

The Thoreau Centenary in Britain

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The American celebration of Henry David Thoreau's one-hundredth birthday in 1917 has received quiet but classic recognition from scholars. Walter Harding's discovery of the "almost completely forgotten" essay on Thoreau in the July 1917 issue of *The Seven Arts* and his inclusion of the essay in *Thoreau: A Century of Criticism*¹ are examples of this recognition. The magnitude and significance of the Thoreau Centenary which occurred in Britain, however, has not been much commented on, except for rare notices like that in Walter Harding's essay "Thoreau's Fame Abroad" in *The Recognition of Henry David Thoreau*.² This limited notice is a surprise when we recall Thoreau's marked reception and influence in Britain. William Condry, the Welsh naturalist and author of the Thoreau volume in the "Great Naturalists Series," said in his address at the annual meeting of the Thoreau Society in 1981, "As for Thoreau's reception in Britain, it seems generally accepted that the people of Old England were quicker than those of New England to appreciate Thoreau's true worth."³ Walter Harding had said much the same thing in "Thoreau's Fame Abroad." This being the case, it should be useful to look more closely at the events and some of the consequences of the Thoreau Centenary in Britain, the public commemoration of Thoreau's birth by honoring his life and writings, centering on the

program which the Humanitarian League scheduled for 12 July 1917 in Caxton Hall in London. To assemble the evidence for this commemoration and its effects is to gain a better understanding of what Mr. Condry recalls as the British appreciation of “Thoreau’s true worth,” but this evidence also suggests that the extraordinary “worth” of Thoreau to the war-weary British people in the year 1917 may be explained in light of his articulation of their own nostalgia for a time of simplicity and peace.

Though the designated program of the Centenary was scheduled by the Humanitarian League for 12 July, the run-up to that official event occasioned numerous public reminders of Thoreau, expressed in advertisements, notices, and articles, appearing in newspapers and magazines. As early as its May issue, *The Vegetarian Messenger and Health Review*, for example, was calling attention to “the centenary of Henry David Thoreau” with its suggestion that societies “whose aims are in accord with Thoreau’s teaching and spirit, should honour the day by arranging for the delivery of a local lecture or the reading of a paper on Thoreau.”⁴ Evidence located in the small print of some newspapers’ calendar-of-events columns indicates that readings and lectures on Thoreau were indeed already being delivered at public functions. Several newspapers show Dr. Walter Walsh speaking in Steinway Hall, London, on both 7 and 14 July on the subject of “The Centenary of H.D. Thoreau.”⁵ Unfortunately, according to other sources, Walter Haydon’s lantern-slide lectures on “Thoreau, his Haunts and his Friendships,” which had been appearing about the London area, had been cancelled from the 12 July program.⁶ It does seem likely, then, that individual enthusiasts were using the Centenary season to encourage discussions of Thoreau and his works.

To assist with arrangements for such discussions, the *Messenger* pointed out, the Humanitarian League was offering to “send copies of a forthcoming pamphlet.” Apparently, there were many requests for this pamphlet as the September issue of *The Humanitarian* noted that owing to “the interest aroused by the Thoreau Centenary, the pamphlet on Thoreau...was in considerable demand, and the supply was quickly exhausted.”⁷ The Society also wanted its readers to know that it would be grateful to those who might return to the office “any copies which they do not wish to keep.” A reader today might also be grateful if one of those pamphlets turned up in some

archive, for it is likely that the pamphlet referred to was a different one from Henry Salt's *Henry David Thoreau: A Centenary Essay*, which the League published in 1917 as a thirty-page book in paper wrappers, clearly not the advisory pamphlet.⁸ For one thing, Salt's essay had already appeared in serial parts in the January (1-6), February (7-9), March (15-16), and April (24-26) issues of *The Humanitarian*. Salt edited the serial parts a bit and added quotations from Thoreau's writings for the book version.

