara Anne*), Francois Candee, master, sailed from the above place, for Malpeque or Cascumpeque, P.E. Island, on the 28th of September last, having on board, beside the crew, the following passengers: Mr. M'Donnell, Mr.

M'Carthy and family, and Miss McInnes, and that since her departure no tidings have been heard of her; and it is feared that she may have foundered at sea in the disastrous gale of the 3rd October last. Should any person have heard of either vessel or crew, they are requested to communicate the same to the Post Office at Charlottetown.

THE ISLANDER, March 30, 1852.

Missing Vessel

Schr., *Seth Hall*, of Dennis, got ashore on Prince Edward Island, in the gale of Oct. 3rd, was got off and laden with potatoes for Dennis via Provincetown. Sailed from the Island about Nov. 23, and left Canso harbor 28th, since which nothing has been heard from her. She was a good vessel of 85 tons, two years old, valued at $4500 of which $4210 was insured at the Union office, in Provincetown: her crew consisted of Seth Hall master, aged 30 years, who was married; John Burgess, 21; Hiram Rogers, 30; and Freeman Berry, 26 all of Brewster, and two Prince Edward Island men. She had also on board the bodies of three sons of Captain James Wixon of Harwich, viz, those of Captain James Wixon, Jr., aged 24, Nymphas, 22, and Joshua, 20, and of Marcus Taylor, 15, all of Harwhich, the part of the crew of the late schooner Franklin Dexter, of Harwich, wrecked in the October gale. It will be recollected that Captain James Wixon, the father of the above, went to the Island after hearing of the loss of his four sons, and had the bodies disinterred, and identified the three above, and also that of Marcus Taylor. The body of the fourth son, Henry C., aged 15 could not be found. He made all necessary arrangements to have the bodies taken home for burial in the above vessel.

ROYAL GAZETTE MAY 3, 1852.

Eliot, York County, State of Main, January 28, 1852.

TO THE EDITOR OR PUBLISHER OF THE P.E. ISLAND GAZETTE:
Dear Sir:
Please pardon the liberty that I am taking in addressing you — being an entire stranger to you, and also belonging to another Country — but I trust, when you hear my object in addressing you, that you will freely pardon the liberty that I am taking. I had a son lost off your Island in the ill-fated gale of October 3d and 4th; he was on board the Schooner *Statesman*, of Newburyport, which went to pieces off your Island — a

part of which (the stem) came on shore near Malpec Harbor. All hands on board perished.
Myself and family have been extremely anxious to obtain his poor body, that we might have it brought home and interred in our family burial-ground. We have seen published in the BOSTON TIMES, within a few weeks, an account taken from the "Prince Edward Island Gazette," that bodies had continued to come on shore off your Island, and that you gave a description of some of them, and that they were decently interred in the Church-yard of New London. One of them which you gave a description of, seems well to answer the description of my poor son, except his age; you judged him to be about twenty years of age; my son's age was about thirty, but had a young look. Your account says he was five feet eight inches in height, with a cross on the outside of his left arm, with the letter T on the inside. My son's name was Terence (?) F. Goodwin. The five foot eight was his height; and he had a cross -I- or similar to this, with a star on his hand on his hand between his thumb and forefinger, and some other marks on the inside of the left arm, and some of our family are pretty confident of that fact that he had a letter T on the inside of the left arm; but I am not confident of that fact myself, but know very that he had others beside the cross and star. — He was of light complexion, with very dark hair, some enclosed will correspond near to it, with sandy beard and whiskers; his whiskers when he left home, were some long around the chin and throat. The clothing that he took from home I will describe:- He had an overcoat of blue; lining, checked, dark blue and light blue, long outside jacket, cut sack fashion, with blue baize lining, and large black horn buttons. Three pairs of satinet trowsers, or pantaloons; 2 pairs of thin grayish black; the other pair lightish gray — a sample of both enclosed, A rob roy vest — sample enclosed with black back, lined with white cotton, with bright buttons. One other vest, made of vesting, black and red, with a black silesia back, black vesting buttons. 2 pairs of drawers, one of them white cotton and wool, plain cloth; other pair all wool, blue with white spots — a sample of both enclosed. Shirts, dark blue flannel. Stockings, blue gray mixed; others blue clouded — yarn of both kinds enclosed. Mittems, blue and white, checked: knit double. Also an oil-cloth suit.
Now, my dear Sir, you will perceive that I have been particular to describe his clothing, as near as I can, of what he carried from home; he obtained some additional clothing in Newburyport, previous to sailing, but of what description I am unable to state. Now if you will have the goodness to ascertain if the clothing of this person will correspond with any of the

above, and his hair and beard will correspond, and will give me information by letter, I should feel under the greatest obligation to you; and if it should prove to be his poor body, it is my intention to come down the last of May, or first of June after it, and I will see you satisfied for your trouble. Or if you can hear of any body having come on shore, and been buried answering this description, do my good sir, write me, and you will get the prayers of an afflicted family for your health and prosperity in this life and a blest immortality beyond the grave. And if you should get any information about this body, and should write me, would you point out the most easy, safe route to your place. Not knowing any man's name on your Island, my only resource was to you, as Editor or Publisher of the GAZETTE.
I am, Sir, Respectfully,
Your humble Servant.
JAMES GOODWIN.

(The above letter was received by us a few weeks ago, which we now publish, with the view of obtaining from some of intelligent readers the information which the writer of the letter is anxious to receive, and which, hitherto, we have been unable to arrive at by private enquiry. The samples of clothing and hair of the unfortunate deceased, referred to in the letter, can be seen by any person making application at the Office of the ROYAL GAZETTE. We shall be obliged to any of our friends, who will enable us to communicate satisfactorily with the bereaved father, who thus appeals to our common humanity.) — EDITOR, ROYAL GAZETTE.

ROYAL GAZETTE, May 24, 1852.

To JAMES GOODWIN, Eliot York County, State of Maine. — We are requested to state for the information of this Correspondent, whose letter we published in the ROYAL GAZETTE on the 3d May instant, wherein he sought to obtain certain particulars respecting the body of his son, which was stated to have been washed onto the shore of this Island, after the disastrous gale of October last, — that James Pidgeon, Esqr., J.P., residing at New London, is the Magistrate who caused the body to be interred, (which was decently done) in the New London Burial-Ground, and that previous to the interment he noticed on the body of the deceased the marks referred to in Mr. Goodwin's letter. A pair of Socks and a pair of Boots taken from the person of the unfortunate man, are now in the possession of Mr. Pidgeon, and are in a sufficient state of preservation to be identified.

Copies of the Gazette containing this notice, and the letter above referred to, are forwarded per Post to Mr. Goodwin's address.

ROYAL GAZETTE, June 21, 1852
FOUND

Near Rustico Harbour, shortly after the great Storm of Oct. 3, 1851, a SEAMAN'S CHEST, made of softwood, and covered with some kind of skin, greatly torn. The Chest, when found, contained a Silver Watch, and sundry wearing apparel, besides the Ship Papers belonging to the *MARY MOULTAN*. Any person or persons having claim to the above property will apply to the subscriber.
Rustico, May 31, 1852.

Excerpt from an article "The Great American Gale", in The Prince Edward Island Magazine, September, 1902, written by James D. Lawson:

"In an adjoining cove another vessel was aground, in which were fourteen men, none of whom had tasted food since the gale arose, and it was then Sabbath morning. Starving and with no prospect of relief at hand, the men were desperate. As a last resort they made two empty casks fast to ropes and threw them into the water. Presently these came ashore and were secured by the landsmen. The ropes by the latter were quickly fastened to a tree growing upon the bank and by that means four were safely rescued. Soon after that a tremendous wave lifted up the hull and landed it hard by the cliff. Fortunately all remaining on board sprang to the land and ran up the slippery bank.

At Rustico, another farming settlement adjoining Cavendish at its eastern side, three schooners were wrecked within five miles of each other — the *Franklin Dexter*, of Dennis, Mass., U.S., manned by a crew often; the *Shipjack*, N.S., by a crew of twelve, and the *Mary Moulton*, Castine, by a crew of fourteen. The *Mary Moutton* was smashed to pieces. The unfortunate crew lie buried in Cavendish Cemetery. The *Shipjack* was beached dismasted with a hole in her side and a balance reef in her mainsail, the supposition being that she was "laying to," and was run down by another schooner. The remains of those on board were buried in the graveyard of the Episcopal Church, Rustico. The *Franklin Dexter* was owned by Capt. Wixon but was sailed by Capt. Hall. Capt. Wickson's four sons and his nephew were on board. Three of the sailors forming the crew were found lashed to the rigging. Their bodies were horribly lacerated, their

clothing being torn to shreds. The other members of the crew had disappeared. As soon as the aged parents of the Wickson boys heard of their sad fate, the mother prevailed upon their father — an old gentleman of seventy — to hasten from Dennis to the scene of the disaster and bring home, if possible, there bodies for interment in the Family plot. When he arrived in Rustico, Capt. Wickson recognized some of his sons' clothing drying on a fence. As most of the bodies of the crew had been found and buried it was necessary to have them exhumed. On the lid of the first coffin being removed, Capt. Wickson fainted, and on being restored to consciousness he fainted again and again, and little wonder, for the lifeless form of his son was exposed to view before him. He soon identified two more of his sons and his nephew. As he searched the shore day after day for the body of his remaining son he became despondent, having been unsuccessful. His case elicited such universal sympathy that the inhabitants generally joined him in the search. At length the body was recovered. The five coffins were placed in a large packing case and placed on board the schooner Seth Hall which lay near, bound for Boston. Captain Wickson proceeded to Charlottetown and took the steamer for that city. Reaching home at Dennis, at the time expected, he met his relatives and friends, who mingled their tears with his as they listened to his touching story. But waiting and longing and hoping and praying for the arrival of the schooner with her precious freight brought her not, for the *Seth Hall* was lost at sea and never heard of more. The inhabitants of the port from which she sailed did not at all wonder at that, for before weighing anchor, the Captain cursed the storm, and the devastation it made, and impiously defied the God of the wind and the weather to prevent him from reaching his destination.

At the rear of Stanhope, another farming district, the writer's native place, fourteen miles from the capital, the schooner *Nettle*, of Truro, Mass., was stranded with four seamen washed overboard. Even yet some persons in this locality have distinct but melancholy recollections of the survivors weeping over their fallen comrades. And people there, now up in years, well remember the nervousness of women and children, especially after night on account of the dead bodies on the shore."

ROYAL GAZETTE, June 13 1853.

PAINTING OF THE OCTOBER GALE.

Last week we saw a very well executed painting of the disastrous gale which occurred in 1851, by which so many fishing vessels were wrecked, and so many lives lost. It has been painted by Mr. Thresher of this town for the New York Exhibition, and we doubt not will be an object of interest to many who may visit the Crystal Palace. The framing has been very neatly and appropriately done by M. Warren. (Haszard's Gazette)

1852

Winter: A coastal vessel again stopped by San Nicolàs Island off the coast of *Alta* California, at the request of the padre of the mission on the mainland, to look for the native American isolate known as the "Lone Woman" left over from a massacre of the 1820s by the Inuit crew of a Russian whaling vessel. She hid from them but they did find evidence of her continued presence.During this period, and continuing into the spring, the contralto

HERMITS

Marietta Alboni would be appearing in nearly a dozen operas in various cities of America.

There was snow on the ground from October through March in the San Luis Valley of Colorado, while temperatures plunged to 12 below zero. "The men were overworked," wrote Post Surgeon Edmund Barry. "I have known Major Blake to refuse passes frequently to deserving men, which I conceived to be owing to partial spite and spleen.... The company in general hated Major Blake, and I suppose the reason was because he kept them all the time at work and allowed very few privileges." Major George Alexander Hamilton Blake, who reportedly absented himself for frequent unofficial trips into Taos, New Mexico, rarely allowed any enlisted man of the 1st US Regiment of Dragoons a pass without abusing him verbally.

1853

June: A coastal vessel again stopped by San Nicolàs Island off the coast of *Alta* California, at the request of the padre of Mission San Juan Capistrano on the mainland, to look for the native American isolate known as the "Lone Woman" left over from a massacre of the 1820s by the Inuit crew of a Russian whaling vessel. This time they found her and brought her to the mainland. Evidently, however, her three decades of isolation from all human contact had removed her immune defenses, for she would die within seven weeks.

In this year or the next Henry Thoreau was adding into Draft F of his WALDEN *ms* a comment about the "Symmes' hole" in the earth, a comment quite as humorous as the comment he had made about it in a student paper while in college but also this time a comment with a point to it, a point which would never have been anticipated by the imaginative Captain John Cleves Symmes:

> WALDEN: It is not worth the while to go round the world to count the cats in Zanzibar. Yet do this even till you can do better, and you may perhaps find some "Symmes' Hole" by which to get at the inside at last. England and France, Spain and Portugal, Gold Coast and Slave Coast, all front on this private sea; but no bark from them has ventured out of sight of land, though it is without doubt the direct way to India. If you would learn to speak all tongues and conform to the customs of all nations, if you would travel farther than all travellers, be naturalized in all climes, and cause the Sphinx to dash her head against a stone, even obey the precept of the old philosopher, and Explore thyself. Herein are demanded the eye and the nerve. Only the defeated and deserters go to the wars, cowards that run away and enlist. Start now on that farthest western way, which does not pause at the Mississippi or the Pacific, nor conduct toward a worn-out China or Japan, but leads on direct a tangent to this sphere, summer and winter, day and night, sun down, moon down, and at last earth down too.

CAT

SYMMES HOLE

"THE OLD PHILOSOPHER"

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

WALDEN: Yet we should oftener look over the tafferel of our craft, like curious passengers, and not make the voyage like stupid sailors picking oakum. The other side of the globe is but the home of our correspondent. Our voyaging is only great-circle sailing, and the doctors prescribe for diseases of the skin merely. One hastens to Southern Africa to chase the giraffe; but surely that is not the game he would be after. How long, pray, would a man hunt giraffes if he could? Snipes and woodcocks also may afford rare sort; but I trust it would be nobler game to shoot one's self.–

"Direct your eye sight inward, and you'll find
A thousand regions in your mind
Yet undiscovered. Travel them, and be
Expert in home-cosmography."

What does Africa, –what does the West stand for? Is not our own interior white on the chart? black though it may prove, like the coast, when discovered. Is it the source of the Nile, or the Niger, or the Mississippi, or a North-West Passage around this continent, that we would find? Are these the problems which most concern mankind? Is Franklin the only man who is lost, that his wife should be so earnest to find him? Does Mr. Grinnell know where he himself is? Be rather the Mungo Park, the Lewis and Clarke and Frobisher, of your own streams and oceans; explore your own higher latitudes, –with shiploads of preserved meats to support you, if they be necessary; and pile the empty cans sky-high for a sign. Were preserved meats invented to preserve meat merely? Nay, be a Columbus to whole new continents and worlds within you, opening new channels, not of trade, but of thought. Every man is the lord of a realm beside which the earthly empire of the Czar is but a petty state, a hummock left by the ice. Yet some can be patriotic who have no *self*-respect, and sacrifice the greater to the less. They love the soil which makes their graves, but have no sympathy with the spirit which may still animate their clay. Patriotism is a maggot in their heads. What was the meaning of that South-Sea Exploring Expedition, with all its parade and expense, but an indirect recognition of the fact, that there are continents and seas in the moral world, to which every man is an isthmus or an inlet, yet unexplored by him, but that it is easier to sail many thousand miles through cold and storm and cannibals, in a government ship, with five hundred men and boys to assist one, than it is to explore the private sea, the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean of one's being alone.–

"Erret, et extremos alter scrutetur Iberos.
Plus habet hic vitæ, plus habet ille viæ."
Let them wander and scrutinize the outlandish Australians.
I have more of God, they more of the road.

It is not worth the while to go round the world to count the cats in Zanzibar. Yet do this even till you can do better, and you may perhaps find some "Symmes' Hole" by which to get at the inside at last. England and France, Spain and Portugal, Gold Coast and Slave Coast, all front on this private sea; but no bark from them has ventured out of sight of land, though it is without doubt the direct way to India. If you would learn to speak all tongues and conform to the customs of all nations, if you would travel farther than all travellers, be naturalized in all climes, and cause the Sphinx to dash her head against a stone, even obey the precept of the old philosopher, and Explore thyself. Herein are demanded the eye and the nerve. Only the defeated and deserters go to the wars, cowards that run away and enlist. Start now on that farthest western way, which does not pause at the Mississippi or the Pacific, nor conduct toward a worn-out China or Japan, but leads on direct a tangent to this sphere, summer and winter, day and night, sun down, moon down, and at last earth down too.

PEOPLE O WALDEN

HABINGTON

LEWIS AND CLARK

HENRY GRINNELL

SYMMES HOLE

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

Frederic Edwin Church painted "Mount Ktaadn" for the railroad and steamboat magnate Marshall O. Roberts, who had made an obscene amount of money buying and selling land on the basis of inside information about the location of new transportation routes and who was obsessed with America's manifest destiny of infinite expansive boosterism:

That last San Nicoleño, "Lone Woman" who was being brought to the mainland of California from that Channel Island just off the coast in June of this year, would become, eventually, allegedly, the inspiration for the pleasant romance ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS.[20]

HERMITS

July 29, Friday: Excerpts from WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS were published by Horace Greeley's New-York Tribune under, of all possible titles,

A Massachusetts Hermit.

20. In the 1950s this offshore landmass, San Nicolàs Island, would serve as a site for top secret Cold War tracking of Soviet nuclear submarines, and would be most decidedly off limits to any romantic tourists. Nowadays those leftover war facilities are being used to track biologicals — which is to say, whales.

1854

July 29, Saturday: In the afternoon Henry Thoreau went a-berrying to Brooks Clark's (Gleason D6) on the Old Carlisle Road.

The Bunker-Hill Aurora and Boston Mirror, on its 1st page in columns 5 and 6, under the heading "Hounds in Walden Woods," provided its readers with an 1,100-word excerpt from the "Winter Animals" chapter of WALDEN (this had been presumably supplied by William W. Wheildon).

