

Undated Letters

From W. ELLERY CHANNING

Dear H.

How would you like to go up to Holt's point to-day or will you

Yrs

W E C

There is no clue to the dating of this note. Channing was probably referring to a point of land on the Concord River just west of Ball's Hill that Thoreau called "The Holt." MS., Harvard; previously unpublished.

From W. CUSHING

Will you please give us an answer—and your subject—if you consent to come—by Mr. Charles Bowers, who is to lecture here tomorrow evening.

Respectfully yours

W. Cushing

Chairman Ex. Comtee—

Mr. Henry D. Thoreau Concord

We have been unable to identify further or date this request for a lecture. MS., Scribner Book Store, New York (typescript); previously unpublished.

From MARY MOODY EMERSON

With her characteristic mixture of bitter and sweet, Emerson's aunt signed the two-page 4to letter she wrote Thoreau, "Your admirer often and your friend always." She signed the letter with her initials only. We do not know when it was written; the catalogue dates it only "May 3." The manuscript was sold by Charles F. Libbie & Co. at the Willard sale of February 15-16, 1910.

To HENRY WILLIAMS, JR.

Though bodily I have been a member of Harvard University, heart and soul I have been far away among the scenes of my boyhood. Those hours that should have been devoted to study, have been spent in scouring the woods and exploring the lakes and streams of my native village. Immured within the dark but classic walls of a Stoughton or a Hollis, my spirit yearned for the sympathy of my old and almost forgotten friend, Nature.

These sentences may or may not have come from a letter Thoreau wrote to the secretary of his Harvard class of 1837. The entry in the Memorials, where the sentences are found, is ambiguous. Williams, the class secretary, quotes first from a letter Thoreau sent him on September 30, 1847 and then from the Class Book in which Thoreau must have written either during or shortly after his period in college. (He heads the autobiographical entry "David Henry" instead of the later "Henry David.")

Williams then prefaces his third quotation from Thoreau, reproduced here, with merely "Again." Its third sentence is practically duplicated in the Class Book entry, but the two preceding ones do not appear there. All have the same ornate style. If they are from a letter Thoreau wrote, it must have been an early one. Text, Henry Williams, Memorial of the Class of 1837, p. 38.