Henry S. Salt's essay on Thoreau which was serialized in those several issues of *The Humanitarian* is arguably the best known literary product from the season of the Centenary, because of Salt's reputation as Thoreau's biographer. Of course, Salt's own life and his work as biographer of Thoreau are well known today through such texts as John Flanagan's "Henry Salt and his Life of Thoreau" in *The New England Quarterly*,⁹ and his role in organizing the program at Caxton Hall was a prominent one. Salt's essay on Thoreau in both the journal and the book is divided into three parts. The first part, "The Thinker," considers Thoreau's genius and defines the inevitable misunderstanding by his contemporaries. Salt wonders what Thoreau would have said had he been told that within half a century an original copy of his first book, the rejected *Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, "would sell for ten guineas." Part two of the essay, "The Apostle of Simplicity," may have had the most relevance for Salt's British audience at the time, considering the popular reading of *Walden* among various simplicity movements. However, Salt uses much of the section to correct, even attack, contemporary apostles of simplicity, such as Pastor Wagner and A.C. Benson, who show no grasp of the social side of the concept, especially as Thoreau defined it. Salt hears Thoreau saying in *Walden* that simplification of life is "the deliberate abandonment of what is excessive and luxurious, with a view to one's own comfort, both of body and of mind. . . because to live otherwise than simply is to put a grievous burden upon others."¹⁰ The final section, "The Humane Natural-

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ist," gave Salt a chance to use Thoreau's persona as naturalist to attack his own trinity of Nature's inhumane enemies: sportsmen, anatomists, and collectors.

Reckoned together, then, the several parts of Salt's essay might be viewed as an appropriate introduction for the Centenary by defining a persona for Thoreau which was a reminder of the credibility for his celebration. And yet the reviews were somewhat mixed. A columnist for *The Publishers' Circular and Booksellers' Record* on 23 June saw the essay as a "charming outline-study of the 'Yankee Diogenes,' the 'poet-naturalist,' who initiated modern understanding of animals."¹¹ The reviewer in *The Athenaeum* in July was both confused about the order of Thoreau's names and suspicious of his ideas. "David Henry Thoreau [sic]:a Centenary Essay....This centenary essay treats Thoreau as Thinker, the Apostle of Simplicity, and the Humane Naturalist. There is a much greater disposition to-day to view Thoreau's ideas sympathetically than was the case in his lifetime, though their application in anything like entirety would still be considered by most people unpractical."¹² These reviews also suggest that Salt's essay was available to readers and reviewers prior to 12 July.

The earliest publication of the intended program for the Thoreau Centenary at Caxton Hall appeared in the July 1917 issue of *The Humanitarian*.¹³ A four-paragraph notice gave details about the event, planned by the Humanitarian League for eight o'clock on Thursday evening. The chair would be Sir John L. Otter, J.P. whose presence would "give general satisfaction." Supporting the chair would be W.H. Hudson, A.W. Oke, W.J. Jupp, Dugald Semple, H.S. Salt, and C. F. Sixsmith. The notice went on to mention several articles, some illustrated, that had already appeared in the June issue of *The Bookman*. One article was by Walter Haydon of Liverpool who was offering the use of his "valuable lantern slides on Thoreau;" since Mr. Haydon himself could not speak at the meeting, it was likely that "another meeting" would be organized later in the year when he could exhibit "photographs taken by him in Concord." The notice suggested that people would want to support the meetings, attend "personally if possible, or if not, by forwarding tickets to their London friends."¹⁴

As would be expected, in the weeks leading up to the meeting in Caxton Hall there were numerous announcements for the upcoming

ing event appearing in newspapers and journals, and the features of some of them are instructive to examine in that they provide understanding about the broad distribution of Thoreau's reputation in the public consciousness at the time. For a reader today, I think, there is something incredible about not only the mass of material being put into print about Thoreau in the focussed and relatively short period of time of the centenary, which in truth came to comprise most of the year 1917, but it is also doubtful if anything like this amount or quality of attention had ever been given to Thoreau since his birth on 12 July 1817.

A concise note appeared in *The Christian Commonwealth* on 27 June: "To celebrate the centenary of the birth of Henry D. Thoreau, a meeting will be held at Caxton Hall on July 12, at 8 p.m. Sir John L. Otter will preside, and short addresses will be given by various speakers. Admirers of Thoreau's writings are invited to be present."¹⁵ A similar notice appeared in a column, "The I.L.P. at Work," in *The Labour Leader* on 5 July: "Thoreau Centenary.—A Meeting to celebrate the Centenary of Henry D. Thoreau will be held in the Caxton Hall, Westminster; S.W., on July 12. Chair to be taken at 8 p.m. by Sir John Otter, J.P. Admirers of Thoreau's writings are invited to be present."¹⁶ Nearly word-for-word announcements appeared in other sources, one on 6 July, for example, in *The Common Cause of Humanity: The Organ of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies*.¹⁷ When another, similar notice occurs in the "Letters to the Editor" in *The Publishers' Circular* on the following day, we learn the name of the composer: "Sir,—In order to celebrate the centenary of Henry D. Thoreau it has been arranged to hold a meeting in the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on the evening of July 12th. The chair will be taken at 9 p.m. by Sir John L. Otter, J.P., and short addresses will be given by various speakers. Admirers of Thoreau's writings are invited to be present.—Yours truly, K. Whitaker."¹⁸