Review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS, presumably by Horace Greeley, titled "A Massachusetts Hermit," on the 3d page of the New-York Daily Tribune, columns 2-6:

> Ticknor & Fields have in press a work by HENRY D. THOREAU entitled "Life in the Woods," describing the experience of the author during a solitary residence of two years in a hut on the shore of Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts. The volume promises to be one of curious interest, and by the courtesy of the publishers we are permitted to take some extracts in advance of the regular issue.
>
> THE HERMIT BUILDS HIS HUT.
>
> **[Reprints "Economy," pages 40.30-45.28.]**
>
> THE HERMIT PLANTS BEANS.
>
> **[Reprints "Economy," pages 54.16-56.13.]**
>
> THE HERMIT COMMENCES HOUSEKEEPING.
>
> **[Reprints "Economy," pages 65.14-67.24.]**
>
> THE HERMIT's FIRST SUMMER.
>
> **[Reprints "Sounds," pages 111.18-114.21.]**
>
> THE HERMIT FINDS A FRIEND.
>
> **[Reprints "Visitors," pages 144.13-150.27.]**
>
> THE HERMIT HAS VISITORS, MANY OF THEM BORES.
>
> **[Reprints "Visitors," pages 150.28-154.17.]**

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

1856

Ridgefield, Connecticut's native son Samuel Griswold Goodrich, who wrote under the pen name "Peter Parley," provided an account of Sarah Bishop in his RECOLLECTIONS OF A LIFETIME (NY: Miller, Orton and Mulligan, Volume I, pages 292-99):

> ... Men hermits have been frequently heard of, but a woman hermit is of rare occurrence. Nevertheless, Ridgefield could boast of one of these among its curiosities. Sarah Bishop was, at the period of my boyhood, a thin, ghostly old woman, bent and wrinkled, but still possessing a good deal of activity. She lived in a cave, formed by nature, in a mass of projecting rocks that overhung a deep valley or gorge in West Mountain. This was about four miles from our house, and was, I believe, actually within the limits of North Salem; but being on the eastern slope of the mountain, it was most easily accessible from Ridgefield, and hence its tenant was called an inhabitant of our town.
>
> This strange woman was no mere amateur recluse. The rock — bare and desolate — was actually her home, except that occasionally she strayed to the neighboring villages, seldom being absent more than one or two days at a time. She never begged, but received such articles as were given to her. She was of a highly religious turn of mind, and at long intervals came to our church, and partook of the sacrament. She sometimes visited our family — the only one thus favored in the town — and occasionally remained overnight. She never would eat with us at the table, nor engage in general conversation. Upon her early history she was invariably silent; indeed, she spoke of her affairs with great reluctance. She neither seemed to have sympathy for others, nor to ask it in return. If there was any exception, it was only in respect to the religious exercises of the family: she listened intently to the reading of the Bible, and joined with apparent devotion in the morning and evening prayer.
>
> I have very often seen this eccentric personage stealing into the church, or moving along the street, or wending her way through lane and footpath up to her mountain home. She always appeared desirous of escaping notice, and though her step was active, she had a gliding, noiseless movement, which seemed to ally her to the spirit-world. In my rambles among the mountains, I have seen her passing through the forest, or sitting silent as a statue upon the prostrate trunk of a tree, or perchance upon a stone or mound, scarcely to be distinguished from the animate objects — wood, earth, and rock — around her. She had a sense of propriety as to personal appearance, for when she visited the town, she was decently, though poorly clad; when alone in the wilderness she seemed little more than a squalid mass of rags. My excursions frequently brought me within the wild precincts of her solitary den. Several times I have paid a visit to the spot, and in two instances found her at home. A place more desolate — in its general outline — more absolutely

given up to the wildness of nature, it is impossible to conceive. Her cave was a hollow in the rock, about six feet square. Except a few rags and an old basin, it was without furniture — her bed being the floor of the cave, and her pillow a projecting point of the rock. It was entered by a natural door about three feet wide and four feet high, and was closed in severe weather only by pieces of bark. At a distance of a few feet was a cleft, where she kept a supply of roots and nuts, which she gathered, and the foot that was given her. She was reputed to have a secret depository, where she kept a quantity of antique dresses, several of them rich silks, and apparently suited to fashionable life: though I think this was an exaggeration. At a little distance down the ledge, there was a fine spring of water, in the vicinity of which she was often found in fair weather.

There was no attempt, either in or around the spot, to bestow upon it an air of convenience or comfort. A small space of cleared ground was occupied by a few thriftless peach-trees, and in summer a patch of starveling beans, cucumbers, and potatoes. Up two or three of the adjacent forest-trees there clambered luxuriant grape-vines, highly productive in their season. With the exception of these feeble marks of cultivation, all was left ghastly and savage as nature made it. The trees, standing upon the tops of the cliff, and exposed to the shock of the tempest, were bent, and stooping toward the valley — their limbs contorted, and their roots clinging, as with an agonizing grasp, into the rifts of the rocks upon which they stood. Many of them were hoary with age, and hollow with decay; others were stripped of their leaves by the blasts, and other still, grooved and splintered by the lightning. The valley below, enriched with the decay of centuries, and fed with moisture from the surrounding hills, was a wild paradise of towering oaks, and other giants of the vegetable kingdom, with a rank undergrowth of tangled shrubs. In the distance, to the east, the gathered streams spread out into a beautiful expanse of water called Long Pond.

A place at once so secluded and so wild was, of course, the chosen haunt of birds, beasts, and reptiles. The eagle built her nest and reared her young in the clefts of the rocks; foxes found shelter in the caverns, and serpents reveled alike in the dry hollows of the cliffs, and the dank recesses of the valley. The hermitess had made companionship with these brute tenants of the wood. The birds had become so familiar with her, that they seemed to heed her almost as little as if she had been a stone. The fox fearlessly pursued his hunt and his gambols in her presence. The rattlesnake hushed his monitory signal as he approached her. Such things, at least, were entertained by the popular belief. It was said, indeed, that she had domesticated a particular rattlesnake, and that he paid her daily visits. She was accustomed — so said the legend — to bring him milk from the villages, which he devoured with great relish.

It will not surprise you that a subject like this should have given rise to one of my first poetical efforts — the first verses, in fact, that I ever published. I gave them to Brainard,

then editor of the Mirror, at Hartford, and he inserted them, probably about the year 1823. I have not a copy of them, and can only recollect the following stanzas:

For many a year the mountain hag
Was a theme of village wonder,
For she made her home in the dizzy crag,
Where the eagle bore his plunder.

Up the beetling cliff she was seen at night
Like a ghost to glide away;
But she came again with the morning light,
From the forest wild and gray.

Her face was wrinkled, and passionless seem'd,
As her bosom, all blasted and dead —
And her colorless eye like an icicle gleam'd,
Yet no sorrow or sympathy shed.

Her long snowy locks, as the winter drift,
On the wind were backward cast;
And her shrivl'd form glided by so swift,
You had said 'twere a ghost that pass'd.

Her house was a cave in a giddy rock,
That o'erhung a lonesome vale;
And 'twas deeply scarr'd by the lightning's shock,
And swept by the vengeful gale.

As alone on the cliff she musingly sate —
The fox at her fingers would snap;
The crow would sit on her snow-white pate,
And the rattlesnake coil in her lap.

The night-hawk look'd down with a welcome eye,
As he stoop'd in his airy swing;
And the haughty eagle hover'd so nigh,
As to fan her long locks with his wing.

But when winter roll'd dark his sullen wave,
From the west with gusty shock,
Old Sarah, deserted, crept cold to her cave,
And slept without bed in her rock.

No fire illumined her dismal den,
Yet a tatter'd Bible she read;
For she saw in the dark with a wizard ken,
And talk'd with the troubled dead.

And often she mutter'd a foreign name,
With curses too fearful to tell,
And a tale of horror — of madness and shame —
She told to the walls of her cell!

I insert these lines — not claiming any praise, nor as rigidly accurate in the delineation of their subject — but as a sketch of the impressions she made upon the public mind, vividly

reflected by my own imagination.

The facts in respect to this Nun of the Mountain were indeed strange enough without any embellishments of fancy. During the winter she was confined for several months to her cell. At that period she lived upon roots and nuts, which she had laid in for the season. She had no fire, and, deserted even by her brute companions, she was absolutely alone, save that she seemed to hold communion with the invisible world. She appeared to have no sense of solitude, no weariness at the slow lapse of days and months: night had no darkness, the tempest no terror, winter no desolation for her. When spring returned, she came down from her mountain, a mere shadow — each year her form more bent, her limbs more thin and wasted, her hair more blanched, her eye more colorless. At last life seemed ebbing away like the faint light of a lamp, sinking into the socket. The final winter came — it passed, and she was not seen in the villages around. Some of the inhabitants went to the mountain, and found her standing erect, her feet sunk in the frozen marsh of the valley. In this situation, being unable, as it appeared, to extricate herself — alone, yet not alone — she had yielded her breath to Him who gave it!

The early history of this strange personage was involved in some mystery. So much as this, however, was ascertained, that she was of good family, and lived on Long Island. During the Revolutionary war —in one of the numerous forays of the British soldiers —her father's house was burned; and, as if this were not enough, she was made the victim of one of those demoniacal acts, which in peace are compensated by the gibbet, but which, in war, embellish the life of the soldier. Desolate in fortune, blighted at heart, she fled from human society, and for a long time concealed her sorrows in the cavern which she had accidentally found. Her grief —softened by time, perhaps alleviated by a veil of insanity— was a length so far mitigated, that, although she did not seek human society, she could endure it. The shame of her maidenhood —if not forgotten— was obliterated by her rags, her age, and her grisly visage — in which every gentle trace of her sex had disappeared. She continued to occupy her cave till the year 1810 or 1811, when she departed, in the manner I have described, and we may hope, for a brighter and happier existence.

HERMITS

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

1858

May 10, Monday: Henry Thoreau and Waldo Emerson walked to Walden Pond. To Thoreau's talk about a hermit living in Maine, Emerson retorted that "man was not made to live in a swamp."

At the Commercial Convention in Montgomery, Alabama, the possibility and the desirability of the resumption of American participation in the international slave trade was a prime topic of consideration. This

was a desideratum, even if it turned out to require the dissolution of the federal union.

> W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: The first piece of regular business that came before the Commercial Convention at Knoxville, Tennessee, August 10, 1857, was a proposal to recommend the abrogation of the 8th Article of the Treaty of Washington, on the slave-trade. An amendment offered by Sneed of Tennessee, declaring it inexpedient and against settled policy to reopen the trade, was voted down, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Virginia refusing to agree to it. The original motion then passed; and the radicals, satisfied with their success in the first skirmish, again secured the appointment of a committee to report at the next meeting on the subject of reopening the slave-trade.[21] This next meeting assembled May 10, 1858, in a Gulf State, Alabama, in the city of Montgomery. Spratt of South Carolina, the slave-trade champion, presented an elaborate majority report from the committee, and recommended the following resolutions: —
>
> 1. **Resolved**, That slavery is right, and that being right, there can be no wrong in the natural means to its formation.
>
> 2. **Resolved**, That it is expedient and proper that the foreign slave trade should be re-opened, and that this Convention will lend its influence to any legitimate measure to that end.
>
> 3. **Resolved**, That a committee, consisting of one from each slave State, be appointed to consider of the means, consistent with the duty and obligations of these States, for re-opening the foreign slave-trade, and that they report their plan to the next meeting of this Convention.
>
> Yancey, from the same committee, presented a minority report, which, though it demanded the repeal of the national prohibitory laws, did not advocate the reopening of the trade by the States. Much debate ensued. Pryor of Virginia declared the majority report "a proposition to dissolve the Union." Yancey declared that "he was for disunion now. [Applause.]" He defended the principle of the slave-trade, and said: "If it is right to buy slaves in Virginia and carry them to New Orleans, why is it not right to buy them in Cuba, Brazil, or Africa, and carry them there?" The opposing speeches made little attempt to meet this uncomfortable logic; but, nevertheless, opposition enough was developed to lay the report on the table until the next convention, with orders that it be printed, in the mean time, as a radical campaign document. Finally the convention passed a resolution: —
>
> That it is inexpedient for any State, or its citizens, to attempt to re-open the African slave-trade while that State is one of the United States of America.[22]

21. De Bow's Review, XXIII. 298-320. A motion to table the motion on the 8th article was supported only by Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Maryland. Those voting for Sneed's motion were Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, and Tennessee. The appointment of a slave-trade committee was at first defeated by a vote of 48 to 44. Finally a similar motion was passed, 52 to 40.
22. De Bow's Review, XXIV. 473-491, 579-605. The Louisiana delegation alone did not vote for the last resolution, the vote of her delegation being evenly divided.

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: This record of the Commercial Conventions probably gives a true reflection of the development of extreme opinion on the question of reopening the slave-trade. First, it is noticeable that on this point there was a distinct divergence of opinion and interest between the Gulf and the Border States, and it was this more than any moral repugnance that checked the radicals. The whole movement represented the economic revolt of the slave-consuming cotton-belt against their base of labor supply. This revolt was only prevented from gaining its ultimate end by the fact that the Gulf States could not get on without the active political co-operation of the Border States. Thus, although such hot-heads as Spratt were not able, even as late as 1859, to carry a substantial majority of the South with them in an attempt to reopen the trade at all hazards, yet the agitation did succeed in sweeping away nearly all theoretical opposition to the trade, and left the majority of Southern people in an attitude which regarded the reopening of the African slave-trade as merely a question of expediency. This growth of Southern opinion is clearly to be followed in the newspapers and pamphlets of the day, in Congress, and in many significant movements. The Charleston Standard in a series of articles strongly advocated the reopening of the trade; the Richmond Examiner, though opposing the scheme as a Virginia paper should, was brought to "acknowledge that the laws which condemn the Slave-trade imply an aspersion upon the character of the South.[23] In March, 1859, the National Era said: "There can be no doubt that the idea of reviving the African Slave Trade is gaining ground in the South. Some two months ago we could quote strong articles from ultra Southern journals against the traffic; but of late we have been sorry to observe in the same journals an ominous silence upon the subject, while the advocates of 'free trade in negroes' are earnest and active."[24] The Savannah Republican, which at first declared the movement to be of no serious intent, conceded, in 1859, that it was gaining favor, and that nine-tenths of the Democratic Congressional Convention favored it, and that even those who did not advocate a revival demanded the abolition of the laws.[25] A correspondent from South Carolina writes, December 18, 1859: "The nefarious project of opening it [i.e., the slave trade] has been started here in that prurient temper of the times which manifests itself in disunion schemes.... My State is strangely and terribly infected with all this sort of thing.... One feeling that gives a countenance to the opening of the slave trade is, that it will be a sort of spite to the North and defiance of their opinions."[26] The New Orleans Delta declared that those who voted for the slave-trade in Congress were men "whose names will be honored hereafter for the unflinching manner in which they stood up for principle, for truth, and

23. Quoted in 24TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 54.
24. Quoted in 26TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 43.
25. 27TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, pages 19-20.
26. Letter of W.C. Preston, in the National Intelligencer, April 3, 1863. Also published in the pamphlet, THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE: THE SECRET PURPOSE, etc., page 26.

consistency, as well as the vital interests of the South."[27]

May 11, Tuesday: Waldo Emerson recorded the conversation of the previous day, with Henry Thoreau at Walden Pond, in his journal:

> *Yesterday with Henry T. at the pond ... I hear the account of the man who lives in the wilderness of Maine with respect, but with despair.... Henry's hermit, 45 miles from the nearest house,* [is not] *important, until we know what he is now, what he thinks of it on his return, & after a year. Perhaps he has found it foolish & wasteful to spend a tenth or a twentieth of his active life with a muskrat & fried fishes.*

> *My dear Henry,*
>
> *A frog was made to live in a swamp, but a man was not made to live in a swamp. Yours ever,*
>
> *R.*

HERMITS

27. Quoted in Etheridge's speech: CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 34th Congress, 3d session, Appendix, page 366.

One of the children of Alexander William Doniphan had already died from accidentally ingesting a poison. The other of his children, 17-year-old Alexander William Doniphan, Jr., a student at Bethany College in West Virginia, at this point drowned in a flood-swollen river.

John Mitchel, who after his fight with the Catholic hierarchy in New-York had relocated to Knoxville, Tennessee where he had tried to become a farmer and had then begun a newspaper named the Southern Citizen, was admitted to the Montgomery Commercial Convention. He was admitted over the objection of Edmund Ruffin, apparently because Ruffin had encountered Mitchel only as a Northerner and had not yet been made sufficiently aware of this Irish gentleman's one redeeming feature, his intense racism.)

According to Noel Ignatiev's **HOW THE IRISH BECAME WHITE**, "To be acknowledged as white, it was not enough for the Irish to have a competitive advantage over Afro-Americans in the labor market; in order for them to avoid the taint of blackness it was necessary that no Negro be allowed to work in occupations where Irish were to be found."

IRISH PHYSIOGNOMY.

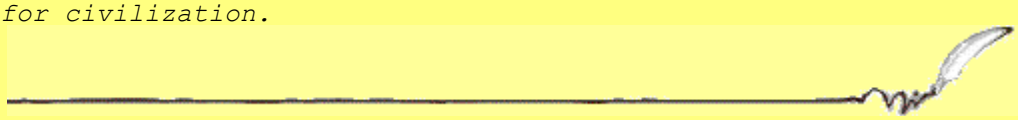
According to the jokes that were going the rounds in those days among non-Irish white racists (the bulk of the population, actually), the Irish were "Negroes turned inside out" while the American free blacks were "smoked Irish."

It has been well said, that inside the charmed Caucasian chalk circle it is the sum of what you are not –not Indian, not Negro, not a Jew, not Irish, etc.– that make you what you are. And, that's as true now as it was then.

1862

It was perhaps in this year that Waldo Emerson jotted the following into his journal:

Thoreau's page reminds me of Farley, who went early into the wilderness in Illinois, lived alone, & hewed down trees, & tilled the land, but retired again into newer country when the population came up with him. Yet, on being asked, what he was doing? said, he pleased himself that he was preparing the land for civilization.



HERMITS
ILLINOIS

The journals of Waldo Emerson for this year as assembled by his son Edward Emerson in 1904-1914 would instance the following contents: "The pinch of war begins. Memory, vanishing dreams. Argument impossible. English and American employers. Serene farmer, anxious newspaper readers. Slavery's statistics unheeded. The inspiring woods. Talent without character; Montaigne. Talk with chicadee; illusions; how far to respect them? War a new glass to see old things; trades go on, and amusements. Praise of Lowell's verses. John Thoreau's two wonderful gifts. Friends begin to die. Opinions are fluxional quantities. Cicero on civil war. Man's reserve right of war. Bassett on outrages on Northerners in Slave States. The current guides us better than we ourselves. Iron, not words. Grand commerce, paralyzed politics. Governments not heroic. The thinkers speak, not to their own, but next generation. Dr. Reed's strange experience. Happily nations tire of a fetich, like Union-saving. England's low plane of policy. Snow and Freedom. Be thankful for honest government, if slow, and for our good cause. Revolution in France. Keep our record clean before the nations. Hitch your wagon to a star. Ideas triumph over numbers. Richter's Titan. Burke on sentiment and policy. Mr. Emerson lectures in Washington at the Smithsonian. 'Civilization at a Pinch': pleasant meeting with President Lincoln. Sees Secretaries Chase, Stanton; also Seward with J. M. Forbes and Governor Andrew; visits Sumner. Dinner with Chase. Call on Mrs. Fremont; more talk with Seward. Seward's dislike of Massachusetts and complaint of Congress; he takes Mr. Emerson to Episcopal church, then to call on President; his boys and their rabbit. The giving up Mason and Slidell; Lord Lyons. Seward's talk of the Prince of Wales's visit, and of Thurlow Weed. Dinner at Mr. Hooper's with Governor Andrew. Mrs. Schuyler's story of Talleyrand and Aaron Burr. Sumner's letters from the Argylls. Reception at Mr. C. Eames's. The Capitol and Library. Recreant Northerners. Raleigh on army in fleet. Majorities. Von Ense on war and aristocracy. Correctness is rare. The stuttering wit. Good of antagonisms; man rooted in Nature, self-helpful, then refined. Thoreau's liking for Whitman; on false preachers; advice to drunkard. Old-time Bostonians in church. Weak Republicans in Congress. Holmes, and the Lowells. The meeting with the titmouse. Greenwood's oratory. Joinville's story of the friar. Shy goodness. The magic cannon in Mexico. Strong Unitarians were originally Calvinists. Les Chevaux de Sahara. Facts and Ideas; materialist and prophet. Freedom loves the North. Whiggery. War the touchstone of reputations, corrects brag and sentimentality. Shallow poetry; wish to teach rhetoric and oratory. The dying Thoreau brave and happy; his praise of Concord River. Our negative success. Mommsen on the poet. Brownell's 'Old Cove.' Mid-April ice on Walden. Cottle's Reminiscences. Spring's wise delay. Florian.

