

¹ The proverb dates from 1586.

² Blake taught at the Milton Academy in Milton, Massachusetts, where Christopher A. Greene (1816-1853) was headmaster from 1849 to 1851.

³ "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth" (Matt. 6:3).

Copy-text: ALS (TxAuHRH, Henry David Thoreau Collection, MS-4222, 1.3)

Published: *LVP* 1865, 63-66; *FL* 1894, 223-226; *FL* 1906, 185-188; *Cor* 1958, 264-266; *Companion* 1964, 314-317; "T to Blake" 1966, 44-46; *Spiritual Seeker* 2004, 59-62

Editor's Notes

T initially addressed the letter "H. G. O. Blake / Care of Mr. C. A. Greene / Milton / Mass."; the letter was then redirected: "Care of Mr. C. A. Greene / Milton" is cancelled and "Worcester." is written to replace "Milton". In addition, the original Concord postmark, "Concord M{*illegible*} Aug 9", is cancelled and "Milton MS / Aug 17." is written next to it.

See *Journal* 3 1990, pp. 94-99, for another version of a part of this letter.

crocodile] *PE*; crocod{*MS torn*}

Author's Alterations

Marquis] marquis

know] *preceded by cancelled* even

From George Albert Bailey

October 7, 1850

Portland, Me., Oct. 7th., 1850.

Dear Sir:

A few days since, by a lucky accident I met with a copy of a work of yours—"A week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers."— I read it with much interest,—and if I tell you plainly that I am delighted with the book, it is because I cannot help telling you so;—therefore you should pardon whatever is amiss in the expression.— I should like to ask you many questions touching your allusions to persons; such, for instance, as "What were the names of the "aged

shepherd"¹ and "youthful pastor";² p. 21?—what that of the "Concord poet"³ quoted on p. 49?—of the Justice of the Peace and Deacon,⁴ p. 68? what the name of "one who was born on its head waters";⁵ quoted on p. 90?—and many more of a similar nature; but I fear that such an act on the part of a stranger, would be but little short of impertinence, though it might be kindly considered by you; so I must not use *that* method of making myself "wise above what is written."⁶

Next to confessing to you my admiration of your book, my object in writing you, is to make an enquiry for "Walden; or Life in the Woods,"—announced at the close of the "Week", as shortly to be published.⁷ I have enquired for it in Boston, but no one could tell me anything about it. Will you please inform me if it has been published, and, if so, where it may be found?—

Truly & Respectfully Yours,
Geo. A. Bailey.

H. D. Thoreau, Esq., Concord, Mass.

Correspondent: George Albert Bailey (1820-1877), son of George and Betsey Webb Bailey of Portland, was at this time working in his brother John's bookstore. A poet, and later a newspaperman, Bailey became part-owner of the *Congressional Globe*, a Washington, D.C., serial which published the debates of the Twenty-Third through the Forty-Second Congresses (1833-1873). Bailey never married.

¹ Rev. Ezra Ripley, who had lived in the Old Manse; see *A Week* 1980, p. 18.

² Nathaniel Hawthorne, who later lived in the Manse; see *A Week* 1980, p. 19.

³ Ellery Channing; see *A Week* 1980, p. 45.

⁴ William Parkman (1741-1832), son of Ebenezer and Hannah Breck Parkman of Westboro, became deacon of Concord's First Parish in 1788; see *A Week* 1980, p. 63. Parkman owned a general store in Concord and was both postmaster and a justice of the peace. "One main branch of his business seems to have been to hold court on Sunday after church, to deal with such profane persons as broke the Lord's day by unnecessary travelling" (*Memoirs*

of *Members of the Social Circle in Concord, Second Series, from 1795 to 1840* [Cambridge, Mass.: privately printed, Riverside Press, 1888], p. 24). The Thoreau family lived in Deacon Parkman's house from 1837 to 1844, so T would have had access to his papers.

⁵ Nathaniel Peabody Rogers (1794-1846) was the son of John and Betsey Mulliken Rogers of Plymouth, New Hampshire; see *A Week* 1980, p. 85. He graduated from Dartmouth in 1816 and married Mary Porter Farrand (1796-1890), daughter of Daniel and Mary Porter Farrand, in 1822. Rogers became a lawyer but left the law to edit the *Herald of Freedom*, an antislavery newspaper in Concord, New Hampshire. T praised Rogers for his work on the *Herald* in the last number of the *Dial* (April 1844), revised his comments about Rogers for inclusion in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, but then omitted them from the final version of the book.

⁶ Bailey uses a common variation of 1 Cor. 4:6, "not to think of men above that which is written."

⁷ T mentions this announcement in his March 22, 1849, letter to Thatcher; see p. 20.

Copy-text: Facsimile of ALS (ScU, Thomas Cooper Library, Joel Myerson Collection of Nineteenth-Century American Literature)

Published: "T Receives a Fan Letter" 1994, 10

From Josiah Pierce

October 18, 1850

Portland. Oct. 18. 1850.

Dear Sir,

In behalf of its Managing Committee, I have the honor of inviting you to lecture before the "Portland Lyceum" on some Wednesday evening during the next winter—¹

Your former animated and interesting discourse² is fresh in the memory of its members, and they are very anxious to have their minds again invigorated, enlivened and instructed by you— If you consent to our request, will you be pleased to designate the time of the winter when you would prefer to come here?

The Managers have been used to offer gentlemen who come here to lecture from a distance equivalent to your