On 11 July *The Christian Commonwealth* gave personality to their announcement: "Mr. Dugald Semple, the simple-life exponent, is one of the speakers at the meeting to celebrate the Centenary of Thoreau in the Caxton Hall to-morrow (Thursday), at 8 p.m. Mr. Semple has lived for nearly ten years in a caravan, and will relate some of his interesting experiences in the open air."¹⁹ And not a personality who was afraid to toot his own horn, Mr. Semple later on gave himself a positive review for his contribution: "One of my great

pleasures in London was to be asked to give an address at the Thoreau Centenary held in Caxton Hall on July 1917. Having lived a similar life to Thoreau, I got a good reception and press report.”²⁰ In that same issue *The Commonwealth* spread over two columns a prominent advertisement for the July issue of *The Healthy Life*, published by C.W. Daniel; it was headlined with large type “Thoreau Centenary” and illustrated with a drawing of the magazine’s cover, and indicated that in celebration of the Thoreau Centenary “a biographical sketch and selections from Thoreau’s writings” were given in that issue.²¹

On both 11 and 12 July Thoreau appeared in the London *Times*, first in a noticeably large advertisement for the next day’s *Times Literary Supplement* which was featuring “Leading Article: Thoreau,”²² second, in a merely terse item on 12 July: “Thoreau Centenary: Meeting, Caxton Hall, 8, Sir John Otter presiding.”²³ Other areas of Britain began to get into the act, and on 12 July Brighton and Hove introduced themselves into London’s *Daily Telegraph*: “Sir John Otter, ex-mayor of the borough, has accepted an invitation to preside at the meeting to be held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, this evening in celebration of the centenary of Thoreau. During the weekend he will lecture on the subject to the members of the Brighton and Hove Natural History Society.”²⁴

Similarities in wording and information within these brief notices about the Centenary are only too obvious, and yet the import of such an accumulation of them says that it must have been a keen awareness of Thoreau’s importance that motivated the celebration of his writing throughout a wide cross-section of the British public. However, there were also longer, more detailed pieces that appeared in print which offered more information about his life. A one-column length mini-essay in *The Animal World* for July, titled “The Thoreau Centenary,” began with the usual announcement, “Thursday, July 12th next, is the centenary of the birth of Henry David Thoreau, the sensitive American idealist whose writings have given pleasure to so many thousands of nature lovers.”²⁵ Then the piece went on to devote five paragraphs to Thoreau’s experiment with nature, to quote a selection from *Walden*, to compare him with Richard Jefferies, and then to recommend him to the public. “Those who have read Thoreau will do well to re-read him; those who are unfamiliar with his writings may hasten to make good this defect.” In a

curious juxtaposition with this recommendation to read Thoreau, in the second column, is located a full-frontal photo of a “Bulldog Saved from Drowning in the North Sea.”²⁶

A much more extensive piece marking the Centenary appeared in *The Christian Commonwealth* on 20 June, titled “Thoreau’s ‘Walden,’” written by Dugald Semple, the simple-life advocate and caravan-dweller. Saying that the centenary will mark a rare life from the history of simple living, Semple singles out Thoreau as a rare writer who has “borne a message so bravely in spite of weak health and an unsympathetic public.” Semple then tells the story of Thoreau’s ancestry, his birth and life in Concord, his education at Harvard, his experience at Walden Pond, and the growth of his philosophy. Referring to *Walden*, Semple declares that Thoreau’s “interpretations of nature were unique both for their elegance of style and keen imagination.”²⁷ Anyone not familiar with Thoreau at this point could have learned the basic facts of his life and significance by reading Semple’s essay. If Dugald Semple’s essay was instructive, it was also a precursor of the large body of literature about Thoreau that was about to flood into the newspapers and magazines. This was just the beginning of a virtual schooling of the British public in the life and ideas of Thoreau which was to be stimulated by the Centenary and running almost daily somewhere in the press.