The birds. Peace uses most gunpowder. Country resources. Memory. Thoreau's death and burial; his English friend Cholmondeley and the gift of East Indian scriptures; list of those bequeathed to Emerson. Writers of romance, Harriet Prescott, Elizabeth S. Sheppard, Bettine von Arnim, George Borrow; Disraeli, Goethe. Misfortune from the negro. Feats, victory over the calf. Imaginative books; Nala and Damayanti. Wholes, you must take and give. The clear eye. Pansies. Real writing. Carlyle's Frederick. Untuning. McClellan. Two things in a picture. Memory of Thoreau. Farmer's standard of living. The gracious lady. Thoreau's sayings; the solitary rock. Courage. The inconvertible sentimentalist. Success of the North secure; the wind of battle scatters complications. Useless ephemeral reading. Thoreau's journals will beget naturalists; sentences from these. Concord prisoners of Bull Run return; welcome to them. Destruction of slavery worth the cost. The saints pictured as ugly. 'The grand style.' Sensitive reputation. Strong homely speech. Your own fault, if your book neglected. Blessing of conceit. The wood - tortoise. Talk with George Sennott. Seventeenth-century writing. Nature in leasts. Beliefs. Hold to your own standard. Shallow talk about Nature; she gives to each his own. Sentences from Thoreau. The motives to Emancipation. The war North and South; our government might let it out to contractor; Letter to C. G. Loring. Bonaparte's way; Gentz's Diary. Renan on Sacrifice. The Volunteer army. Friends. Iteration in verse. Uninventoried goods of farm. Delusions of lawyers and clergy. Sensibility is all. Excellence justifies. Musicians. Walden's bottom. Levity of the people. The world comes to you. Believing sceptics. The Emancipation Proclamation; its opponents. November splendor. Health. Incubus of Slaver.y. Art and religion. Unintelligent or biased voting. Garrison and Phillips. Victorious new generation. Southern victories but temporary; Moral law will win. Lincoln's slow policy. Armies or ships. Von Ense on the earthly and the heavenly alliance. The Nation on trial. Movements of an aristocracy and a democracy. The 'Divine Institution.' Poetry's charm. 'American Nationality,' War's service and power; the coming Reconstruction, let that be sound. Carlyle fears hypocrisy, but blind as to hero's foibles. The orchard's great bounty. Holmes's social talent. Father Isaac Hecker comes to Concord. Seeking for the Law. Household worship. Value of clubs, and of cheering books. The American problem. Hazel blossoms. Death in ancestral letters. Lyceum's three needs. Quotations from Borrow. Necessarily a bard. Reading."

1863

September 27, Sunday: Neues Leben op.278, a polka française by Johann Strauss, was performed for the initial time, in Pavlovsk.

Bronson Alcott noted: "Abby walks with me to Walden. We find the old paths by which I used to visit [Henry Thoreau] from 'Hillside,' but the grounds are much overgrown with shrubbery, and the site of the hermitage is almost obliterated."

ALCOTT FAMILY
HILLSIDE
HERMITS

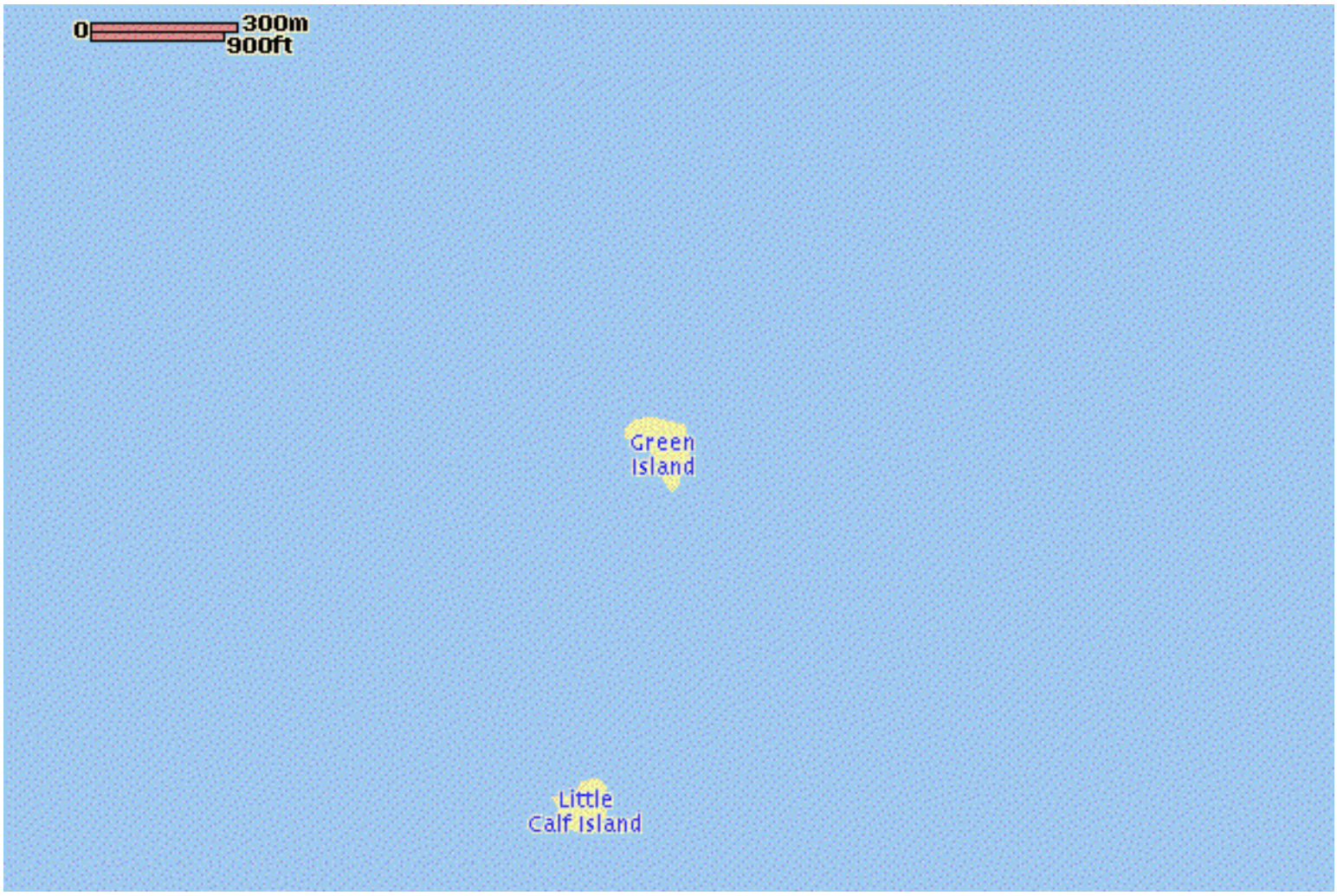
(It is clear that at this point no cairn had yet been begun at the site on the shore of Walden Pond, where Emerson's (Thoreau's) shanty had once stood.)

THOREAU'S CAIRN

September 28, Monday: Johannes Brahms conducted his 1st rehearsal with the Vienna Singakademie.

1865

End of the hermit Samuel Choate's reign over Green Island outside Boston Harbor, as at the approximate age of 70 he had become obviously too old and feeble to be allowed to continue his solitary existence.



(He was escorted to a charitable home.)

1866

Thomas Carlyle returned to Scotland to deliver his inaugural address as lord rector of Edinburgh University.

At about this point John B. Smith decided that he would try out his fortunes in the hermiting profession in the New World. He used his savings to embark to cross the ocean from Scotland, and by good fortune would be aboard one of the immigrant vessels that did not founder or be lost to a storm during the crossing. Arriving in the port of New-York, he would take up gardening until finding out that summers in that climate were too much for him. Having been tempted once with some cider, he had become a committed tee-totaler. He would perform various odd jobs that would take him to Springfield, Massachusetts and then Boston. Shutesbury, Leverett, and Lock's Pond were pointed out to him as areas in which he could pick berries to sell in Boston. From Boston he would relocate to Leverett, Massachusetts and would finally find his niche in Erving, Massachusetts, on Hermit's Mountain along the edge of the Mohawk Trail. He began with picking blue-berries and moved on to huckle-berries, finding it to be possible to carry some 20 quarts at a time in boxes tied in an old shawl that he threw across his back like a pack. It would take a couple of days to pick a packload of berries, 7 days to walk the 85 miles into Boston, and one day there to sell the berries. He could dispose of these berries for 20 to 25 cents per quart, which brought in an income of some $5 per trip. His expenses each time in the city would come to about $1 leaving a net proceeds of $4, which was enough to sustain him for several weeks. He also carried nuts to market, and fashioned evergreen wreathes. On such journeys he packed also, of course a bed-rug, coffee-pot, and crackers. For the wreathes, of which he could carry 30 or 40 at a time, he could obtain 30 or 40 cents each, thus raising his earnings to $10 to $15 per trip (it was not possible to ride on the Vermont and Massachusetts Railroad while engaged in such trade as the fare one-way would have been nearly $4, consuming far too much of his earnings).

TRALFAMADORIANS EXPERIENCE REALITY IN 4 DIMENSIONS RATHER THAN 3 AND HAVE SIMULTANEOUS ACCESS TO PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE. THEY ARE ABLE TO SEE ALONG THE TIMELINE OF THE UNIVERSE TO THE EXACT TIME AND PLACE AT WHICH AS THE RESULT OF A TRALFAMADORIAN EXPERIMENT, THE UNIVERSE IS ANNIHILATED. BILLY PILGRIM, WHILE CAGED IN A TRALFAMADORIAN ZOO, ACQUIRES THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD TIME, AND SO WHEN HE RETURNS TO EARTH, HE BECOMES A HISTORIAN VERY LIKE ALL OUR OTHER HISTORIANS: ALTHOUGH HE CANNOT HIMSELF SEE INTO THE FUTURE THE WAY THE TRALFAMADORIANS DO, LIKE ALL OUR OTHER HUMAN HISTORIANS DO HE PRETENDS TO BE ABLE TO SEE ALL PERIODS OF OUR PAST TRAJECTORY NOT WITH THE EYES OF THE PEOPLE WHO WERE LIVING DURING THOSE PERIODS, BUT WITH THE OVERARCHING EYE OF GOD.

THIS ENABLES HIM TO PRETEND TO BE VERY VERY WISE AND TO SOUND VERY VERY IMPRESSIVE!

1867

March-July: Sojourner Truth moved freed Southern slaves to Rochester, New York.

While walking across Massachusetts John B. Smith came upon dry shelter in a depression in a south-facing cliff face overlooking Millers River and the Vermont and Massachusetts Railroad tracks beside it, a track which extended from Fitchburg to Greenfield and some 10 miles farther. There was a small spring nearby, an adequate water supply which he would denominate "Moses' Rock." A rabbit and a mouse already resided in this dry spot under the overhang of the cliff face, and eventually the hermit of that place would sacrifice the resident rabbit for a stew, although in his book HISTORY OF THE HERMIT OF ERVING CASTLE (Andover: printed by Warren F. Draper), copies of which he would offer to visitors for 25 cents, he would describe that stew as having come about as a misunderstanding followed by an accident. The mouse of this dry spot would become so familiar that it would sit upon the hermit's knee, leap upon his shoulder, and nibble from his hand. It liked to leap and turn somersets, to the hermit's great amusement as in this remote region and in this topography (and in this era) he was unable to get a television signal, and so the hermit denominated it "Frisky." It would come when called by this name. The hermit learned that so long as he was careful to keep Frisky fully fed, it was not tempted as the local families of striped ground squirrels were, to molest his stored provisions. He did not smoke, since in his opinion his habitation was already smoky enough and since he disliked the fumes of tobacco. At first he was most cautious to avoid detection in his hideaway, as he was a squatter — this poverty-stricken isolate of course feared being driven away. For instance, during this early period he would always take care never to enter the same store twice.

CONTINGENCY

ALTHOUGH VERY MANY OUTCOMES ARE OVERDETERMINED, WE TRUST THAT SOMETIMES WE ACTUALLY MAKE REAL CHOICES. "THIS IS THE ONLY WAY, WE SAY, BUT THERE ARE AS MANY WAYS AS THERE CAN BE DRAWN RADII FROM ONE CENTRE."

November 30, Saturday: John B. Smith while fixing up the roof of his hermitage made a noise by throwing down a stone, and observed through the trees a person running away. Having been detected, he would spend that night in terror (the future is never fixed until it come about, and one of the likely outcomes of such discovery was an outcome the hermit definitely did not enjoy dreaming about).

HISTORY'S NOT MADE OF WOULD. WHEN SOMEONE REVEALS, FOR INSTANCE, THAT A PARTICULAR INFANT WOULD INVENT THE SEWING MACHINE, S/HE DISCLOSES THAT WHAT IS BEING CRAFTED IS NOT REALITY BUT PREDESTINARIANISM. THE HISTORIAN IS SETTING CHRONOLOGY TO "SHUFFLE," WHICH IS NOT A PERMISSIBLE OPTION BECAUSE IN THE REAL WORLD SUCH SHUFFLE IS IMPOSSIBLE. THE RULE OF REALITY IS THAT THE FUTURE HASN'T EVER HAPPENED, YET. THERE IS NO SUCH "BIRD'S EYE VIEW" AS THIS IN THE REAL WORLD, FOR IN THE REAL WORLD NO REAL BIRD HAS EVER GLIMPSED AN ACTUAL HISTORICAL SEQUENCE.

December 1, Sunday: On this morning John B. Smith was reassured, for no sheriff came to arrest him in his hermitage at the cliff face near Erving, Massachusetts.

In Vienna, 3 movements from Ein deutsches Requiem by Johannes Brahms were performed for the initial time, in the Großer Redoutensaal. Although the performance was less than perfect and a few hisses were heard, the composer was loudly applauded and called on stage.

In Buenos Aires, at the Teatro Colón, Louis Moreau Gottschalk premiered his Souvenir de Buenos Aires for piano.

ESSENCES ARE FUZZY, GENERIC, CONCEPTUAL;
ARISTOTLE WAS RIGHT WHEN HE INSISTED THAT ALL TRUTH IS SPECIFIC AND PARTICULAR (AND WRONG WHEN HE CHARACTERIZED

TRUTH AS A GENERALIZATION).

December 2, Monday: On this forenoon 3 men cautiously approached the hermitage of John B. Smith under the overhang of his south-facing cliff face near Erving, Massachusetts. They were carrying, reassuringly, only axes and spades. It turned out that they were not local magistrates, but merely a crew hired to construct a road. One of the men, the one who had seen him and ran away on the previous Saturday, was named Mr. Death. They suggested sensibly that the only thing the isolate had to fear was that he might irritate the local landowner were he to chop down any of his growing trees for wood. He would be able to exist in this locale for some 3 decades, building stone walls out from the depression in the south-facing cliff face and fashioning for himself a hut.

When the 2-window box office opened to vend tickets to Charles Dickens's initial public reading in New-York City, there was a double line extending from that office for a full kilometer and a half.

At the Tremont Temple in Boston, Dickens gave the initial public reading of his 2d tour of the United States: "Carol" and "Trial from Pickwick."

"HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE" BEING A VIEW FROM A PARTICULAR POINT IN TIME (JUST AS THE PERSPECTIVE IN A PAINTING IS A VIEW FROM A PARTICULAR POINT IN SPACE), TO "LOOK AT THE COURSE OF HISTORY MORE GENERALLY" WOULD BE TO SACRIFICE PERSPECTIVE ALTOGETHER. THIS IS FANTASY-LAND, YOU'RE FOOLING YOURSELF. THERE CANNOT BE ANY SUCH THINGIE, AS SUCH A PERSPECTIVE.

HERMITAGES "Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project

December 3, Tuesday: Nikola Ristic replaced Jovan Ristic as prime minister of Serbia.

A company of ladies visited the hermitage of John B. Smith under the overhang of his south-facing cliff face near Erving, Massachusetts, bringing with them delicacies. Eventually he would be visited also by Mr. Barton Wright, Esq., of Springfield, the owner of this 400-acre parcel of forest land, and Mr. Wright would turn out to be most agreeable to his remaining at that location.

Charles Dickens read from his works at the Tremont Temple in Boston, “David Copperfield” and “Bob Sawyer’s Party.”

YOUR GARDEN-VARIETY ACADEMIC HISTORIAN INVITES YOU TO CLIMB ABOARD A HOVERING TIME MACHINE TO SKIM IN METATIME BACK ACROSS THE GEOLOGY OF OUR PAST TIMESLICES, WHILE OFFERING UP A GARDEN VARIETY OF COGENT ASSESSMENTS OF OUR PROGRESSION. WHAT A LOAD OF CRAP! YOU SHOULD REFUSE THIS HELICOPTERISH OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORICAL PAST, FOR IN THE REAL WORLD THINGS HAPPEN ONLY AS THEY HAPPEN. WHAT THIS SORT WRITES AMOUNTS, LIKE MERE “SCIENCE FICTION,” MERELY TO “HISTORY FICTION”: IT’S NOT WORTH YOUR ATTENTION.

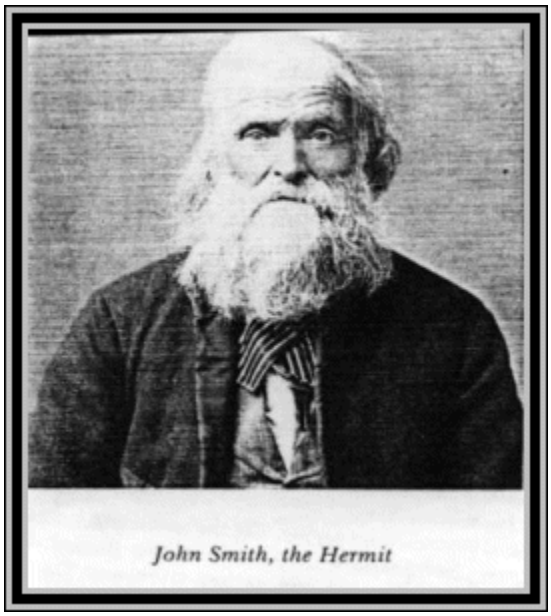
1868

At this point the roof of Whelan's (Emerson's, Thoreau's) shanty was removed whole by the Clarks, to cover their pig yard. Ellery Channing, a not always reliable source, claimed he saw the hut itself in ruins, the structure just having been pulled down — yet we would have a report, in 1876, strangely, of the structure as still standing. It would be reported to have been reconstructed, receiving a new roof, for use as a stable. The floor and some timbers would also be reported to have been used around 1885 to make a shed on the side of the barn. Eventually, the barn's shed would collapse and its wood would be used to repair the barn itself. The front door of the shanty was used over time in a variety of spots. Most sources agree that the boards somehow were used in barn repair on the Brooks Clark Farm. This has not been substantiated by any other source, but Edward Bacon would allege that the hut was demolished and the boards used to enlarge the farmhouse.

count on Ellery to be Ellery

In his prime, while John B. Smith was 45 years of age and perhaps not yet bald, people would venture to his hermitage under the overhang of his south-facing cliff face near Erving, Massachusetts to hear tales of his earlier existence as a peddler in the Highlands of Scotland and of the roles he performed on the stages of Glasgow and London. He wrote to newspaper editors in Boston, Massachusetts and Hartford, Connecticut to advertise himself and his solitary existence and attract tourists. George Warren Barber (1835-1886) of

Warwick or Medfield, Massachusetts, while a student at Andover Theological Seminary, wrote out his narrative so he would be able to sell copies of this HISTORY OF THE HERMIT OF ERVING CASTLE (Andover: printed by Warren F. Draper). The book indicates that the hermit's food consisted largely of Indian pudding, which he referred to as "stirabout" and consumed without milk or sauce. Sometimes he would purchase a few herrings, or obtain a little wild meat, and of course he did purchase and consume tea and coffee. He grew hollyhocks, sedum, and ferns along with his crops of potatoes, corn, and onions, picking berries and collecting nuts in season, and knitting cordage rugs and stockings. John wrote of the Americans, "I often wonder America should be so void of the sense of hermits." To visitors who didn't harass him he would sell copies of his book for 25 cents, and stockings that he had knitted, and wreaths he'd woven of mountain laurel. He was decidedly a hermit in residence, with a stock of wares.



