

Carlyle and His Works" and about the decision to publish it in two installments (see pp. 279-280).

<sup>2</sup> Phil. 3:13-14: "but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

*Copy-text:* ALS (VtMiM, Greeley/1)

*Published:* HDT 1882, 222-224; Cor 1958, 173-174

*Editor's Note*

This letter is addressed "Henry D. Thoreau, Esq. / care of R. W. Emersons / Esq. / Concord, / Massachusetts," postmarked "U.S. EXPRESS MAIL N.Y. N. YORK FEB 5", and endorsed "H. Greeley".

*Author's Alterations*

Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>, 1847.] *interlined above cancelled* Jan  
I] ~,  
hard] *preceded by cancelled of*  
Mr] Mrs

*To Horatio Robinson Storer*

*February 15, 1847*

Concord Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> 1847

Dear Sir,

I have not forgotten your note which I received some-time since. Though I live in the woods I am not so attentive an observer of birds as I was once, but am satisfied if I get an occasional sight of or sound from them. My pursuits at present are such that I am not very likely to meet with any specimens which you will not have obtained. Moreover, I confess to a little squeamishness on the score of robbing their nests, though I could easily go to the length of abstracting an egg or two gently, now and then, and if the advancement of science obviously demanded it might be carried even to the extreme of deliberate murder.

I have no doubt that you will observe a greater number of species in or near the College Yard than I can here. I have noticed that in an open country, where there are but few trees, there are more attractions for many species

of birds than in a wooded one. They not only find food there in greater abundance, but protection against birds of prey; and even if they are no more numerous than elsewhere, the few trees are necessarily more crowded with nests. Many of my classmates were quite successful in collecting birds nests and eggs, and they did not have to go far from the college-yard to find them— I remember a pigeon woodpecker's nest in the<sup>a</sup> grove on the east side of the yard, which annually yielded a number of eggs to collectors, while the bird steadily supplied the loss like a hen, until my chum demolished the whole with a hatchet. I found another in the next field chipped nearly two feet into a solid stump. And in one of the fields near the yard I used to visit daily in the winter the dwelling of an ermine-weasel in a hollow apple tree. But of course one must be a greater traveller than this if he would make anything like a complete collection.

There are many whipporwills & owls about my house, and perhaps with a little pains one might find their nests. I hope you have more nimble and inquisitive eyes to serve you than mine now are— However, if I should chance to stumble on any rarer nest I will not forget your request. If you come to Concord again, as I understand you sometimes do, I shall be<sup>e</sup> glad to see you at my hut—

Trusting that you will feather your own nest<sup>f</sup> comfortably without stripping those of the birds quite bare— I am

Yrs &c

Henry D. Thoreau.

*Correspondent:* See pp. 284-285.

<sup>f</sup> The proverb "feather one's nest" was current by the sixteenth century.

*Copy-text:* ALS (VtMiM, Thoreau/3)

*Published:* *Saturday Review of Literature* 21 (November 11, 1939): 9; *NEQ* 13 (1940): 30-31; Reginald Lansing Cook, *The Concord Saunterer: Including a Discussion of the Nature Mysticism of Thoreau*

(Middlebury, Vt.: Middlebury College Press, 1940), 62-63; *Cor* 1958, 175-176

*Editor's Notes*

This letter is addressed "Horatio B. Storer / 14 Winter Street / Boston", postmarked "CONCORD MASS FEB 16", and endorsed "Henry D. Thoreau / Concord / Mass. / Feb 15<sup>th</sup> 1847. / Oology".

be] PE; b{MS torn}

*Author's Alteration*

the] *interlined with a caret*

*From Henry Williams Jr.*

*March 1, 1847*

*Boston, March 1, 1847.*

*Dear Sir,*

The following inquiries are made agreeably to a vote passed at the Last Annual Meeting of the Class, with a view to obtain authentic information concerning each one of its members, and to enable the Secretary to record facts now easily obtainable, but which, from year to year, it will be more and more difficult to collect.

You are respectfully requested to answer the questions proposed, as fully as may be convenient and agreeable to you, and to add such other facts concerning your life, before or after entering College, as you are willing to communicate. The answers are to be recorded in the Class Book for future reference.

*Please to address Henry Williams, Jr., Boston; post paid.*

*Very Respectfully and Truly Yours,  
Henry Williams, Jr., Class Secretary.*

\_\_\_\_<sup>e</sup>

1. When and where were you born?
2. Where were you fitted for College, and by whom?
3. If married, when, where, and to whom?
4. What is your profession? If learned, with whom studied? If mercantile, where and with whom begun?