London’s *Public Opinion* on 6 July devoted a full page to a piece titled “Our Life is Frittered Away by Detail,” opening with the “Simplicity!” quotation from *Walden* and its development into a sonnet by Eric Briton, borrowed from *Bookman*. Except for transitional sentences, the anonymous composer of the article wove together quotations from Dr. E. Waldo Emerson’s essay in the Thoreau number of *Bookman*, George Eliot’s review of *Walden* in the 1856 *Westminster Review*, and an article by Walter Haydon. If there is a single point made among the three sources, it is that Thoreau’s genius came from his ability to perceive deeper truths about life in the plain materials of the natural world.²⁸

One of the most sensitive of these early reminders of Thoreau’s value appeared the next day, 7 July, in an unsigned, one-and-half page article, “Nature’s Priest and Rebel,” in the British journal *The Nation*. Linking Thoreau’s birthday with “these times,” in an obvious reference to the war when many “value life and freedom,” the writer sees reason to “celebrate the day with renewed hope and

exhilaration of spirit.” Then in one sentence he both explains his choice of title for Thoreau, “Nature’s priest and rebel,” and defines Thoreau’s two-fold value for contemporary society. “For in Thoreau we possess one of those few men who have come very close to the realities of nature, and by their criticism or defiance of society’s accepted platitudes, have set the spirit free.” Explaining that comparisons of Thoreau with other writers, like Emerson, whom Thoreau surpassed, and White of Selbourne, are misguided, he finds that Thoreau was much closer to Wordsworth because “though he watched nature with delighted intensity, his ultimate interest, like Wordsworth’s, was in man—in the common course of human life, and in the preservation of human freedom, whether from the pressure of the State or from the dullness of habit.” The strategy of simplicity, thinks the writer, enabled Thoreau to build his hut in the forest and live there, but his mission was to free the human spirit. Clearly, those “pressures of the State” were obvious in a contemporary Britain enmeshed in the affairs of war, for the writer devotes the final page of the essay to describing Thoreau’s contests with injustices of the State, like those of “our own tax-resisters,” and his defense of John Brown.²⁹

The writer had reason enough to have the war on his mind, for on the day of his essay’s appearance in *The Nation* the war’s largest raid by German airplanes took place over London. Some twenty “aeroplanes” followed the course of the Thames into London and dropped bombs over the metropolitan area, causing considerable damage and killing and injuring 141 people. A previous attack by fifteen warplanes had occurred on 13 June with fewer casualties. During the raid of 7 July, however, the Royal Flying Corps engaged the raiders with “the utmost vigour” and destroyed eleven of the German planes before they could reach the sea again. The *Yorkshire Herald* gave a full page to its description on 9 July of “The Great Air Raid on London,” which had been a spectacle made up of the heroism of the airmen and the daring of the English people who flooded into the streets and turned their eyes upward to watch the aerial combat. “It was at this stage of the raid that the greatest air fight ever witnessed in this country took place between the Germans and our aerial men. It was a wonderful spectacle and the people who saw it were so fascinated that, oblivious to danger, they stood in the streets, held to the spot, as it were, in gazing at the thrilling epi-

sode.”³⁰ Five days later, then, when Sir John L. Otter opened the Thoreau Centenary ceremonies at Caxton Hall in London it was indeed relevant that he spoke these words: “This evening, in these days that try men’s souls, we turn our eyes for a brief time from the field of carnage, and our thoughts from the vital issues of a tremendous conflict, to the placid woods near Concord: to a man whose deepest pleasure was to sit in solitude, absorbed in the transactions of birds and squirrels in the business of their lives: noting the seasonal processes in the growth of plants.”³¹ There is a special aptness in Sir John Otter’s choice of the image of “seasonal processes,” spoken in a time of violent struggle, expressed understandably with envy for Thoreau’s season of solitude in Concord, and announced from the site of the Victorian-era Caxton Hall.

Today being redeveloped into a luxury apartment complex as an extension of the Stakis St. Ermin’s Hotel, Caxton Hall was in 1917 the Westminster City Hall, which had been the site for official ceremonies, public functions, and registry-office business since its opening in 1883, so it was an appropriate forum for the celebration of Thoreau’s birthday. Caxton Hall had been the scene of political meetings organized by the suffragettes at the turn of the century, and the Social Democrats met there in 1981 to form their party. The building had also been the scene of weddings by the rich and famous. Sir Anthony Eden went there to be married, attended by Sir Winston Churchill as his best man. Ringo Starr arrived at Caxton Hall for his wedding in a white Rolls-Royce, but his fellow Beatle George Harrison rode up on a bicycle. Since only the front of Caxton Hall is listed as grade II, over two-thirds of the original building is being torn down in order to raise the new £30 million structure. Obviously, this demolishing of such a significant building has met with public protests, which is understandable when one imagines not only the events that took place there, but also the magnificence of the architecture, described at its opening in 1883 by a local paper.