John Smith, the Hermit

THE TASK OF THE HISTORIAN IS TO CREATE HINDSIGHT WHILE INTERCEPTING ANY ILLUSION OF FORESIGHT. NOTHING A HUMAN CAN SEE CAN EVER BE SEEN AS IF THROUGH THE EYE OF GOD.
IN A BOOK THAT IS SUPPOSED TO BE ABOUT HISTORY, ISSUED BY RANDOM HOUSE IN 2016, I FIND THE PHRASE "LOOKED UPON FROM THE BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF HISTORY, ..." ONLY A MERE STORYTELLER, NEVER A HISTORIAN, COULD HAVE PENNED SUCH A PHRASE —

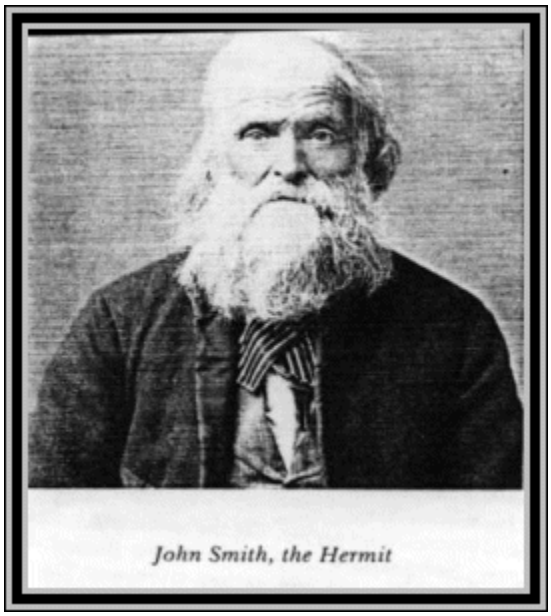
BECAUSE NO BIRD HAS EVER FLOWN OVER HISTORY.

April 26, Tuesday: George Warren Barber (1835-1886) of Warwick or Medfield, Massachusetts, a student at Andover Theological Seminary, stood on a flat rock which would receive the name "Pulpit Rock" alongside the hermitage of John B. Smith under the overhang of his south-facing cliff face near Erving, Massachusetts and pronounced a sermon upon the "Parable of the Talents" before an audience that had assembled for that purpose (the resident hoped that sort of thing wouldn't happen with any regularity). Although Smith did not favor the singing of songs on the Sabbath, he did possess a songbook as well as his copy of the BIBLE and his favorite tunes were Balerma, Old Hundred, Jerusalem, and Comfort.

NEVER READ AHEAD! TO APPRECIATE APRIL 26TH, 1868 AT ALL ONE MUST APPRECIATE IT AS A TODAY (THE FOLLOWING DAY, TOMORROW, IS BUT A PORTION OF THE UNREALIZED FUTURE AND IFFY AT BEST).

Summer: A little bird built its nest in the mouth of John B. Smith's hermitage under the overhang of his south-facing cliff face near Erving, Massachusetts, and amid curling smoke laid 4 spotted eggs, which hatched and grew into 4 lovely chicks (the hermit did not specify the species of this bird, and did not mention any male assisting her in the creation of this nest). There were also visits by a family of 4 striped squirrels, that lived a little way up the face of the cliff and came to see what they could carry away. The hermit's mouse "Frisky," and the birds nesting above his cave, and the striped squirrels of the cliff face, disappeared at about the time of arrival of Robinnie, the initial cat who made herself mistress of the hermitage. Robinnie had been brought out to the cave by a lady of the town who had pleaded with the hermit to take responsibility for her. The hermit noticed that before consuming her prey, Robinnie much enjoyed displaying the little animals before him. For money, which even a hermit needs a little of, he collected berries and made wreathes, carrying them on his back from Erving to Boston. As word of him spread, he began to have visitors, and was able to set himself up again as a professional hermit just like back in the old country. He was eager to sell socks he knitted to his visitors, pointing out to them that it was just as common in Scotland for men to do such knitting as women. Eventually the owner of a section of nearby woodland, Mr. Trask, set up a hostel called Erving House, and from that habitation guides would escort the guests on visits to the habitation of the hermit. It was reported in local

gazettes that he even once entertained, as they passed through, a Prussian count and countess. There are photographs still in existence in which Smith, with bushy beard and bald head, poses with families. Once, however, he was visited and molested by a criminal who was wanted elsewhere by detectives of the police — but this man finally went away without causing any great harm and fortunately did not return.



John Smith, the Hermit

King Maximilian II had already had paths and lookout points constructed in the area around the *Jugend* lookout point, and in the 1850s, as a birthday present for consort Marie, he had positioned an iron bridge, the "*Marienbrücke*," across *Pöllat* Gorge. At this point some 8 meters of stone were removed from the top of the *Jugend* to the left of the *Pöllat* to prepare the site for the erection of a fantastical "New *Hohenschwangau* Castle" modelled by King Ludwig II of Bavaria after the palace at Versailles (this involved the removal of the ruins of two smaller, earlier castles known as *Vorderhohenschwangau* and *Hinterhohenschwangau*.

> It is my intention to rebuild the old castle ruin of *Hohenschwangau* near the *Pöllat* Gorge in the authentic style of the old German knights' castles, and I must confess to you that I am looking forward very much to living there one day (in 3 years); there will be several cozy, habitable guest rooms with a splendid view of the noble *Säuling*, the mountains of *Tyrol* and far across the plain; you know the revered guest I would like to accommodate there; the location is one of the most beautiful to be found, holy and unapproachable, a worthy temple for the divine friend who has brought salvation and true blessing to the world. It will also remind you of "*Tannhäuser*" (Singers' Hall with a view of the castle in the background), "*Lohengrin*" (castle courtyard, open corridor, path to the chapel); this castle will be in every way more beautiful and habitable than *Hohenschwangau* further down, which is desecrated every year by the prose of my mother; they will take revenge, the desecrated gods, and come to live with Us on the lofty heights, breathing

the air of heaven.

THE FALLACY OF MOMENTISM: THIS STARRY UNIVERSE DOES NOT CONSIST OF A SEQUENCE OF MOMENTS. THAT IS A FIGMENT, ONE WE HAVE RECOURSE TO IN ORDER TO PRIVILEGE TIME OVER CHANGE, A PRIVILEGING THAT MAKES CHANGE SEEM UNREAL, DERIVATIVE, A MERE APPEARANCE. IN FACT IT IS CHANGE AND ONLY CHANGE WHICH WE EXPERIENCE AS REALITY, TIME BEING BY WAY OF RADICAL CONTRAST UNEXPERIENCED — A MERE INTELLECTUAL CONSTRUCT. THERE EXISTS NO SUCH THING AS A MOMENT. NO "INSTANT" HAS EVER FOR AN INSTANT EXISTED.

1869

May 18, Tuesday: Edmond Stuart Hotham, who had obtained Waldo Emerson's permission and had built or dug a habitation near Thoreau's site on Walden Pond (he was an ascetic rather than a writer), had lasted out the previous winter but, at this point, feeling too harassed by visitors to the pond including reporters looking for a story, departed from the region.[28]

In the town of Quincy in this year, the 1st "schoolbus" of the sort that picks children up and brings them to school (except that this was a wagon rather than a bus, and was not yellow).

28. Refer to Kenneth Walter Cameron's "Thoreau's Disciple at Walden," Emerson Society Quarterly 26 (1962): 34-45. The person in question was a tall, quiet theology student from New York, and his reading of the book WALDEN was so superficial as to cause him to seek to distinguish himself by outdistancing its author in economy and in asceticism. Bronson Alcott described him as serious, sensible, and unassuming but without "light of idealism." After Emerson allowed him the use of his famous woodlot by the pond, he dug in November into a slope in front of where the shanty had been situated to create a habitation half the size of Thoreau's. It was "not unlike a pile of dirt with a hole in its front ... built of rough boards and boughs, faced by a small glass window and a glass and wood door, and banked up nearly to the top, except in front, by earth and turf." Ellery Channing recorded it as dug into the bank of the pond. Covered with vines on the outside and tree branches on the inside, it must have been more than a little like the original dirt homes the white people who came to Concord during the early 17th Century had made in the banks of the river. There was a camp bed, a stove, a table, two shelves, two stools, and a waffle iron to make corn waffles. He drank pond water and ate Graham biscuits, wheat bread, dried apples, and corn.

1878

Daniel Teller's THE HISTORY OF RIDGEFIELD attempted to describe Sarah Bishop in her later years — as, of course, the collective memory of the townsfolk was at that point reconstructing her:

> Her whole appearance was to the last degree peculiar. Poorly clad, her form slightly bent, her face pale and careworn, her brow wrinkled and nearly hidden by long locks of gray hair, which were allowed to fall carelessly over it, her step quick and agile, she would seem to glide rather than walk through the town in quest of such articles of food as were absolutely indispensable to the sustenance of the body; or a few crumbs of that spiritual bread which is no less indispensable to the soul. She is said to have reminded one more of a visitant from the spirit-world than of a being of actual flesh and blood.

HERMITS

This local historian concluded his account of Sarah with:

> In the year 1810 this strange life ended, and ended in a manner sadly in keeping with all which had preceded it. One stormy night she left the house of a Mr. Williamson, living where Mr. Timothy Jones now lives, some two miles away, to return by a nearer route across the fields to her own wretched den. A few days after, much anxiety having been felt as to her condition, search was made for her. Not finding her in the cave, those in search started down across the fields towards the house at which she had been last seen. They had proceeded but a little way before they discovered her lifeless body literally wedged in between masses of rocks. She had never reached her home. The things which the kind neighbor had given her were with her. In attempting to climb the steep and rocky hill-side she had missed her footing and perished.

1886

September: Frederick Douglass and Helen Pitts Douglass began an extended tour of England, Ireland, France, Switzerland, Italy, Egypt, and Greece. They wouldn't be back until August of the following year.

Brewster records that in this month of this year in Concord, the last American Passenger Pigeon *Ectopistes migratorius* to be sighted there was destroyed.

Friedrich Nietzsche's BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL.[29] In evaluating this work, consider it in conjunction with the advice Henry David Thoreau offered for such target shooting in one of his letters, "Aim above morality," and compare it with Thoreau's 1841 journal entry, "The best thought is not only without somberness, but even without morality. The universe lies outspread in floods of white light to it. The moral aspect of nature is a jaundice reflected from man. To the innocent there are no cherubim nor angels. Occasionally we rise above the necessity of virtue into an unchallengeable morning light, in which we have not to choose in a dilemma between right and wrong, but simply to live right on and breathe the circumambient air. There is no name for this life unless it be the very vitality of vita. Silent is the preacher about this, and silent must ever be, for he who knows it will not preach."

To help you form an impression, whether there was a soul affinity between Nietzsche and Thoreau, I will include here a snippet about hermiting from this volume:

> In the writings of a hermit one always hears something of the echo of the desolate regions, something of the whispered tones and the furtive look of solitude; in his strongest words, even in his cry, there still vibrates a new and dangerous kind of silence — of burying something in silence. When a man has been sitting alone with his soul in confidential discord and discourse, year in and year out, day and night; when in his cave —it may be a labyrinth or a gold mine— he has become a cave bear or a treasure digger or a treasure guard and dragon; then even his concepts eventually acquire a twilight color, an odor just as much of depth as of must, something incommunicable and recalcitrant that blows at every passerby like a chill.
> The hermit does not believe that any philosopher —assuming that every philosopher was first of a all a hermit— ever expressed his real and ultimate opinions in books: does one not write books precisely to conceal what one harbors? Indeed, he will doubt whether a philosopher could **possibly** have "ultimate and real" opinions, whether behind every one of his caves there is not, must not be, another deeper cave — a more comprehensive, stranger, richer world beyond the surface, an abysmally deep ground behind every ground, under every attempt to furnish "grounds." Every philosophy is a foreground philosophy — that is a hermit's judgement: "There is something arbitrary in his stopping **here** to look back and look around, in his not digging

29. Friedrich Nietzsche. *JENSEITS VON GUT UND BÖSE* (BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL), in THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE, NY: Viking Press, 1982b (1886)

deeper **here** but laying his spade aside; there is also something suspicious about it." Every philosophy also **conceals** a philosophy; every opinion is also a hide-out, every word also a mask.

HERMITS

1890

Professor Bliss Perry's THE BROUGHTON HOUSE.

(NOT WORTH YOUR WHILE)

According to Lawrence Buell, during this decade Henry Thoreau would be considered just another of those cranky hermits in just another of those secluded nooks (the evidence for this is pages 146, 153, and 479 of THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMAGINATION: THOREAU, NATURE WRITING, AND THE FORMATION OF AMERICAN CULTURE, as instanced below). The Professor alleges, in addition, that by this point in time John Burroughs had become "aware of Thoreau's shadow," aware, that is, that in resorted to a cabin in a secluded nook, "Slabsides," even though his cabin and its locale were rather unlike Henry's shack in the Walden woods, he was running a risk of becoming like his mentor a cranky hermit:

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

1897

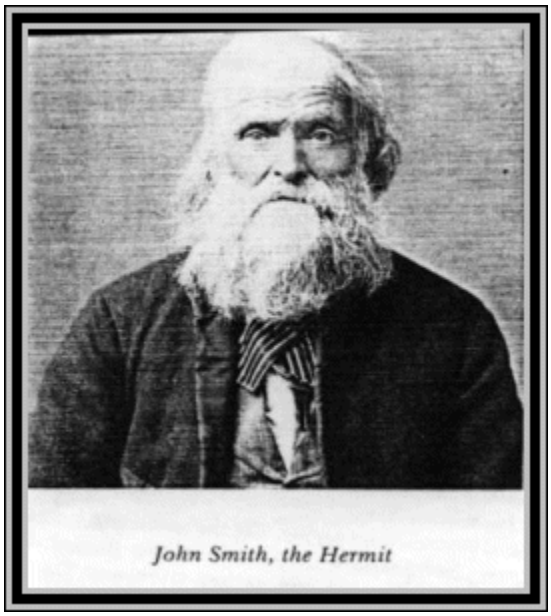
After 15 years in Queensland with the Townsville Daily Bulletin, editor Edmund James Banfield suffered a physical and nervous collapse[30] and, accepting the recommendation of a local physician, took his wife Bertha Golding "Whither Thou Goest I Will Go" Banfield and Irish maid Essie McDonough to begin a government-sponsored "homestead" and live on *Coonanglebah* or Dunk Island, a double-peaked island of about 3 or 4 square miles in the latitude the Great Barrier Reef, a mere $2^1/_2$ miles from the mainland of Australia. After some three months there with the employment of several aborigines "I knew my island, and was on terms of friendly admiration —born of knowledge of beauty spots— with all the others. I had become a citizen of the universe." Banfield had become, to use the nonce term coined by James Michener, a *nesomaniac*, a person "mad about islands."

If this was a hermit, be it duly noted, this was a hermit accompanied by an unacknowledged household staff.[31]

30. According to his biographer Michael Noonan (A DIFFERENT DRUMMER: THE STORY OF E.J. BANFIELD, THE BEACHCOMBER OF DUNK ISLAND. St Lucia, London, and New York: U of Queensland P, 1983, page 94), "His condition has been said to have been a form of phthisis, a progressive wasting disease, possibly pulmonary consumption." Whatever it was, it would not prevent his living to the age of 70.
31. Well, almost unacknowledged — this spouse's grave marker would begin with the word "Also."

1899

Fall: In his hermitage in the south-facing cliff face in the mountain woodland near the small town of Montague, Massachusetts (town motto: "five fingers on one hand"), John B. Smith fell ill and was taken in at a local farm. He would die during the following March. A cat Toby's headstone has been repositioned near his headstone, this cat in his series of pets having died and been put underground in a different timeframe and in a different locale.



John Smith, the Hermit

Friends Elbert Russell and Lieuetta Cox Russell attended the sessions of Western Yearly Meeting and were seated in the second row of seats on the platform, behind the speakers and the chairman in charge.

> *Esther Frame preached that night a rather famous sermon of hers on "Homecoming in Heaven." With dramatic gestures, she drew a number of highly emotional scenes of people reunited in heaven. She had the congregation wave their handkerchiefs in a Chautauqua salute to those who were waiting for them in heaven; she called on all who were sanctified to stand up. Lieuetta and I did not believe in forcing people to make confessions of things they could not wholly accept nor explain; so we kept our seats, very conspicuously. Then she called on all to arise who wanted to go to haven. We kept our seats again. This time our lack of response could not be ignored; she turned and said, "Why Brother and Sister Russell, don't you want to go to heaven?" It was quite embarrassing, as well as good ground for a future attack on the head of the Biblical Department at Earlham, but we ignored the appeal. finally she told a pathetic story about a man traveling on a Pullman with his wire's coffin in the baggage car, at which Minnie Mills Hadley, who had recently brought her deceased*

husband, Marcus, home from Philadelphia, fainted. At the next stage in her emotional appeal, the wife of Thomas E. Brown, came running down the aisle clapping her hands and shouting "Glory." That was going beyond the limits of even Evangelical Quaker propriety. After a hurried conference among a few leading Friends, including the yearly meeting Superintendent David Hadley, they closed the meeting abruptly. This unsatisfactory denouement seems to have saved Lieuetta and me from any unfavorable reaction from our earlier nonconformity.

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT IT IS MORTALS WHO CONSUME OUR HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS, FOR WHAT WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO DO IS EVADE THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE HUMAN LIFESPAN. (IMMORTALS, WITH NOTHING TO LIVE FOR, TAKE NO HEED OF OUR STORIES.)

1900

March 30, Friday: The body of John B. Smith was interred at the far end of the Erving Center Graveyard, a pretty and stately hilltop yard with the usual smattering of Puritan death's head slate stones, architectural-style Civil War-era stones, and crass polished modern granite thingies reminding one of one's kitchen counter-top. In a hidden spot that seems more like part of an abutting house's backyard are 2 small undated marble stones that have become almost covered in dead leaves. One says across the top "THE HERMIT" with on its face the inscription "OF ERVING CASTLE. JOHN SMITH Æ 82." The other smaller stone bears just a name from one of his succession of cats, "TOBY."

