

set out for Maine on May 2 on a two-week job-hunting tour. Ezra Ripley gave T a letter of recommendation and a list of clergy to visit.

<sup>2</sup> Vose was to study law with George T. Davis in Greenfield, Massachusetts.

<sup>3</sup> Albert H. Nelson's 3,498 votes fell short of the 4,433 that re-elected Stedman Buttrick.

*Copy-text:* ALS (ViU, Clifton Waller Barrett Library, Henry David Thoreau Collection [#6345])

*Published:* *Over Thoreau's Desk: New Correspondence, 1838-1861*, ed. Kenneth Walter Cameron (Hartford, Conn.: Transcendental Books, 1965), 6

*Editor's Note*

This letter is addressed "Henry Vose, / Butternuts. / Chenango County, N. York.," postmarked "CONCORD MAS. MAY 28", and endorsed "Henry David Thoreau. / 1838."

*Author's Alterations*

for] *added in margin*  
 behindhand] too  
 you] *interlined with a caret*  
 are still] *interlined with a caret*

*To John Thoreau Jr.*

*July 8, 1838*

Concord July 8<sup>th</sup> 38-

Dear John,

We heard from Helen today and she informs us that you are coming home by the first of August, now I wish you to write, and let me know exactly when your vacation takes place, that I may take one at the same time.<sup>1</sup> I am in school from 8 to 12 in the morning, and from 2 to 4 in the afternoon; after that I read a little Greek or English, or for variety, take a stroll in the fields. We have not had such a year for berries this long time—the earth is actually blue with them. High blueberries, three kinds of low-thimble and rasp-berries constitute my diet at present. (Take notice—I only diet between meals.) Among my deeds of charity I may reckon the picking of a cherry tree for two helpless

single ladies who live under the hills—but i'faith it was robbing Peter to pay Paul—for while I was *exalted* in charity towards them, I had no mercy on my own stomach. Be advised, my love for currants continues. The only addition that I have made of late to my stock of Ornithological information—is in the shape, not of a Fring. Melod.<sup>2</sup> but surely a melodious Fringilla—the F. Juncorum,<sup>3</sup> or rush sparrow. I had long know him by his note but never by name. Report says that Elijah Stearns<sup>4</sup> is going to take the town School. I have four scholars, and one more engaged. Mr. Farrar left town yesterday. Among occurrences of ill omen, may be mentioned the falling out and cracking of the inscription stone of Concord monument. Mrs Lowell and children are at Aunt's.<sup>5</sup>

Peabody walked up last Wednesday—spent the night, and took a stroll in the woods. Sophia<sup>6</sup> says I must<sup>e</sup> leave off and pen a few lines for her to Helen. S Good bye. Love from all and among them yr

aff brother  
HDT

*Correspondent:* See p. 29.

<sup>1</sup> John and Helen were teaching in Roxbury, Massachusetts; Henry had opened a private school in the family home.

<sup>2</sup> Song sparrow.

<sup>3</sup> Field sparrow.

<sup>4</sup> Elijah Wyman Stearns (1813-1896), son of Elijah and Elizabeth Stearns of Bedford, Massachusetts, graduated from Harvard in 1838, taught for several years, and then became a druggist in Bedford.

<sup>5</sup> T's aunt Nancy Thoreau (1789-1815) married Caleb Callender Billings (1788-1833) of Bangor, Maine, in 1810. Their first child, Mary Ann Thoreau Billings (1810-1888), married Charles Lowell (1807-1895), a Bangor merchant, in 1834. The Lowell children were Elizabeth Lowell (1835-1909) and Caleb Callender Lowell (1836-1902). The Lowells were probably staying at the home (and boarding house) of Elizabeth Thoreau (1784-1839), the oldest of T's paternal aunts.

<sup>6</sup> Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau (1819-1876) was the fourth child of John and Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau.

*Copy-text:* ALS (RPB, Albert Edgar Lownes Collection on Henry David Thoreau, 1837-1965, Ms. 80.1, Series 1, Box 1, Folder 1)

*Published:* *FL* 1894, 25-26; *T: Home* 1902, 80-81; *FL* 1906, 23-24; *Life of HDT* 1917, 203; *Cor* 1958, 27

*Editor's Notes*

This letter is addressed "John Thoreau / West Roxbury / Mass." and postmarked "CONCORD MASS JUL 16".

must] *PE*; mu{*MS torn*}

*To Andrew Bigelow*

*October 6, 1838*

Concord Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> -38

Sir,

I learn from my brother and sister, who were recently employed as teachers in your vicinity, that you are at present in quest of some one to fill the vacancy in your high school, occasioned by Mr. Bellows<sup>a</sup> withdrawal.<sup>1</sup> As my present school, which consists of a small number of well advanced pupils, is not sufficiently lucrative, I am advised to make application for the situation now vacant. I was graduated at Cambridge in -37, and have since had my share of experience in schoolkeeping<sup>e</sup>.

I can refer you to the-President and Faculty of Harvard College—to Rev. Dr. Ripley, or Rev. R. W. Emerson—of this town, or to the parents of my present pupils, among whom I would mention—

Hon. Samuel Hoar—Hon. John Keyes<sup>2</sup>—& Hon. Nathan Brooks.<sup>3</sup> Written recommendations by these gentlemen<sup>e</sup> will be procured if desired.

If you will trouble yourself to answer this letter immediately, you will much oblige your

humble Servant,  
Henry D. Thoreau

*Correspondent:* Andrew Bigelow (1795-1877), son of Timothy and Lucy Prescott Bigelow of Groton, Massachusetts, graduated from