The style adapted is Renaissance. The elevations are built of red brick facings in gauged work, with dressings of red Corsehill stone, and richly moulded pilasters, etc., the panels to the windows being enriched with medallion portraits of eminent men who have been more or less connected with Westminster—namely, Milton, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Tyndale, Newton, Locke, Bacon, and Caxton. Over the niches in the pedestals are sculptured figures of

the Queen and the Prince of Wales. On the ground-floor are the offices for the Vestry Clerk, Rate Collectors, etc. On the first floor are a reading room, committee rooms, etc., and on the ground and third floors are other rooms for the use of the offices of the two Vestries. Leading from the public staircase and an oak private staircase is the board room. At the south end of this room is a public gallery, the large windows of which are filled with stained glass, the subjects chosen being historically connected with Westminster. The total cost of the building will be about £30,000.³²

The best account of the proceedings in Caxton Hall on 12 July 1917 appears in the August issue of *The Humanitarian*, the monthly journal of the Humanitarian League, which had organized the celebration of the centenary of Thoreau's birth and announced a tentative program of speakers in the July issue of *The Humanitarian*. Apparently the advertising of the event had prompted a run on the tickets, for the meeting was called a great success and the "hall was crowded to overflowing."³³ Sir John L. Otter, who traveled up from Brighton, was the Chair and he also gave the main address, "Thoreau as Thinker," described as a "sympathetic outline of the character and doctrines of Thoreau." The address was published in full in the October issue of *The Humanitarian*.³⁴ Sir John Otter was one of several prominent persons from the political and literary scene who participated in one way or another in the program.

Sir John Lonsdale Otter had just retired from being the Mayor of County Borough, Brighton, the year previous, after serving three years. He was born in 1852, died in 1932, and was educated at Cambridge University, after which he was a member of the Inner Temple. He published several books, including a novel in 1929 with a suggestive title, *A Summer Idyl*, but which contains no reference to *Walden*. The Chair was followed by Dugald Semple, the Secretary of the London Vegetarian Society, the well-known advocate of the simple life, who spoke "from personal experience" about Thoreau's Walden experiment. Dugald Semple was born in Scotland in 1884 and lived until 1964. He was trained as an engineer and draughtsman, but his celebrity in natural-living circles was based on his own experiments with simplicity and living in the open, including many years of caravanning. He was a prolific writer in journals and books on subjects relating to the simple life; sample titles

from a score of books suggest his interests: *Simple Life Visitors* (1909), *Living in Liberty* (1913), *Fruitarianism* (1913), *Jays of the Simple Life* (1915), *Life in the Open* (1919), *What to Eat in War-Time* (1940), *Looking at Nature* (1945). Alfred W. Oke, F.S.A., a representative of the Council of the Anti-Slavery Society, spoke about the part Thoreau played in the Abolitionist movement, and praised Thoreau's defense of John Brown. Thoreau was jealous for human history, said Mr. Oke, and deserved to be more appreciated for that. Henry S. Salt, the biographer of Thoreau, then closed the main group of speeches with his talk titled "Thoreau as Pioneer," which was published in full in the September issue of *The Humanitarian*.³⁵

Following the main speakers, a discussion of Thoreau that involved other participants took place. A major participant, perhaps as discussion leader, was Dr. M. Eden Paul, the noted physician, traveler, and writer. Dr. Paul was born in 1865 and died in 1944. He was educated at University College, London, and at London Hospital, afterwards the *Times* correspondent who traveled with the Japanese army in its war with China in 1895. He practiced medicine in Japan, China, Singapore, and England between the years 1895-1912, and later wrote numerous books, some about Karl Marx, modern socialism, and the sexual life of children. Discussion leader or not, Dr. Paul was a fair representative of the intellectuals who shared their estimations of the value of Thoreau's ideas with the audience in the hall that evening.