BETWEEN ANY TWO MOMENTS ARE AN INFINITE NUMBER OF MOMENTS, AND BETWEEN THESE OTHER MOMENTS LIKEWISE AN INFINITE NUMBER, THERE BEING NO ATOMIC MOMENT JUST AS THERE IS NO ATOMIC POINT ALONG A LINE. MOMENTS ARE THEREFORE FIGMENTS. THE PRESENT MOMENT IS A MOMENT AND AS SUCH IS A FIGMENT, A FLIGHT OF THE IMAGINATION TO WHICH NOTHING REAL CORRESPONDS. SINCE PAST MOMENTS HAVE PASSED OUT OF EXISTENCE AND FUTURE MOMENTS HAVE YET TO ARRIVE, WE NOTE THAT THE PRESENT MOMENT IS ALL THAT EVER EXISTS — AND YET THE PRESENT MOMENT BEING A MOMENT IS A FIGMENT TO WHICH NOTHING IN REALITY CORRESPONDS.

1902

Thomas Francis Neale was born in New Zealand.

HERMITS

There was no history of wanderlust in my family that I knew of - than the enterprise which had brought my father, who was born in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, out to New Zealand after serving with the 17th Lancers. By the time he met my mother, who came of sound pioneering stock, he had become a company secretary. And so I was born in Wellington, though while I was still a baby we moved to Greymouth in New Zealand's South Island, where my father was appointed paymaster to the state coal mines. Here we remained until I was about seven, when the family -I had two brothers and three sisters- moved to Timaru on the opposite side of South Island.

It was a change for the better. My maternal grandmother owned twenty acres of land only five miles out of Timaru and here we settled down, my father commuting to his new office either by bicycle, trap or on horseback, while I went to the local school where (with all due modesty) I was good enough in reading, geography and arithmetic to merit a rapid move from Standard One to Standard Three.

Looking back, I imagine the real clue to my future aspirations lay in the fact that is always seemed absolutely natural that I should go to sea. I cannot remember ever contemplating any other way of life and there was no opposition from my parents when I announced I would like to join the New Zealand Navy. My real ambition was to become a skilled navigator, but when my father took me to Auckland Naval Base to sign on, I was dismayed to discover that already I was too old at eighteen and a half to be apprenticed as a seaman. It was a bitter disappointment, but I had set my heart on a seafaring career and did the next best thing. Signing on as an apprentice engineer meant starting right at the bottom -and I mean at the bottom- as a stoker, although I didn't mind because the job, however menial, would give me a chance to see something of the Pacific.

I spent four years in the new Zealand Navy before buying myself out, and I only left because of a nagging desire to see more of the world than the brief glimpses we obtained beyond the confining, narrow streets of the ports where we docked. And our visits were dictated by naval necessity - simple things like routine patrols or defective boilers, so that I saw Papeete but never Tahiti; Apia but never Samoa; Nukualofa but never Tonga. It was the islands I always longed to see, not a vista of dock cranes nor the sleazy bars which one can find in every maritime corner of the world. For the next few years I wandered from island to island. Sometimes I would take a job for a few months as a fireman on one of the slow, old, inter-island tramps. When I tired of this, I would settle down for a spell, clearing bush

or planting bananas. There was always work, and there was always food. And it was only now that I really came to know and love the islands strung like pearls across the South Pacific - Manihiki at dawn as the schooner threads its way through the pass in the reef; Papeete at sunset with the Pacific lapping up against the main street; the haze on the coconut palms of Puka Puka; the clouds above Moorea with its jagged silhouette of extinct volcanoes; Pago Pago, where Somerset Maugham created the character of Sadie Thompson, and where you can still find the Rainmaker's Hotel; Apia, where, I was later told, Michener was inspired to create Bloody Mary and where Aggie Grey's Hotel welcomes guests with a large whisky and soda. I loved them all, and it was ten years before I returned to New Zealand in 1931. I was then twenty-eight and when I reached Timaru I telephoned my father at his office.

"Who's that?" he asked.

"Tom."

"Which Tom?"

"Your Tom!" I replied.

At first he could hardly believe it. But before long he was at the station to fetch me in his car. The old man looked much the same as I remembered him, as did my mother - but my brothers and sisters had grown so much that at first I scarcely recognised them. Ten years is a long time, but before long I was back in the family routine as though I had been away hardly more than a month. Yet, somehow, I remained an outsider in my own mind. I had seen too much, done so much, existed under a succession of such utterly different circumstances, that at times I would catch myself looking at my mother sitting placidly in her favourite chair and think to myself, "Is it really possible that for all these years while I've been seeing the world, she has sat there each evening apparently content?"

I stayed for some months, doing odd jobs, but then I was off again, and I knew this time where I wanted to go, for of all the islands one beckoned more than any other. This was Moorea, the small French island off Tahiti, and it was here that finally I settled -or thought I had- in an island of dramatic beauty, with its jagged peaks of blue and grey rising from the white beaches to awesome pinnacles against the blue sky. It is a small island in which, however, everything seems to be a little larger than life. It is an island of plenty. I could walk along the twisting, narrow coast road and pick guavas, coconuts or papa-paws and pineapples and nobody could be angry. The French, who had superimposed their wonderful way of life on the people, took care that Moorea should remain unspoiled.

Only one boat a day made the twelve-mile trip from Papeete and passed through the narrow channel in the barrier reef. And -when I was there, anyway- providing a man behaved himself, he was left alone, and I preferred it that way. I had to work -indeed, I wanted to work- and there was always bush to be cleared, copra to be prepared, fish to be caught. I really wanted for nothing, and I remember saying to myself one beautiful evening after

swimming in the lagoon, "Neale," (I always call myself Neale when I talk to myself), "this is the nearest thing on earth to paradise."

Life was incredibly cheap. A bullock was slaughtered twice a week and we were able to buy the meat at four-pence a pound. Within a short time of settling down the natives had built me a comfortable two-roomed shack for which I paid them a bag of sugar and a small case of corned beef. Life was as simple as that. I had my own garden, a wood-burning stove, plenty of vegetables, fruit and fish. My living expenses never came to more than one pound sterling a week -often the total was less- because from the moment I left the a Navy I had made up my mind to "batch" - in other words, look after myself completely; do my own washing, cooking, mending, and never move anywhere without being entirely equipped to fend for myself. It is a decision I have stuck to all my life. Even now, I am never without my own mattress, sheets, pillows, blankets, cutlery, crockery, kitchen utensils and a battered old silver teapot. Even as I write, the "housewife" which the Navy gave me the day I joined up is not far out of reach. It is in itself a symbol of years of "batching" which has saved me a fortune. Mine was a simple existence. No furnished rooms to rent, no meals to buy. My only luxury was buying books. I was very happy in Moorea. I quickly learned to speak Tahitian, I made one or two friends, I worked fairly hard, I read a great deal. My taste in literature is catholic, anything from Conrad or Defoe to a Western; the only thing I demand is an interesting book in bed last thing at night. It was in Moorea that I first stumbled on the works of the American writer Robert Dean Frisbie, who was to have such an important influence on my life. Frisbie had settled in the Pacific, and had written several volumes about the islands which I read time and time again, though it never entered by head then that one day we should be friends.

1908

West Mountain is near Lewisboro and North Salem, New York and Ridgefield, Connecticut, very close to the state line. On a hill to the north of Lake Rippowam, near Mountain Lakes Camp, there is a rock formation that in this year was recognized as "Sarah Bishop's Cave":

ROMANCE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

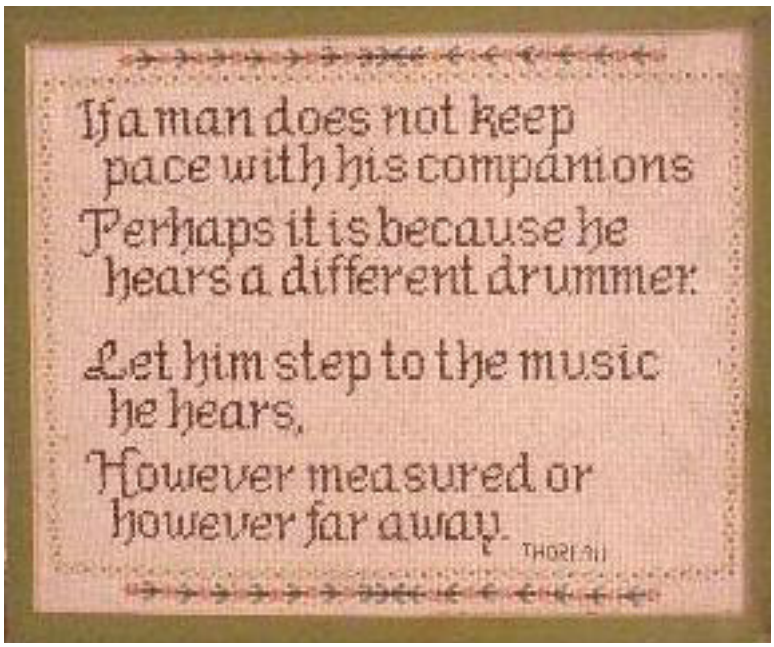
Sarah Bishop's Cave in Ridgefield where a mysterious woman lived and died shortly after the War—Tradition claims that she was an American girl who fell in love with a British army officer during conflict

If this had indeed been Sarah's den, its roof is barely three feet high.

Clifton Johnson went for a ramble on Cape Cod in October with camera in hand and then, with Emerson's funeral oration at hand, produced an introduction for a new edition of CAPE COD:

> The men he loved were those of a more primitive sort, unartificial, with the daring to cut loose from the trammels of fashion and inherited custom. Especially he liked the companionship of men who were in close contact with nature. A half-wild Irishman, or some rude farmer, or fisherman, or hunter, gave him real delight; and for this reason, Cape Cod appealed to him strongly. It was then a very isolated portion of the State, and its dwellers were just the sort of independent, self-reliant folk to attract him. In his account of his rambles there the human element has large place, and he lingers fondly over the characteristics of his chance acquaintances and notes every salient remark. They, in turn, no doubt found him interesting, too, though the purposes of the wanderer were a good deal of a mystery to them, and they were inclined to think he was a peddler.

Edmund James Banfield's CONFESSIONS OF A BEACHCOMBER; SCENES AND INCIDENTS IN THE CAREER OF AN UNPROFESSIONAL BEACHCOMBER IN TROPICAL QUEENSLAND about his life on an island off the coast of Australia allegedly included, in italics on its title page, a WALDEN quote:[32]



32. Strangely, while the terminal "however mentioned or far away" is present in what was allegedly a "Facsimile first edition" published in 1994 by the U of Queensland P, this alleged original epigraph is not preserved, nor is it referred to in the new introduction supplied by Banfield's biographer Michael Noonan.

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

> WALDEN: If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.

DIFFERENT DRUMMER
EDMUND JAMES BANFIELD

This romantic record of a life of mere escapism also concluded with a WALDEN quote:

> WALDEN: If the day and the night are such that you greet them with joy, and life emits a fragrance like flowers and sweet-scented herbs, is more elastic, more starry, more immortal, –that is your success.

EDMUND JAMES BANFIELD

There were, however, excesses of Thoreauvianism to which this author would not stoop, such as writing on the same topics (or writing as carefully as Thoreau), as witness the following:

> It may have been anticipated that I would, Thoreau-like, set down in details and in figures the exact character and cost of every designed alteration to this scene; but the idea, as soon as it occurred, was sternly suppressed, for however cheerful a disciple I am of that philosopher, far be it from me to belittle him by parody.

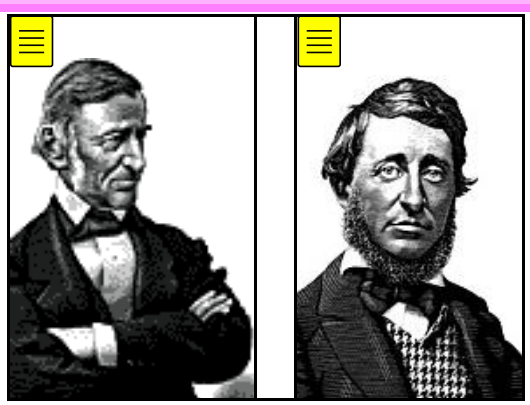
In certain significant respects Banfield is not Thoreauvian at all, in fact proves to be entirely clueless. He speaks for instance very frankly of the tactics and strategies by which he obtained labor from the local aborigines, for various repetitive or dirty chores he was reluctant himself to perform. He speaks of the Chinese as the “alien race” that “does the hard work” while white owners, who are “mere idlers” such as himself, settle back knowing how ill they are suited to tropical toil, to enjoy the status of “resident landlords” — and yet he fears that a very different future awaits:

> [T]he minor departments of rural enterprise in North Queensland are in a peculiar stage — a stage of transition and uncertainty. Coloured labour has been depended upon to a large extent. Even the poorest settler has had the aid of aboriginals. But with the passing of that race, and prohibition against the employment of any sort of coloured labour, the question is to be asked, Can tropical products be grown profitably unless consumers are willing to pay a largely increased price — a price equivalent to the difference between the earnings of those who toil in other tropical countries and the living wage of a white man in Australia? Fruit of many acceptable varieties can be grown to perfection with little labour in immense quantities. Coffee is one of the most prolific of crops ... a plentiful supply of cheap labour is essential to success. Those who by judicious treatment of the aboriginals command their services have so far made profit. A coffee plantation suggests pleasant, picturesque and spicy things. The orderly lines of the plants, in glossy green adorned for a brief space with white, frail, fugitive flowers distilling a sweet and grateful odour, the branches crowded with gleaming berries, green, pink and red, present pleasing aspect. As a change to the scenery of the jungle, a coffee estate has a garden-like relief. But picking berry by berry is slow and monotonous work, vexatious, too, to those mortals whose skin is sensitive to the attacks of green ants. Then comes the various processes of the removal of the pulp, first by machinery, finally by the fermentation of the still adhering slimy residuum; then the drying and saving by exposure to the sun on trays or on tarpaulins until all moisture is expelled; and the hulling which disintegrates the parchment from the twin berries; then winnowing, and finally the polishing. Do drinkers of the fragrant and exhilarating beverage realise the amount of labour and care involved before the crop is taken off and preserved from deterioration and decay?

Banfield turns out upon inspection to have been an unabashed white supremacist. Had he been living in today's Australia he would have been a member of Pauline Hanson's "One Nation" nativist political grouping!
For instance, the following passage sounds very much like Waldo Emerson and **not at all** like Thoreau:

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

The world is not so vast that any part of it —still less a part so situated and so highly favoured as this— can be left unpeopled. If not peopled by Australians or those of British blood, it will assuredly be by people for whom the average Australian entertains but scant respect.



"Frankly," Banfield proclaims, his escapism was not at all self-serving. No, his great escape was due instead to a selfless and "sentimental regard for the welfare of bird and plant life." Thus it was that, after he had lived on his retreat for a period, "one of the first ordinances to be proclaimed would be that of forbidding interference with birds. That ordinance prevails. Our sea-girt hermitage is a sanctuary for all manner of birds save those of murderous and cannibalistic instincts." This uninformed attitude toward natural predation explains passages such as the following one, in which he fancies that his target practice is "avenging" a lesser "tragedy of the bush":

> A bold falcon ... swooped down upon a wood-swallow ... and bore it bleeding to a tree-top, while I stood shocked at the audacity of the cannibal. A bullet dropped the murderous bird with its dead victim fast in its talons.

Banfield's militancy extended beyond the shooting of avian culprits out of their trees. He was also in the habit, it seems, of correcting the morals of the more earthbound predator culprits:

> Cutting firewood in the forest one morning, I came across a carpet snake, 12 feet long, laid out and asleep in a series of easy curves, with the sun revealing unexpected beauty in the tints and in the patterns of the skin. Midway of its length was a tell-tale bulge, and before the axe shortened it by a head, I was convinced that here was a serpent that had waylaid and surprised or beguiled a fowl. Post-mortem examination, however, proved once more the unreliability of uncorroborated circumstantial evidence. The snake had done good and friendly service instead of ill, for it had swallowed a white-tailed rat — the only specimen that I have seen on the island.

To say that this is jejune is to put a good face on it. Here is what Banfield's biographer Michael Noonan has had to offer in regard to intellectual influences: "He began to delve into the philosophical writings of the leading naturalists of the day –Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman and Henry David Thoreau– with whom he found himself instantly in accord."[33]

33. Noonan, Michael. A DIFFERENT DRUMMER: THE STORY OF E.J. BANFIELD, THE BEACHCOMBER OF DUNK ISLAND. St Lucia, London, and New York: U of Queensland P, 1983, page 31. Perusing such simplistic remarks, one is inclined to inquire in what sense Emerson was a naturalist, in what sense Whitman was a naturalist, which would match the sense in which Thoreau was a naturalist — but leave it alone.

1911

Publication of Edmund James Banfield's 2d major effort, MY TROPIC ISLE, which was reviewed in the following intriguing manner by the Sydney, Australia Daily Telegraph:

> Mr Banfield strikes us as being really as fond of solitude as Thoreau pretended to be. And he has one qualification which Thoreau lacked most emphatically, namely, a gentle and unaggressive humor, which colors and brightens all the records of his observations upon the aboriginals of the Queensland coast, and the plants, birds, beasts, reptiles, and fishes of his tropic isle.

HERMITS

John Muir's MY FIRST SUMMER IN THE SIERRA was published while he spent the year in South America and Africa, touring Rio De Janeiro, Buenos Aires, the Amazon, Chile, Uruguay, Capetown South Africa, Zambesi, Lake Victoria, and Egypt.

1918


Edmund James Banfield's TROPIC DAYS.

HERMITS

Gerard Manley Hopkins's POEMS.

Inversnaid

THIS darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fáwn-fróth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, féll-frówning,
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes
that the brook treads through,
Wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

1923

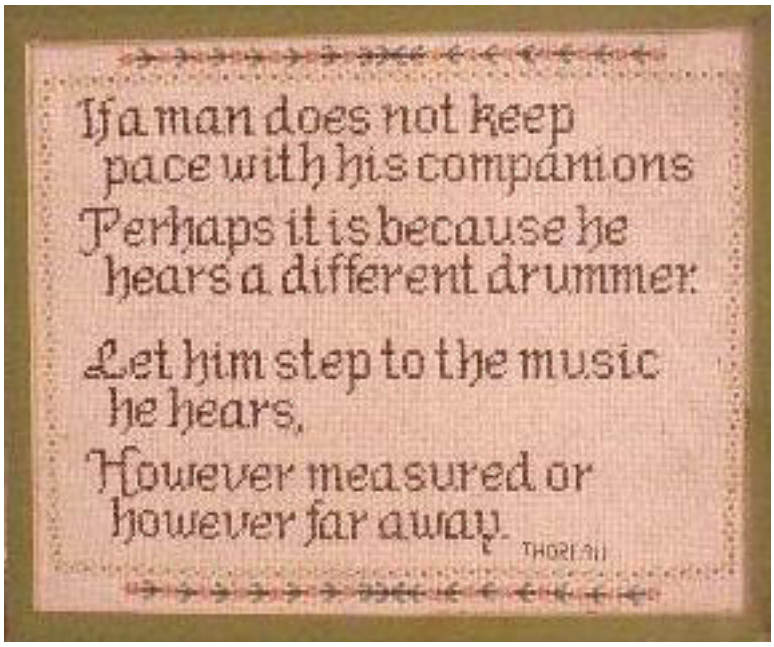
The "beachcomber of Dunk Island," Edmund James Banfield, suffered medical complications. Isolated as he was from all medical support services, he died.

A cairn has been raised above the grave, and on it are words of Thoreau, words which the Beachcomber both loved and lived:

> If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears.

THOREAU'S CAIRN
HERMITS

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES



WALDEN: If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.

DIFFERENT DRUMMER
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WALDEN: If the day and the night are such that you greet them with joy, and life emits a fragrance like flowers and sweet-scented herbs, is more elastic, more starry, more immortal, –that is your success.

EDMUND JAMES BANFIELD

1945

June: Thomas Francis Neale, who had been living on Rarotonga and Moorea in the Cook Islands, saw Suwarrow for the first time. At that point five coastwatchers in the pay of the Allies were stationed on the atoll, at Anchorage Island.

HERMITS

I might have stayed in Moorea for ever, but around 1940, at a moment when I thought myself really happy, a character came into my life who was to change it in a remarkable way. This was Andy Thompson, the man who led me to Frisbie, captain of a hundred-ton island schooner called the *Tiare Taporo* - the "Lime Flower." I met Andy on a trip to Papeete and immediately liked him. He was bluff, hearty and a good friend, though after that first meeting months would sometimes pass before we met again, for we had to wait until the *Tiare Taporo* called at Papeete. We never corresponded.

I was astounded, therefore, to receive a letter from him one day. It must have been early in 1943. Andy was a man used to commanding a vessel and never wasted words. He simply wrote: "Be ready. I've got a job for you in the Cook Islands." At that time I didn't particularly want a job in the Cook Islands and Andy didn't even tell me what the job was. Yet when the *Tiare Taporo* arrived in Papeete a few weeks later, I was waiting. And because I sailed back with him I was destined to meet Frisbie, who in

turn "led" me to Suvarov. To this day, I do not know why I returned with Andy - particularly as the job he had line up involved me in running a store on one of the outer islands belonging to the firm which owned Andy's schooner. The regular storekeeper was due to go on leave and I was supposed to relieve him. On his return, I gathered, I would be sent on as a sort of permanent relief storekeeper to the other islands in the Cooks. I suppose, subconsciously, I must have been ready for a change of environment. Nonetheless, I didn't find the prospect entirely attractive. First, I had to go to Rarotonga and here, within two days of arriving, I met Frisbie.

Since this man's influence was to bear deeply on my life, I must describe him. Frisbie was a remarkable man. Some time before I met him, his beautiful native wife had died, leaving him with four young children. He loved the islands; his books about them had been well reviewed but had not, as far as I could learn, made him much money. Not that that worried him, for his life was writing and he had the happy facility for living from one day to the next with, apparently, hardly a care in the world. He was, he told me, an old friend of Andy's, and any friend of Andy's was a friend of his. It was Sunday morning and, unknown to me, Andy had invited us both for lunch.

I could not have known then what momentous consequences this meeting was to have. None of us suspected it then but Frisbie had only a few more years to live (he was to die of tetanus), and on that Sunday morning I saw in front of me a tall, thin man of about forty-five with an intelligent but emaciated face. He looked ill, but I remember how his eagerness and enthusiasm mounted as he started to talk about "our" islands and told me of his desire to write more books about them. We liked each other on sight, which surprised me, for I do not make friends easily; and it was after lunch -washed down with a bottle of Andy's excellent rum- that Frisbie first mentioned Suvarov. Of course, I had heard of this great lagoon, with its coral reef stretching nearly fifty miles in circumference, but I had never been there, for it was off to trade routes, and shipping rarely passed that way.

Because it reef is submerged at high tide -leaving only a line of writhing white foam to warn the navigator of its perils- Suvarov, however, is clearly marked on all maps. Yet Suvarov is not the name of an island, but of an atoll, and the small islets inside the lagoon each have their own names. The islets vary in size from Anchorage, the largest, which is half a mile long, to One Tree Island, the smallest, which is merely a mushroom of coral. The atoll lies almost in the centre of the Pacific, five hundred and thirteen miles north of Rarotonga, and the nearest inhabited island is Manihiki, two hundred miles distant.

That afternoon Frisbie entranced me, and I can see him now on the veranda, the rum bottle on the big table between us, leaning forward with that blazing characteristic earnestness, saying to me, "Tom Neale, Suvarov is the most beautiful place on earth, and no man has really lived until he has lived there." Fine

words, I thought, but not so easy to put into action.

"Of course, you must remember," he broke in, "there's a war on, and at present Suvarov is inhabited." This I knew - for two New Zealanders with three native helpers were stationed on Anchorage in Suvarov's lagoon. These "coast-watchers" kept an eye open for ships or aircraft in the area, and would report back any movement to headquarters by radio.

"But they'd probably be glad to see you - or even me," added Frisbie with a touch of irony. I got up for it was time to leave. And as I said good-bye to this tall, thin man whose face and eyes seemed to urn with enthusiasm, I said, and the words and sigh came straight from the heart, "That's the sort of place for me."

"Well - if you feel that way about it, why don't you go there?" he retorted.

Storekeeping was not a very arduous job and I soon fell into my new life. My first "posting" took me to Atiu - a small island with rounded, flat-topped hills, and fertile valleys filled with oranges, coconuts and paw-paw; all of it less than seven thousand acres, each one of them exquisite and forever beckoning. From there I moved on to Puka Puka -"the Land of Little Hills"- where seven hundred people lived and produced copra.

The pattern of my life hardly varied, irrespective of the island on which I happened to be relieving the local storekeeper. Each morning I would make my breakfast, open up the store and wait for the first native customers in the square functional warehouse with its tin roof. The walls were lined with shelves of flour, tea, coffee, beans, tinned goods, cloth, needles - everything which one didn't really need at all in an island already overflowing with fruit and fish! No wonder that as I was shuttled from one outer island to another, I soon discovered that storekeeping was not the life for me, though it did have its compensations.

As long as I kept my stock and accounts in good order, I had a fair amount of leisure, which I occupied by reading. In some stores we carried supplies of paperback books so even my browsing cost me nothing, providing I didn't dirty the covers. I was batching, of course, and each store had free quarters so I was able to save a little money, especially as in some of the smaller islands the white population could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Mine was, in every sense of the word, a village store. One moment I would be selling flour, the next I would be advising a mother how to cure her baby's cough. I carried an alarming assortment of medicines (always very popular) as well as a jumble of odds and ends ranging from spectacles to cheap binoculars, from brightly decorated tin trunks to lengths of rusty chain. I had drums of kerosene for the smoking lamps of the village, lines and hooks for the fishermen who, more often than not, would try to buy these with their latest catch of parrot fish or crays.

I came to be something of a "doctor" and village counsellor, and this I did find a rewarding part of my job, for in the really small islands I was often the only man to whom the people could turn for help. In an indirect way, I was money-lender, too - because I alone had the power to judge the worth of a man's credit against the future price of copra, and many is the bolt of calico I have sold against nuts still on the tree.

The really sad conclusion about my life as a storekeeper is that I might have enjoyed it had the store been in Tahiti or Moorea or had I never met Frisbie and been fired with the dream of going to Suvarov, for my yearnings were not desperate ones; I didn't spend all my days mooning about. But always in the back of my mind was the vague feeling, "What a bore life is! Wouldn't it be wonderful if for once I could see what life is like on an uninhabited island."

As it was, I seemed to spend my time waiting for the inter-island schooner which, every now and the, would lie off the island, giving the people a reason for wakening for a few hours out of their languid torpor while my stores were unloaded. Occasionally, Andy would sail in in the *Tiare Taporo*, then we would spend an evening on my veranda.

It was an eventful, placid existence and though I should have been content enough, I soon disliked it intensely. Why, then, did I remain for years as a storekeeper moving around from island to island? The main reason was that every time I was transferred, I had to return through Rarotonga and so met up with Frisbie again. Then we would talk far into the night about Suvarov (and the other islands of the Pacific) and occasionally, when the rum bottle was low I was able to persuade him to read the latest passages he had written. He had a deep compelling voice, and talked with as much enthusiasm as he wrote. And towards the end of each evening -and often "the end" only came when the dawn was streaking over the red tin roofs of Raro- we always came back to Suvarov. "Do you think I'll ever get there?" I asked one night. "Why not?" answered Frisbie, "though probably you'll have to wait until the war's over." I remember we were sitting together sipping a last beer on a visit to Rarotonga, "but then -there's no reason why you shouldn't go -that is, providing you equip yourself properly. Suvarov may be beautiful, but then -there's no reason why you shouldn't go -that is, providing you equip yourself properly. Suvarov may be beautiful, but it is not only looks damn fragile, it is damn fragile -and I should know."

There was no need to elaborate. I already knew that in the great hurricane of 1942, sixteen of the twenty-two islets in the lagoon had literally been washed away within a matter of hours. Frisbie had been trapped on Anchorage with his four small children and the coast-watchers during this hurricane. He had saved children's lives by lashing them in the forks of tamanu trees elastic enough to bend with the wind until the violence of the storm was spent.

I did not see Frisbie again for some time, but we corresponded regularly, and one day when I was feeling particularly low, I picked up his book, THE ISLAND OF DESIRE. When I came to the second half I discovered it was all about Suvarov; how he had lived on the island with his children, hoe he had been caught in that great hurricane. I was enthralled and his descriptions were so vivid that no sooner had I finished the book than I sat down and wrote to him. "one of these days," I wrote in my sloping, eager hand, "that's where I'm going to live." Frisbie replied, a half

joking letter in which he suggested "Let's both go. You can live on Motu Tuo and I can live on Anchorage, and we can visit each other. It made sense. For like me, Frisbie was naturally a solitary man. Like me, he never had much money and yet, sadly, we were never to see the island together. In fact, Frisbie was never to see Suvarov again before he died in 1948.

There was another important reason for remaining in the Cooks. If ever I did go to Suvarov -if ever I had the luck or courage to "go it alone"- I would have to leave from Rarotonga, for Suvarov is in the Cook Islands, and though the inter-island trading schooners rarely passed near the atoll there might one day be an occasion when a ship would sail close enough to the island to be diverted. But only from Raro.

This is exactly what happened. Suddenly, in 1945, there came an opportunity to visit Suvarov for two days. It was Andy who broke the news to me in Rarotonga. He was under orders, he told me, to take the *Tiare Taporo* round the islands, calling in at Suvarov with stores for the coast-watchers there, on his way back from Manihiko.

"I need an engineer for this trip," he said off-handedly, as though he did not know how much I longed to see the island. "Care to come along?" I was aboard the Tiare before Andy had time to change his mind!

When we sailed a few days later, Andy and I were the only Europeans aboard amongst a crew of eight Cook Islanders. We set off for the northern Cooks -Puka Puka, Penrhyn, Manihiki- which are all low-lying atolls quite different from the Southern cooks which are always known as the "High Islands."

It was a pleasant, leisurely trip. I can imagine no more perfect way of seeing the South Pacific than from the deck of a small schooner. Life moved at an even, unhurried pace. I did not have much work for the *Tiare* carried sail and the engine was seldom needed. Our normal routine was to sail for a few days until we reached an atoll, lay off-shore, discharging cargo, take on some copra and then sail off again into the beautiful blue Pacific with white fleecy clouds filling the sky above.

The night before we reached Suvarov, we lay well off the atoll without even sighting it, for Andy, a good navigator, had no intention of risking his ship during the hours of darkness. All through the night we could hear the faint, faraway boom of the swells breaking on Suvarov's reef. Though there was no moon, it was clear and starry, and I stood on deck for a long time, listening, filled with an emotion I cannot even attempt to describe, until finally I felt asleep dreaming of tomorrow.

Dawn brought perfect weather and we began to approach the atoll at first light, though it lay so flat that for a long time we could not make out the land ahead. We had a good wind and full sail, and the *Tiare* must have been making four knots without her engines as I stood on the cabin top, the only sound the lap of the water and the creaking of wood, shading my eyes until at last I caught my first glimpse of Suvarov - the pulsating, creamy foam of the reef thundering before us for miles, and a few clumps

of palm trees silhouetted against the blue sky, the clumps widely separated on the islets that dotted the enormous, almost circular stretch of reef. The air was shimmering under a sun already harsh as Andy took the *Tiare* towards the pass, and Anchorage started to take a more distinct shape. I could make out the white beach now, an old broken-down wharf - a relic of the days when attempts had been made to grow copra on the island - and then some figures waving on the beach. From the south end a great flock of screaming frigate birds rose angrily into the air, black and wheeling, waiting for the smaller terns to catch fish so they could steal them.

How puny the islets seemed in the vast rolling emptiness of the Pacific! Frisbie had called them fragile but they were more than that. To me they looked almost forlorn, so that it seemed amazing they could have survived the titanic forces of nature which have so often wiped out large islands. Had they been rugged, then survival would have been easier to appreciate, but none of the islets ahead of us in the lagoon was more than ten or fifteen feet above sea level, so that only the tops of the coconut trees proclaimed their existence. The chop of the sea ceased, for now we were in the lagoon, and it was as though the *Tiare* were floating on vast pieces of colored satin. We edged towards Anchorage very slowly through a sea so still that our slight ripple hardly disturbed it. Like many South Pacific islets, Anchorage -lying just inside the lagoon- is subterraneously joined to the main reef by a submerged "causeway" of coral. And so, as I looked down into the water, I thought I had never seen so many colours in my life as the vivid blues, greens and even pinks that morning; no painter could have imitated those patterns formed by underwater coral at differing depths. Then the anchor rattled down. We put a ship's boat overboard and a few minutes later I was wading ashore through the warm, still water towards the blinding white beach.

Common politeness made me greet the five men living there -each of them desperately anxious to go home as soon as possible!- but as soon as I decently could, I went off alone, and on that first day I took a spear and my machete -a French one I had bought in Tahiti, more slender and pointed than those of the Cook Islands- and went along the reef, spearing the plentiful fish I discovered in the reef pools and so lazy that one could hardly miss them.

In the evening, I had supper with the coast-watchers and looked over their shack with the secret, questing eyes of a man wondering if one day he would inherit it. It seemed ideal. The tanks were full of good water, and when I went for a stroll I discovered a fine garden they had made out of a wilderness. The watchers were only anxious to leave. How different are men's attitudes to life! They were agreeable, cheerful and noisy -and delighted with the stores we had brought them- but their was a forced gaiety, hiding their anger that war should have played them such a dirty trick as turning them into castaways on a desert island.

On the second day, Andy and I took a ship's boat in the islet of Motu Tuo six miles across the lagoon, where the native boys caught coconut crabs and fish and lit a fire to cook our picnic lunch. And when lunch was over, I turned to Andy and said simply, but with utter conviction, "Andy, now I know this is the place I've been looking for all this time." It was to take me seven more years before my dream came true. Seven long years before another vessel from Rarotonga passed anywhere near the island, seven years during which I reached middle age. Perhaps it was this consciousness of time passing, perhaps this and the dreariness of my job that brought an increasing heaviness of heart which I only managed to struggle against by clinging obstinately to the hope that I would one day get back to the island.

1952

October 7, Tuesday: The New Zealand hermit-wannabee Thomas Francis Neale took up residence in the Anchorage Island compound abandoned by the wartime coastwatchers on the Suwarrow atoll in the Cook Islands of the great Pacific Ocean.

In 1952 my opportunity came. Dick Brown, an independent trader in Rarotonga, had gone into the shipping business after the war, buying a long narrow submarine chaser of less than a hundred tons which he had converted into an inter-island trader. She was called the *Mahurangi*, and quite by chance I heard that on her next trip she was going north to Palmerston Island and then to Manihiki. I did not need a map to know that the course passed right by Suvarov. In all my years in the Cooks, I had never heard of a trading vessel sailing this direct route; it was an opportunity which might never come my way again. I totted up my finances. I had saved 79 pounds. I went to Dick and asked when he was sailing.

"In two weeks," he replied.

"How much would it cost to divert on the way to Manihiki and take me to Suvarov?"

He scratched his head, figuring. "Thirty quid."

It seemed a lot of money, especially when the *Mahurangi* must pass almost within sight of Suvarov and could have dropped me off with little trouble. But diverting a vessel is always expensive and I did not argue.

"Done!" I said, and we shook hands on it.

I had just two weeks to gather together everything I thought a man would need to survive on an uninhabited coral atoll. Two weeks - and 49 pounds.

OCTOBER 1952-JUNE 1954

THE FIRST DAY

It was 1.30 p.m. as we chugged slowly towards the pass. I stood leaning over the gunwale, sipping from a tin of warm beer, watching Frisbie's "island of desire" - which was now about to become my island - as we prepared to drop anchor a hundred yards offshore. This was an experience I did not want to share with anyone. The journey northwards had been uneventful. I knew several of the crew -good-hearted, cheerful, bare-chested boys from the outer islands in search of adventure- and we carried nine native passengers as well as myself. There were five women and four men, all returning to Manihiki after visiting relatives in Raro, and they were bursting with the infectious exuberance of people just ending a wonderful holiday in the "big city." The forward deck was cluttered with their farewell gifts; everything from newly-plaited hats to bundles of protesting chickens. Like all holidaymakers, they were taking home things they could just as easily have bought on their own island, but these were invested with all the importance of souvenirs or gifts.

They were a jolly crowd, but something had made me keep to myself for most of the trip. One might have thought I would eagerly seize the opportunity of sharing these last few days in the company of my fellow men, but in fact the opposite happened. Perhaps I was too excited; perhaps I was a little afraid. As the captain -eyes fixed on the two rocks marking the channel- bellowed orders, I stood a little apart from the others, filled with a tremendous excitement surging up inside me. But I have never been a demonstrative man and I doubt whether the crew or passengers crowding the rails had the slightest inkling that this was a moment so remarkable to me that I could hardly believe it was really happening.

The sun beat down harshly; scarcely a ripple disturbed the lagoon as we edged our way through the pass, and the white beach, which I had last seen with Andy from the cabin top of the *Tiare Taporo*, came closer and closer. My landing was hardly spectacular. Not far off the old wrecked pier the crew lowered a ship's boat and loaded my belongs aboard, and rowed me ashore. As the *Mahurangi*'s skipper had decided to stay in the lagoon until the following morning, my boat was followed by the passengers anxious for the chance to stretch their legs. So I came ashore in crowded company and almost before my crates and stores had been off-loaded, the beach was busy with women washing clothes whilst the men hurried off to fish.