A flood of letters had also poured in to the Chair of the meeting expressing not only regrets of the writers that they could not appear in Caxton Hall, but also describing experiences with Thoreau's writings. Among those who wrote letters and had their regrets expressed at the meeting were Edward Carpenter, Walter Haydon, W. J. Jupp, Ernest Rhys, and W. H. Hudson. That Hudson, celebrated as the writer of the novel *Green Mansions*, is the one natural scientist listed here indicates that Thoreau's appeal, as Walter Harding made clear, went "far beyond the nature lovers."³⁶

The effects of the Thoreau Centenary, the organization of activities to celebrate the birth of Thoreau, also expanded "far beyond" that meeting on 12 July in Caxton Hall in London, a fact that had not escaped the editor of *The Humanitarian*. Under the title "Other Celebrations" in the August issue, the journal said: "The Centenary has been the subject of a good many other references from the platform

or in the press.”³⁷ The notices and articles mentioned above as run-up to the Caxton Hall celebration are evidence enough of the reality of this statement about “references” in the press, and *The Humanitarian* itself adds several examples of “references” from the platform. “An address on Thoreau was given by our friend Dr. Walter Walsh at a meeting of the Free Religious Movement in the Steinway Hall on July 8th, and there was a lecture under the auspices of the Selborne Society on July 10th.”³⁸ Additional local celebrations had taken place at Letchworth “when the Adult School had a meeting,” and at Kingston-on-Thames “in the grounds of Mr. W. G. Smith.” In addition, a combined meeting and ramble by the Bolton and Manchester Field Naturalists celebrated Thoreau when a paper was read by the editor of the *Manchester City News*.³⁹

Everyone did not agree that the Centenary had yielded these far-reaching results or had provoked very much interest in the public sector. Writing in *The Humanist* in the following November, for example, A.S. Toms saw no reason for applause. He began a two-page gloss on the recently publicized image of Thoreau, titled “Thoreau,” by denying that anything positive had occurred. “The centenary of the birth of Henry David Thoreau on July 12 cannot be said to have evoked any notable display of public interest. The commemorative gathering organized by the Humanitarian League was held in a very small hall, though the relative number of persons present would have justified ampler accommodation.” Ignoring a seeming contradiction in these sentences, Toms continues by attacking what he sees as the organizers’ wrongheaded reading of Thoreau. “The League was evidently concerned to emphasize that side of Thoreau’s career which presents a certain moral angularity to the average man, and causes him to dub its exponent a faddist or crank. It is permissible to doubt whether Thoreau would have regarded the speakers and their sympathizers as his disciples.” Toms uses the remainder of his article to doubt that Thoreau was political, a conscientious objector, pacifist, anti-religious, or an effective simplifier of life. What he seems to be left with to commend is “the inconsecutiveness of *Walden*” which he judges to be “one of its delights.”⁴⁰

Mr. Toms, who was a leading British Ethicist, a member of the Ethical Movement, had apparently given this same opinion in speaking engagements, for he had given an address, “Thoreau,” to the Annual Service of the Union of Ethical Societies, held in Epping For-

est, the site of “healthy outdoor services,” in August, when the group “decided to celebrate the Thoreau Centenary.”⁴¹ And he presented the same talk to the North London Ethical Society in Dartmouth Park in October.⁴²

There is no evidence to suggest that Toms’s article in the November issue of *The Humanist* provoked any recoil from readers. However, his attitude toward Thoreau’s reputation as advocate of civil disobedience may have caused some unquiet, for in a subsequent article he seems to have denounced the Conscientious Objectors of the current war so as to provoke much wrath from readers. The March and April, 1918 issues of *The Humanist* carried long, angry letters to the editor denouncing Toms’ article. One reader said, “If Mr. Toms had taken the trouble to ascertain the views of the more thoughtful soldiers, he would know that they do not dispise [sic] the Conscientious Objectors as cowards who shirk their duty to defend hearth and home (they know that war *wrecks* far more homes than it defends), but rather respect them as men of indomitable moral courage who are resolved to obey, at any cost to themselves, the dictates of their conscience, which forbids them to become mere cogs in the wheels of a soulless system which they abhor.”⁴³ Thus, it is plain that Mr. Toms’ views about militarism failed to catch fire with his readers, and it is surely equally suggestive that his gloomy judgment about the Thoreau Centenary was a minority opinion. Actually, the evidence accumulates quickly and credibly that Toms was wrong and that the Thoreau Centenary was instrumental in making 1917 the Year of Thoreau in Britain. The activities surrounding what *The Humanitarian* called “the platform” that caused further attention to be directed at Thoreau can be illustrated by two commemorative events, one that came about south of London in Sussex and one that occurred well north in Lancashire, recorded in both cases by the press and in the records of the responsible societies.