Quite suddenly, though still in the company of human beings, I felt a momentary pang of loneliness. Everybody seemed so busy that nobody had any time to notice me. The crew was already rowing back to the *Mahurangi*, the laughing, brown women were sorting out their washing, the fishermen had disappeared, while

I stood, feeling a little forlorn, on the hot white beach under a blazing sun, surrounded by a mound of crates, parcels, and black stones, unceremoniously dumped near the pier. A plaintive meaow reminded me I had a friend. Mrs. Thievery was impatiently demanding her freedom. Leaving all my packages on the beach, except my Gladstone and the box with the cats, I walked almost apprehensively the fifty yards up the coral path to the shack. I was in some way reluctant to get there, wondering what I would find. Was it still going to be habitable? Were the water tanks still in good order? All sorts of anxieties crowded into my mind. Was there anything left of the garden which the coast-watchers had started, and what about the fowls they had left behind? Then there was the old boat. I had seen no sign of it on the beach. I quickened my step along the narrow path, brushing past the tangled undergrowth and creepers, the dense thickets of young coconuts, pandanus, gardenias, which had grown into a curtain, walling me in, almost blocking out the sun. Suddenly the shack was there in front of me and I must admit my heart sank. I had forgotten the amazing violence of tropical growth; forgotten, too, just how long ago it was since men had lived here. Subconsciously, I had always remembered Suvarov when the shack had been inhabited. And now, standing there with my bag and box at my feet, I could hardly distinguish the galvanised iron roof through the thick, lush creepers covering it. The outbuildings, too, seemed almost strangled beneath a profusion of growth. Cautiously I stepped on to the veranda which ran the length of the shack. The floorboards felt firm, but when I looked up at the roof, I saw the plaited coconut fronds had rotted away. And then, at one end of the veranda I spotted a boat, upside down, with two quarter-inch cracks running right along her bottom. I knew immediately she would sink like a stone in the water; nor was this realisation made any less depressing by the knowledge I had brought no caulking with me. It was all rather overpowering. I sat in the hot sun, mopped my brow and opened up my faithful Gladstone bag and took out the screwdriver which I had packed on top of my clothes in order to be able to unscrew the netted top of the box and release the cats. In a moment the mother had jumped out, looking around her, and I set the kitten down alongside. Unlike me, they did not seem a bit deterred and proceeded to make themselves at home immediately. Within five minutes Mrs. Thievery had killed her first island rat. I rolled myself a cigarette and sat on the veranda for a few moments and looked around at the scene I remembered so well from my one brief visit. The end of the veranda -which was about seven feet wide- had been walled in to make an extra room, which the coast-watchers had used as their kai room. In front of the shack the ground had been cleared to form a yard which was in hopeless confusion with weeds and vines trailing across it, dead coconut fronds blown in on stormy nights littering every corner. At the end of the yard was a storage shed and bathhouse, also overgrown with vines, while to my left were the remnants of the garden. After one glance at the tangled wreckage of its fence I turned

away. Time enough later for these problems. First I must look over the shack. So, getting up, I pushed open my front door. Oddly, this act gave me a curious sensation, an almost spooky feeling as though I were venturing across the threshold of an empty, derelict building which held associations I couldn't know anything about. As though, in fact, I was trespassing into someone else's past which had become lost and forgotten, but was still somehow personal because the men who had lived here must have left some vestige of their personalities behind. Once I was over this, I went inside. The room was about ten by ten. There was a high step up from the veranda and the first thing I saw was a good solid table up against the wall facing me. Nearby was a home-made kitchen chair. High on the wall to my left I saw two shelves holding some fifty paperback books. Two of the walls had been pierced for shutters and I opened them to let in air and light. These were typical island shutters, hinged at the top, opening upwards and designed to be kept open with a pole.

This had been the radio room, and it would make an excellent office, I thought; a sort of writing room where I could keep my few papers and, each evening, record the day's events in my journal. And the barometer would look very handsome nailed to the wall over the table! Indeed, when I took down one or two books and riffled their pages, it did not need much imagination on my part to invest the roughly hewn table with the more dignified title of desk and visualise the small, square room not so much as four rather bare walls, but as my study.

A footstep outside interrupted my daydream, and as I turned round to see the man in the doorway, I felt a moment of irritation that even on this day I could not be left alone. But I had been unfair. It was one of the passengers, a big burly Manihiki pearl diver called Tagi, who now stood rather sheepishly, wearing nothing but a pareu, and said, "Tom, we thought you might be too busy to cook yourself a meal. When the fish is ready, come and eat with us." Full of contrition, I accepted gratefully, for on this day of all days I had no time to cook.

"I'll give you a call when it's ready," he added cheerfully, but seemed to linger. He was filled with curiosity.

"Come in and see - not bad, eh?" I asked him.

He looked around, then followed me into the bedroom which was separated from the office by a partition five foot high, with a narrow slip serving as a door. I opened up the other shutters. This room was double the length of the first room, and to my astonishment contained a bed. It had never entered my head that I would find a bed as for some reason I had assumed the coast-watchers would have been equipped with camp beds and I had been cheerfully resigned to sleeping on the floor until I built one. I sat down eagerly to test it. It was solidly built of wood - with no springs, I was pleased to note, for I cannot stand a bed which sags. A wooden bedside table and a small shelf, which had probably been erected to keep toilet articles on, completed the furnishings.

"I wish I had a house like this," sighed Tagi.
A practical thought now occurred to me. If the coast-watchers had left a bed, two tables, a chair and books, might they not also have left some useful articles in the kai room? I hastened to inspect it. This room had been constructed by walling in the last third of the veranda and when I pushed open the door from the veranda and looked inside, I was astounded. In one corner was a large food safe with doors and sides of zinc netting, in another the carcass of an ancient kerosene-operated refrigerator The fuel tank had been removed but it would still make an excellent cupboard. The hinges of the food safe seemed strong when I swung the door open and the three shelves were in good condition.
To complete the furnishings, the coast-watchers had built a solid table -more of a bench, really- running nearly the length of the longest wall and facing out on to the yard, with shutters above it.
I wonder if you can appreciate the excitement I felt when I discovered this unexpected treasure. I know I had barely landed on Anchorage, yet the sight of these solid pieces of furniture -which would save me endless work- made me feel as Crusoe must have felt each time he returned to the wreck. I was so delighted that I opened the food safe and the refrigerator again for the sheer pleasure it gave me, and I remember mopping my brow and saying, "Yes, Tagi, you're right. This is a place in a million."
At the far end of this room a broken-down door led out to the cook-house, quite a decent room, roofed with flattened-out fuel drums, and walled in with slats of dried mid-rib of coconut fronds neatly nailed on to supporting poles, and giving plenty of air. Round the back of the shack were the two water tanks, which I remembered. They were in good condition. One, built of circular corrugated iron, held about three hundred gallons; the other, a square galvanized tank, held some four hundred gallons. And when I turned on the taps excellent water came gushing out. To my relief, this was quite drinkable. The tanks must have been well built and, since they rested on a wooden platform eighteen inches above the ground, did not seem to have suffered the general process of decay. Fed from the guttering along the wall, each was almost full.
Behind the shack, I discovered a latrine some eight feet deep, situated some little distance away. This handy convenience was lined with two oil drums whose bottoms had been thoughtfully knocked out. On the spur of the moment, I christened it "The House of Meditation." As I toured my new domain, my first sensation of dismay began to evaporate in the excitement of discovering items like the food safe and the bed, and I began to think to myself that this wilderness of creepers and vines could easily be cleared up in a couple of days. Then I had another pleasant surprise -in fact, two- after walking across the yard to take a look at the store shed and bath-house. Situated at the far end of the yard, it was shaded by parau trees which shed their hibiscus blossoms each way, so that I had to

tread over a carpet of flowers to reach it. Picking up a handful, I let them trickle through my fingers as I stood for a moment, soaking in the scene. A gap in the trees, like a window, gave me a glimpse of the lagoon, blue and still and sunlit. If I listened carefully I could hear the thunder of the barrier reef above the faint rustle of the palm fronds, until the clamour of frigate birds wheeling overhead drowned all other sounds. One more angry than the rest seemed to dive almost on to the shack, and as I watched it, I suddenly realised that the long, low building, even though covered with creepers, was solid and that Tagi had been right to envy me, for it was, in fact, going to be the best place I had ever "batched" in. I turned round to tell him, but he had gone. I had been so absorbed I had never heard him leave. Entering the rough lean-to hut, whose walls were made of plaited coconut stretched on pandanus poles, I discovered a real treasure which the coast-watchers must have left - a coil of eight-gauge fencing wire. There were at least a hundred and fifty yards of it and it was all in excellent condition. Jutting off the shed was the bath-house, with a water tank on a stand, and a half-wall of flattened tin drums. It was badly overgrown with creepers but it would be easy to hack these down, and in no time I would be able to build a shelf for my washbowl, and put up a line for my towels. I was on the point of leaving the bath-house when I got a real start. An old hen, clucking with fear, rose right up under my feet and made off into the bush. I had a comfortable feeling that eggs might be available in future.

Now I took a look at the garden, or rather the remains of the garden, overgrown with weeds and thick creepers. Once there had been a fence, but now only a few poles stuck out like rotten teeth, adorned with once-taut wire whose remnants lay tangled on the ground. One glance told me that whatever topsoil there might once have been had long since blown away. Right away it was obvious that re-making the garden was going to be a major problem. Only a single breadfruit tree in one corner of the wilderness gave a hint that the soil was at least fruitful. I had been so preoccupied in exploring my new home that I only became aware of how hungry I was when Tagi returned to summon me down to the meal on the beach. But later, as we sat there against a background of palms with the lagoon stretching away in front of us and the *Mahurangi* riding at anchor a hundred yards out, I couldn't help watching my companions' faces and wondering what they would be doing at this time the following day the following week, the following month, the following year. Would they ever remember me at all once they had sailed away in the schooner? It was an odd sensation.

But somehow I did not very much care whether they chose to remember or not. For now I was quite sure I had broken free, thought it was hard, sitting there eating fish with my fingers, to search inside myself for words which described what it felt like. The might not remember me, but, I wondered would I ever remember them? How, in later years would I look back on this

last meal? I covertly watched the five women who had finished their washing which was laid on the beach, weighed down at each corner with lumps of coral, as they feasted, without a care in the world. Jolly, handsome-looking women, mostly inclined to plumpness from eating too much poi, they grabbed whatever they could - from the tasty fish and crays to the ugly over-rich coconut crabs. We all ate off banana or breadfruit leaves, while a kettle boiled noisily on the small fire, and there was a great deal of laughter and giggling and suddenly I found myself being envious of them.

The Cook Islanders are such happy-go-lucky people, untouched by the onslaught of tourism, that nobody can help liking them. They were contented, no doubt about that, and they didn't have to search for happiness. They were simpler than we whites in the South Seas, they took their pleasure as they came. I was the odd fish at that fishy meal!

Once we had finished, there was still plenty of daylight and Tagi announced that the men would carry my packages up to the shack. No sooner had they started, however, than the five women also surged towards the yard. Now that I had shared the meal, they felt they had earned the right to see where I was going to live, to satisfy a curiosity that I found rather touching because of its innocence. I couldn't be angry, for those weren't predatory females anxious to probe the secrets of a crank. They accepted me for what I was, and wanted to see if I would be comfortable. They obviously thought I was not going to be comfortable, for when they had gathered in the yard, a great deal of gesticulating accompanied a torrent of words. In a way I was anxious to get down to work for I had all my belongs to sort out.

"What's the row about?" I asked, a little crossly.

"The women say your veranda roof is no good," replied Tagi.

"I could have told you that," I retorted.

"They would like to make a new one," he added.

And they did! Almost before the last of my packages had been deposited in the shack, five giggling women were squatting on my veranda burdened with fronds. They worked to such good effect that over half a new roof had been finished before the *Mahurangi* sailed the following morning. I had little time that first evening to explore my island. Indeed, all I could do was unpack the few necessities I required, for as I wrote on the first page of my journal, "I haven't had time for a proper look around, but I can see miles of work sticking out. There will be no time for sitting under a tree and watching the reef, not for a long time anyway." Soon after sundown, after I had entered this in my journal, I rolled a last cigarette before turning in. I was either too tired or maybe too excited even to brew a pot of tea. I had unpacked a little glass and crockery and now I used some of my precious soap to scrub down my eating table. I put a couple of drinking coconuts on the shelf near the bed and then I unrolled my kapok mattress, spread it out and made my bed carefully. I had had no time to examine the books left by the

coast-watchers, but in any event it did not matter, for on this first night only one book seemed appropriate. When the cats had settled down, I lit the glass table lamp, carried it to the bedside table, and soon I was tucked in reading THE ISLAND OF DESIRE.

Only once did I wake during the night, when a sudden squeal, half human, half animal, made me jump up, frozen with fear. It was succeeded by a series of grunts - and then I knew the sounds and relaxed. it seem that the rumours I had heard of wild pigs on the island were true.

The *Mahurangi* sailed soon after dawn. Over the years I had imagined this moment dozens of times, often wondering what sort of emotions I would experience at the actual moment of severing my last contact with the outside world. I had imagined I might be a little despondent and had thought, too, there might be a sudden surge of almost frightening loneliness. But now the schooner was leaving I felt nothing but impatience that the ship took so long to get under way. I hate protracted farewells at the best of times, and yet I would have been abnormal had I not felt a pang or two of emotion. It was not despondency. It was not fear. But when Tagi, who was the last to get into the ship's boat came and said, "Best of luck, Tom," I will admit there was a lump in my throat. It was the severing of the link, the rather ceremonious way he shook hands, that made me feel that way; but it passed quickly.

At last all the passengers were on board, and the old *Mahurangi* began to move. I stood on the beach watching her sail slowly towards the gap through the reef. Once she was far enough away, I took off my shorts and waved them in symbolic farewell.

From that moment onwards I never again put on those shorts. Instead I wore a five-inch strip torn from an old pareu. I wore it native style, one end fastened round the waist, with the other end hanging down in front, then passed between the legs, down behind, the end being tucked under the waist band. Done properly, it will remain in position all day, whether you are working, swimming or fishing.

1954

June: Thomas Francis Neale needed to leave Suwarrow due to problems of arthritis and fear that he had slipped a disc.

HERMITS

1958

J. Golden Taylor's NEIGHBOR THOREAU'S CRITICAL HUMOR (Logan UT: Utah State U Monograph Series)

"A Review From Professor Ross's Seminar"

Taylor's main purpose is "to identify Thoreau's pervasive, serious humor and to show how it is the chief vehicle of his social criticism. Only in high-keyed figurative, hyperbolical humor could he achieve the intensity which would adequately convey the tragic irony he saw between man's performance and potentiality" (5). Thoreau's humor arises out of the unavoidable incongruity between what is and what ought to be. Humor is an indispensable tool for the sort of cultural work that Thoreau, the social critic, wants to do. This work is accomplished through the use of devices like understatement, whimsicality, irony, paradox, surprise, exaggeration, and "audacious indictment." Taylor locates Thoreau in the Hebraic core of Puritan tradition, a style of humor much different from the Down East brand of humor so popular in Thoreau's day. Taylor criticizes Lowell for the comparative insignificance and irrelevance of his rustic humor, and declares that Thoreau's humor was "superior to any other humor being written during his lifetime in America." Taylor compares Thoreau to Lincoln (an odd choice considering that Taylor wants to distance Thoreau from popular humor) in the sense that both are never more serious than when they are humorous. Part and parcel of Taylor's argument is his conviction that Thoreau, contrary to popular conception, was no hermit or misanthropist, but took great pleasure in people.

(Lane Stiles, Winter 1992)

1960

March: Thomas Francis Neale went back to Suwarrow, this time, it would turn out, staying 42 months.

HERMITS

1962

Lerner, Max. “Thoreau: No Hermit.” THOREAU: A COLLECTION OF CRITICAL ESSAYS. Paul, Sherman, ed. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall, Incorporated, 1962

“A Review From Professor Ross’s Seminar”

This is a great essay, and very short — pages 20-22. Lerner emphasizes Thoreau’s ability to be impervious to “anything that did not fit into that continual quest for a practical solution of the problems of his own individual life which he called his philosophy.” Lerner points to what he sees as Thoreau’s attack upon every dominant aspect of American life in the beginnings of the industrial advance. In this way, Lerner draws attention to Thoreau’s individualism.

Lerner also says, however, that Thoreau’s individualism has been over-emphasized. Thoreau is not a hermit, he says, although Thoreau may have a bit of the nihilist about him. Thoreau’s “hermit-like individualism” is rather, a rebellion against the oversocialized New England town. Thoreau is also, Lerner indicates, a social advocate.

(Kathleen R. Wallace, 1986)

1963

December 27, Friday: Thomas Francis Neale was forced off Suwarrow in the Cook Islands because a commercial pearl-diving operation was destroying his tranquility. (See AN ISLAND TO ONESELF.)

HERMITS

AN ISLAND TO ONESELF — SUVAROV, COOK ISLANDS

BY TOM NEALE

This is the story of the years which I spent alone, in two spells on an uninhabited coral atoll half a mile long and three hundred yards wide in the South Pacific. It was two hundred miles from the nearest inhabited island, and I first arrived there on October 7, 1952 and remained alone (with only two yachts calling) until June 24, 1954, when I was taken off ill after a dramatic rescue.

I was unable to return to the atoll until April 23, 1960 and this time I remained alone until December 27, 1963.

I was fifty when I went to live alone on Suvarov, after thirty years of roaming the Pacific, and in this story I will try to describe my feelings, try to put into words what was, for me, the most remarkable and worthwhile experience of my whole life.

I chose to live in the Pacific islands because life there moves at the sort of pace which you feel God must have had in mind originally when He made the sun to keep us warm and provided the fruits of the earth for the taking; but though I came to know most of the islands, for the life of me I sometimes wonder what it was in my blood that had brought me to live among them....

1967

July: Thomas Francis Neale returned to the Suwarrow atoll the 3d time — this time, it would turn out, for 10 years.

HERMITS

(During cyclones, waves sweep entirely over the islands of this coral atoll. With an only moderate amount of further global warming, it will be totally submerged and all its rare bird population will be exterminated.)

1969

Summer 1969: Charles Lindbergh began building a dream home on Maui in the Hawaiian Islands.

Ted Kaczynski and his younger brother David Kaczynski drove to Canada to look for a plot of remote land on which they might settle, where they might begin to lead a life that was remote and self-sufficient. They filed a request with the Canadian government, to lease such a plot of ground.

HERMITS

William Jefferson Clinton went to see Colonel Willard A. Hawkins, who according to the Los Angeles Times happened to be "the only person in Arkansas with authority to rescind a draft notice."

VIETNAM

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[I] never received any unusual or favorable treatment.
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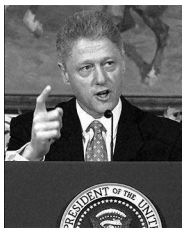
Gosh, he's a young man of such promise. It would be a shame to waste him.

I did not have sex with that woman  **— Monica Lewinsky.**

Fall: David Kaczynski returned to Columbia University for his Senior year while Ted Kaczynski waited in the home of their parents (then in Lombard, Illinois) for the Canadian government to issue a permit for the 2 brothers to lease a remote plot on which they might create for themselves a life of simplicity and self-sufficiency.

HERMITS

1971

Ted Kaczynski moved to a cabin without electricity or running water 4 miles outside Lincoln, Montana, where he would live more or less as a recluse (despite being down in a creek bed within sight of a neighbor cabin next door) while learning survival skills and attempting to make himself self-sufficient. There he completed a piece of writing in opposition to high technology, that did not as yet have a title.