It was Sir John Otter, upon his return to Brighton, who was again the center of a public assembly honoring Thoreau, this time on Saturday, 14 July, when the Thoreau Centenary was celebrated as a part of the annual meeting of the Brighton and Hove Natural History and Philosophical Society, together with the local branch of the Selbourne Society. The celebration of Thoreau preceded the business meeting, and the whole meeting was covered by a reporter for the area newspaper, the *Brighton Gazette, Hove Post, Sussex and Surry*

Telegraph. In a column-length report, "An Idyll of Simplicity," the anonymous writer included both personal observation about Thoreau and the context of Sir John Otter's address. The opening belongs to the reporter:

It is a fact, but one that is distinctly regrettable, that the [sic] mundane affairs of life are a frequent source of unhappiness to the ordinary individual. There may be isolated instances of great souls who lived their lives according to a glorified doctrine of their own, but the result was usually that the adverse verdict of a very practical world left them sick at heart, and not much good was done. This being so it is not strange that the life of Henry David Thoreau was not recognized in its proper light, until the same earth that he loved so well had received all that was mortal of the great poet-naturalist. Time that works wonders in the minds of all has thus indicated the greatness of a man whose genius was as undeniable as his good purpose, and 1917 sees the centenary celebrations of his work, late indeed, but none the less genuine. The members of the Brighton and Hove Natural History and Philosophical Society and the Brighton Branch of the Selbourne Society held a meeting on Saturday to celebrate the Thoreau Centenary, and Alderman Sir John Otter, J.P., gave an address which was a delightful interpretation of a great man, from one whose own aims though of necessity modernized, were identical in their fundamental principles.⁴⁴

Much of the phrasing in this reporter's paraphrase of Sir John's speech is similar to that in the address Sir John gave two days previously in Caxton Hall. Thus, there was the same reference to the war. "On the occasion of the centenary," says this writer, "Sir John Otter invited the members to avert their eyes for a few moments from the fields of war's carnage and their thoughts from the vital issues of this tremendous conflict to a study of Thoreau. . . ."⁴⁵ And yet for all his theme's seriousness, he seems to have caught a different mood in his audience, for the writer records several instances of humor during the talk. In one instance, on explaining that Thoreau advised one day of work per week and six days of leisure, "Sir John did not know what would happen here if the experiment of giving everyone six days of leisure a week were suddenly tried (laughter). It was rather appalling to think of, and he thought society would crack under the strain." It is apparently, then, the local reporter who explains that "Thoreau's book 'Life by Walden Pond' was the record of

a mere episode in his life," and it is Sir John in his own summation who suggests that if there are any present unacquainted with Thoreau's books, "it would be an award to him (the speaker) if he should have put them 'on his track.'" Business details take up the final paragraphs, which include a notice that Society members from the medical and dental professions are gone to the war, ending with a roll of twenty-five Society officers, among whom is listed "A.S. Toms."⁴⁶

A condensed, one-page version of the meeting and the address on Thoreau, titled "The Centenary of Thoreau," can be found in the annual volume of Natural History and Philosophical Society's *Abstracts of Papers Read Before the Society*, located today in the archives of the Booth Museum of Natural History in Brighton. Though a shorter version, the abstract contains similar details about the meeting, save for two differences, one intriguing and one unintentionally humorous. The abstract says that Sir John "had dealt exhaustively with the subject in the previous session," the subject presumably having been Thoreau, and yet the previous session is not entered in "Contents." So when did he previously speak "exhaustively" on Thoreau? And the title of Thoreau's "book" has now become *Life of Walden Pond*.⁴⁷

One week later, Thoreau's centenary was observed further north in England during a joint ramble of the Manchester and Bolton Field Naturalists Societies. A description of the gathering was given space in the *Bolton Evening News* for 23 July under the heading "Thoreau's Centenary." The newspaper item took a flattering position on the speaker, the president of the Manchester Field Naturalists, saying that the "address was given by Mr. J. Cuming Walters, M.A., and engaged the rapt attention of everyone, and all were delighted with the perfect phrasing, the felicity of expression, and the melodious voice of this apostle of the simple life."⁴⁸ Not only was Cuming Walters an advocate of the simple life, but he also opposed vivisection, and he was an intellectual who published a score of scholarly works, including studies of King Arthur and Tennyson. More to the point for this occasion, he was president of the Manchester Literary Club, and had been editor of the *Manchester Evening Chronicle* for four years and editor of the *Manchester City News* for a decade.