Ted began dedicating himself to reading about sociology and books on political philosophy, such as the works of Jacques Ellul, and also stepped up his campaign of sabotage. He soon came to the conclusion that more violent methods would be the only solution to what he saw as the problem of industrial civilization. He would claim that he lost faith in the idea of reform, and came to perceive violent collapse as the only way to bring down the techno-industrial system. Regarding his switch from being a reformer of the system to developing a means of taking it down, he said:

> I don't think it can be done. In part because of the human tendency, for most people, there are exceptions, to take the path of least resistance. They'll take the easy way out, and giving up your car, your television set, your electricity, is not the path of least resistance for most people. As I see it, I don't think there is any controlled or planned way in which we can dismantle the industrial system. I think that the only way we will get rid of it is if it breaks down and collapses ... The big problem is that people don't believe a revolution is possible, and it is not possible precisely because they do not believe it is possible. To a large extent I think the eco-anarchist movement is accomplishing a great deal, but I think they could do it better... The real revolutionaries should separate themselves from the reformers… And I think that it would be good if a conscious effort was being made to get as many people as possible introduced to the wilderness. In a general way, I think what has to be done is not to try and convince or persuade the majority of people that we are right, as much as try to increase tensions in society to the point where things start to break down. To create a situation where people get uncomfortable enough that they're going to rebel. So the question is how do you increase those tensions?

HERMITS

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

Continuing the tradition of Evolutionary Ethics scientism at Harvard University pioneered by Professor Louis Agassiz during Henry Thoreau's lifetime –not content with merely teaching pigeons to commit suicide– Professor Burrhus Frederic Skinner issued BEYOND FREEDOM AND DIGNITY.

EVOLUTIONARY ETHICS

April: Dr. Daniel Ellsberg gave a copy of the Pentagon Papers to reporter Neil Sheehan, who took it to New York City, where he and other Times reporters began to look through these extensive materials.

In his coded diary, Ted Kaczynski explained to himself "I act merely from my desire for revenge.... I believe in nothing.... I don't even believe in the cult of nature worshippers or wilderness worshippers."
He acknowledged to himself that he was not some sort of anti-technology Luddite but merely a seeker for "personal revenge."

A news item relating to the development of ELECTRIC WALDEN technology: Something was going on which eventually would mean that you could go to a cabin without becoming terminally deprived (if, that is, your cabin had electricity):

Host nodes on the Internet

DATE	NODES
May 1969	4
October 1969	5
April 1971	23
June 1974	62
March 1977	111
August 1981	213
May 1982	235
August 1983	562
October 1984	1,024
October 1985	1,961
February 1986	2,308
November 1986	5,089
December 1987	28,174

Host nodes on the Internet

DATE	NODES
July 1988	33,000
October 1988	56,000
January 1989	80,000
July 1989	130,000
October 1989	159,000
October 1990	313,000
January 1991	376,000
July 1991	535,000
October 1991	617,000
January 1992	727,000
April 1992	890,000
July 1992	992,000
October 1992	1,136,000
January 1993	1,313,000
April 1993	1,486,000
July 1993	1,776,000
October 1993	2,056,000
January 1994	2,217,000
1995 predicted	5,000,000 estimated

June: Ted Kaczynski visited his younger brother David Kaczynski, who was working for Anaconda Corporation in Great Falls, Montana. The brothers purchased a 1.4-acre plot south of Lincoln, Montana and Ted began construction of a cabin.

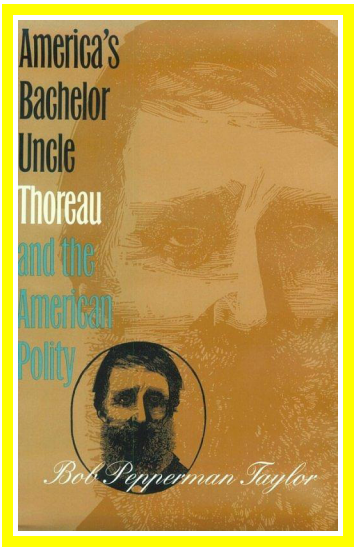
HERMITS

During a college commencement speech, Senator Mike Mansfield labeled Vietnam "a tragic mistake." Gosh, do you suppose?

"Killing to end war, that's like fucking to restore virginity."
— Vietnam-era protest poster

1972

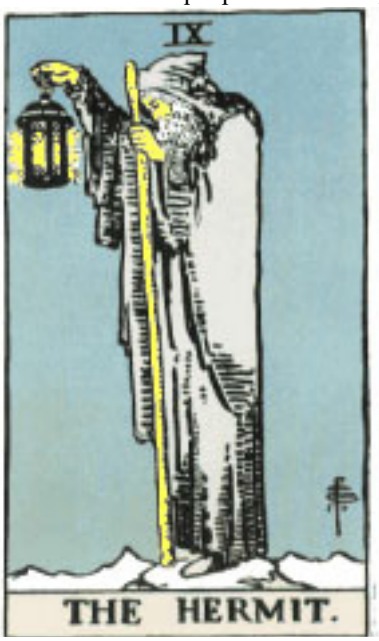
Bob Pepperman Taylor has remarked, in his AMERICA'S BACHELOR UNCLE: THOREAU AND THE AMERICAN POLITY (Lawrence KA: UP of Kansas, 1996, page 7), that "Thoreau is, on the whole, the political thinker scholars of American political thought love to either ignore or hate." One of the instances which he has offered of this is John Patrick Diggins, opinioning in this year that Henry Thoreau's "strategy of disassociation may have been designed to make man unfit for society, but it also rendered his ideas unfit for social philosophy." Thoreau was so entirely "[o]bsessed with his own salvation" that he even called upon others to withdraw from



society. He thereby "became oblivious to all that is general and public." He was so utterly "innocent of the nature of power" as to be "ignorant of the realities of social change," and this made him "indifferent at times to the spectacle of human suffering." Obviously, here we had merely one hermit, preferring "solitary existence

to social solidarity." Diggins is not subtle: to critique political society is to repudiate political society.

HERMITS



1975

Bly, William. “The Hermit Days of Henry Thoreau and Thomas Merton” Thoreau Society Bulletin, 1975

“A Review From Professor Ross’s Seminar”

Bly is definitely not a writer, to such an extent that I found this short article hard to read. What he seems to be saying is that Merton liked Thoreau. Bly gives us some of Merton’s journal entries and other writings about Thoreau, particularly his comments on living in the woods. Merton lived his last years in a small cabin associated with a Trappist monastery.

Bly assumes that Thoreau’s woods experience was similar to Merton’s contemplative experience. Merton writes “there is no explanation and no justification for the solitary life, since it is without a law. To be a contemplative is therefore to be an outlaw. As was Christ. As was Paul” (2). Although Bly does not seem to realize it, there are great differences in the way Thoreau and Merton regard their “life in the woods.” Merton only reflects on it when pressed, and then he says “All I can answer is that I am not living “like anybody” or “unlike anybody.” We all live somehow or other, and that’s that”(2). This seems to me very different from Thoreau’s pride in his life in the woods. Bly writes, “Thoreau and Merton preached to all men for freedom, discipline, God and the ecology of earth. They found the best of life to be derived from solitude and to be born in silence. Comparison beyond this is unimportant”(3). This is a naive comparison of solitude springing from very different motivations.

{Mary Ellen Ashcroft, 1989}

1977

Early in this year, stomach cancer forced Thomas Francis Neale to relocate to Rarotonga.

HERMITS

November 30, Wednesday: Thomas Francis Neale died in hospital on Rarotonga.

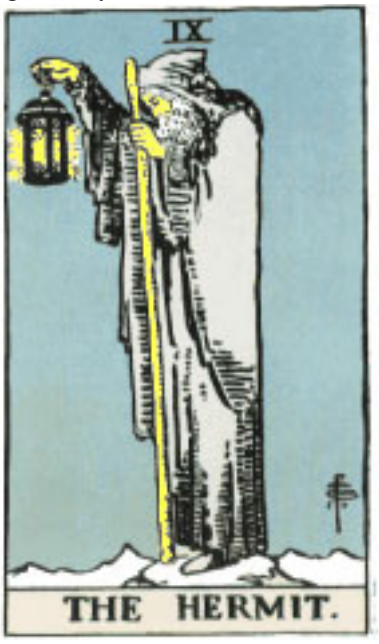
HERMITS

1992

Spring: In “Surrounded by water and dying of thirst” (PARABOLA v17, n1:12-18), Lambros Kamperidis argued that modern life’s unproductive loneliness, which often leads to depression, is very different from the sort of solitude which is undertaken deliberately to discover a more authentic way of life. The latter form of solitude, as practiced by Henry Thoreau among other hermits and ascetics, is incomplete without a return to the community to transmit what has been learned. The entry of Jesus into Jerusalem after 40 days in the wilderness is offered as the type case of this pattern, and this pattern is said to be a spiritual version of the hero’s quest.

1993

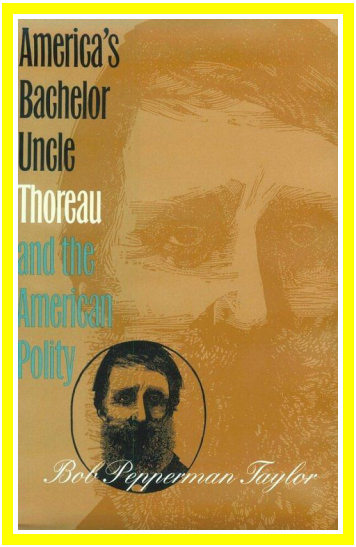
Bob Pepperman Taylor has remarked, in his AMERICA'S BACHELOR UNCLE: THOREAU AND THE AMERICAN POLITY (Lawrence KA: UP of Kansas, 1996, page 7), that "Thoreau is, on the whole, the political thinker scholars of American political thought love to either ignore or hate." One of the instances which he has offered of this is Richard Ellis, opinioning in this year that Thoreau had been a mere "voluntary recluse or hermit."



As far as Ellis could discern in his careful review of the source materials, "Cooperation no less than competition, Thoreau believed, would subject the individual to coercion and manipulation by others." (Which raises an interesting question. Do you suppose that these folks who have been taking this sort of "whipping boy" attitude toward what they assert to be the political thought of Thoreau, and perennially substituting his name for what is actually an unfortunate tendency in the thought of their hero Emerson, are not taking Thoreau's writings as their source material at all, but are instead relying upon their own tradition of extrapolation, and treating this derivative material as if it were the source materials to be evaluated? And, have

they supposed that no-one would have the wit to go back to the originary materials and call their bluff?) During

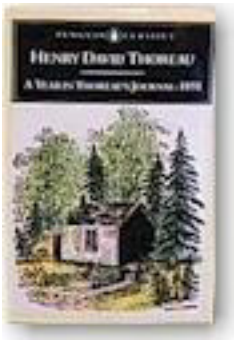
HERMITS



this year Penguin put out Thoreau's journal of the year 1851 as edited by Professor H. Daniel Peck:

H. Daniel Peck. YEAR IN THOREAU'S JOURNAL. Viking Penguin, 1993

TIMELINE OF JOURNAL

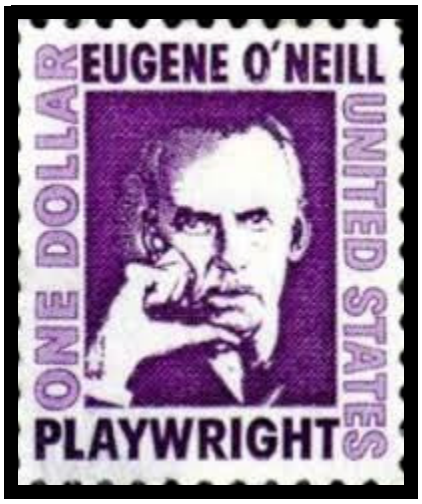


1996

January: Through Washington DC attorney Anthony Disceglie, David Kaczynski and his wife Linda Patrik, a philosophy professor at Union College, approached the FBI with the suggestion that the UNABOM suspect they had for so long been seeking might well be David's older brother living in a cabin half owned by David, in a creek bed a few miles south of Lincoln, Montana. The Bureau gave assurances that the information would be held in confidence, that they would not be "outed" as people who had turned in their own relative (despite this assurance, the juicy details would promptly be leaked to an eager press). The Bureau began surveillance of said cabin, in which it would turn out Ted already had under his bed a new post-Manifesto explosive device.

HERMITS

Up to this point, the best the Bureau had been able to come up with was to fantasize that perhaps –since the bomber had used $1.00 Eugene O'Neill commemorative stamps on several of his packages– the bomber was a rabid fan of Eugene O'Neill. Following up on this possibility it opened a file on the Eugene O'Neill Society and collected directories of its membership between 1979 and 1992.



(Way to go, guys! –Er, have you considered the possibility that this serial author himself is the serial killer?)

April 3, Wednesday: 35 were killed when a US Air Force plane crashed in bad weather near Dubrovnik, Croatia. Among the dead were Ron Brown, US Secretary of Commerce, and other high officials in the US government and business.

Having obtained a search warrant (although it would turn out to be problematic), after a 3-week stakeout the FBI took Ted Kaczynski into custody at his 10-by-12-foot cabin in western Montana and began to inventory its contents: 5 firearms, 3 typewriters, 1 explosive device, etc. Among the several hundred books found in the cabin (more cabin space probably had been devoted to books than anything else) were:

- BIBLE
- SPANISH STORIES
- TRISTAN AND ISEULT

- THE ANCIENT ENGINEERS
- THE TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY
- Joseph Conrad's HEART OF DARKNESS, YOUTH, TYPHOON
- Joseph Conrad's THE SHADOW-LINE
- Joseph Conrad's THE SECRET AGENT
- James Fenimore Cooper's THE DEERSLAYER
- James Fenimore Cooper's LAST OF THE MOHICANS
- Charles Dickens's DAVID COPPERFIELD
- Charles Dickens's A TALE OF TWO CITIES
- Fyodor Dostoevski's BROTHERS KARAMAZOV
- George Eliot's SILAS MARNER
- Euell Gibbons's STALKING THE WILD ASPARAGUS
- Ted Robert Gurr's (?) VIOLENCE IN AMERICA
- Thomas Hardy's FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD
- Eric Hoffer's THE TRUE BELIEVER
- Victor Hugo's LES MISERABLES (Volumes 1 and 2)
- Arthur Koestler's DARKNESS AT NOON
- W. Somerset Maugham's STORIES OF THE EAST
- W. Somerset Maugham's RAZOR'S EDGE
- George Orwell's 1984
- Claudio Sanchez-Albornoz's SOBRE LA LIBERTAD HUMANA
- William Shakespeare's MERCHANT OF VENICE
- Albert Speer's SPANDAU: THE SECRET DIARIES
- John Steinbeck's OF MICE AND MEN
- Robert Louis Stevenson's TREASURE ISLAND
- Chester C. Tan's CHINESE POLITICAL THOUGHT IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
- Mark Twain's LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI
- Leo Tolstòy's THE COSSACKS AND THE RAID
- U.S. Government National Defense Civil Preparedness Agency's YOUR CHANCE TO LIVE
- Various mathematics journals
- Several Harvard University yearbooks

HERMITS

1997

October 5, Sunday: Carol Zaleski[34] reviewed a new book, Peter France's HERMITS: THE INSIGHTS OF SOLITUDE (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1997, 240 pages, $23.95), on page 32 of the New York Times Book Review. The last paragraph of this review began as follows:

> Two literary hermits are featured: Thoreau, ornamental hermit of the Transcendentalists, and Robert Lax, Minimalist poet and friend of Merton's, now living alone on Patmos.

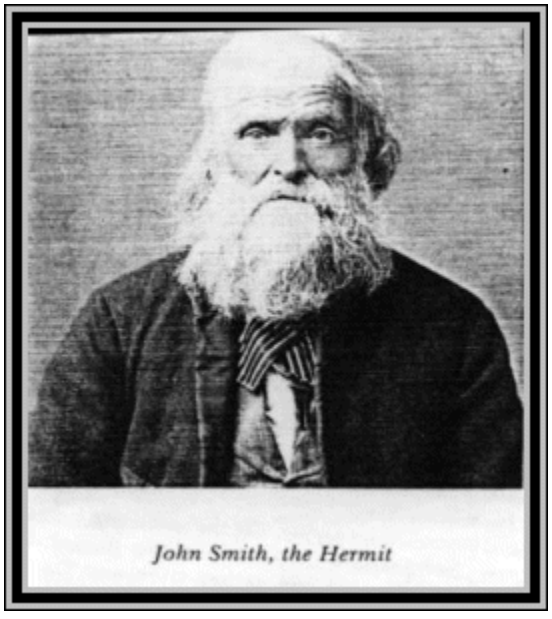
HERMITS
TRANSCENDENTALISM

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT

34. Robert Richardson <rdrichardson@wesleyan.edu> clearly has taken no offense at this characterization of Thoreau as a mere "ornamental hermit" of the Transcendentalists: "I know Carol Zaleski. She is completely brilliant and has written what is, I think, the best piece I've seen on Wm James VARIETIES... I would say that anything she writes is worth a look. Her James piece (can we stretch Transcendentalism this far?) is 'Speaking of Wm James to the Cultured Among his Despisers' in Journal of Psychology of Religion 2,3, pages 127-170."

1998

What remains of the hermitage of John B. Smith, which is not much, was re-located by John Foster of the New England Naturalist Training Center. Foster dug up stone steps that led into the "cave," which after the resident's enlargement had become 10 feet in height and had gone into the cliff face some 12 feet (the hermit's book indicates that he had expanded the interior somewhat by keeping his fire atop an outcropping and then dashing water upon it, causing the rock to fragment). Chunks of rock were employed in the construction of walls extending out from the cliff face. He had kept his entrance rudely boarded up with logs, and for greater warmth had stuffed mosses into the chinks.You can still see the foundations of his stone walls and some of the view he must have had down to the river (although trees have grown up during the century since the railroad switched from wood to coal), but during his lifetime most of this region extending some 3 miles back from every rail line in every direction had been denuded of anything burnable to stack beside the RR tracks and sell to passing locomotives for their fuel. During his time, also, a carriage road had led closer to the vicinity than now. The site is up a steep hill rising up from the train tracks and Route 2, and French King Bridge which spans a bend at the confluence of Millers River with the Connecticut River. The site now gets predictable vandalism, with paint and smoke-smudge signatures and epithets on the rocks, and some beer empties and trash, but is fortunately hard to climb up to — and fortunately most local stoners do not much like to exert themselves. The locals who now come to visit Hermit's Cave in the Erving State Forest ordinarily arrive in small bands as teens. Such groups would likely have annoyed Smith, though he did enjoy his visits from ladies and gentlemen who would purchase copies of his book, and pairs of the socks he knitted, and listen to his stories.



John Smith, the Hermit

Dr. Linda Grant De Pauw, evidently a writer for the National Enquirer, in SEAFARING WOMEN, provided us with an imaginative recreation of Sarah Bishop's rape and abduction by the crew of an English privateer:

> Sarah Bishop of Long Island, New York, was the victim of a British raiding party in 1778. Rape had become an everyday event

in the war zones; when Bishop was taken aboard a British privateer, she became a member of the crew with certain additional duties. Although she handled the wheel and stood watches, she was also expected to be a communal sex object. Eventually she and the captain of the privateer came to an understanding, after which she was strictly the captain's woman. The captain was killed, however, in an engagement with an American privateer, and it was another six months before Bishop found an opportunity to escape. Two years after her capture, Sarah Bishop slipped over the side of the ship and swam ashore at Stamford, Connecticut. Her experience had been so traumatic that she could not bear to return to normal human society. She made her way to Ridgefield, Connecticut, and climbed to a rocky cave, where she lived the rest of her life as a hermit.

HERMITS

"MAGISTERIAL HISTORY" IS FANTASIZING: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY

"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

HERMITS AND HERMITAGES

Prepared: March 6, 2017

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.

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.