But a larger sense of the content of Mr. Walters' charming address is given in the "Report of the Committee" recorded in the an-

nual volume of the *Paper and Proceedings of the Manchester Field and Naturalists and Archaeologists' Society*, which opened with a description that merges the prosaic with the poetic:

A notable gathering assembled in the gardens of Royton Cottage, Rivington, by permission of Lord Leverhulme, the company of about 120 being a joint meeting of the members of the Manchester and the Bolton Field Naturalist Societies. The day and the surroundings were ideal and in perfect keeping with the address on the "hermit of the woods," Henry David Thoreau, given in the open air to the accompaniment of the cooing of doves, the fragrance of flowers, the brilliant sunshine, and the delightfully fresh breezes which fanned the erstwhile moist brows of the members. The theme was a classic one...the ideas and ideals of Thoreau of Walden Woods.⁴⁹

What follows is a long quotation, evidently all the words of Mr. Walters, though some may not have been uttered in his "melodious voice" on the spot, for the recorder indicates that parts were not read, but were placed in the archives of the Bolton Society. In any event, Mr. Walters used a fairly political approach to Thoreau's influence, comparing him to Captain John Brown, for example. Then he defines Thoreau's relevance by submitting again to the common theme of the war.

His criticism of the artificialities and futilities of civilized life are so applicable to-day that it seems remarkable that they should have been published half a century ago. The war is forcing us to see the wisdom of his life and writings, and to live more according to his ideas—to live more deliberately, and to fight the essential facts of life, to live more simply, to exercise truer economy, and not to spend all our lives in getting a living, so that we have more energy and leisure for the divine and poetic life. I think, too, his essay on "Civil Disobedience" is more necessary in these days than ever.⁵⁰

Indeed, it was not only as the writer of *Walden* that Thoreau was catching readers' attention, but also his experience as a passive resister. Thoreau was remembered as one who had been a conscientious objector and had put his life on the line. When a two-paragraph item on Thoreau appeared in *The Daily News and Leader* on 12 July, the first paragraph devoted itself to the reception of *Walden* by writers like George Eliot and periodicals like *Chambers's Journal*, then the second paragraph is entirely devoted to Thoreau as "conscien-

tious objector,” and to his experience in the Concord jail, complete with Emerson’s disapproving question: “Why are you in there, David?”⁵¹

When Frederick Rockell published his grandly-titled essay, “The Centenary of Thoreau: How by His Walden Experiment He Set Out to Prove that Simplicity of Life Means Fulness of Life,” in *The Co-Operative News* on 14 July, he also praised Thoreau’s night in jail, “when he went to prison rather than pay taxes to a Government which supported slavery.”⁵² Rockell was a leader in the Russian and British Co-operative movement before and after the war, but he also had introduced and published the poems of John Denwood, *Cumbrian Carols and Other Poems*, in 1907. Denwood was born in poverty, became a weaver, then without any education became a nature poet compared to Wordsworth, but he also wrote poems against social evils of his time (1845-1890). Thus, one can understand Rockell’s interest in Thoreau. Not only did he value his passive resistance, but he treats it within the context of the current war in order to background his thesis about Thoreau: his life “in solitude in Walden Woods,” he concludes, was a protest against “the subordination of man’s spirit” to a materialistic view of life. Then Rockell introduces the war as a means to provide a negative definition of Thoreau’s views on simplicity, as if to suggest that Thoreau’s is the way to peace. He says:

These views of Thoreau’s are not without application to the present war. In the great days of Germany, the days when Germans were thinkers, and dreamers, and musicians, they taught the virtues of self-possession. When the Prussian ascendancy came to rule with the mailed fist, these homely virtues were crushed out, and the German people were schooled to believe in the virtues of worldly possessions. And when the Germans were thoroughly drilled in that belief, war, sooner or later was inevitable. . . .⁵³

By noting the accustomed references to the war, one might say that what speaks to us today about these events in Manchester and Brighton, and clearly the celebration in London, is the amount of time and space given to Thoreau during a period when the war demanded so much time and space in the affairs of the British people. The horrors of the war had become draining and consistent by mid-1917. The appalling horrors of the Somme, for example, now appeared to be ready to segue into further madness in Flanders, from

where sounds of the great guns could be heard at times in London. On the homefront food was scarce, and the demands of the military for further conscription had reached into the bottom of the barrel. The historian Leon Wolff in his book *In Flanders Fields* defines a growing resentfulness in the British public this way: "In sullen obstinacy people had by 1917 become resigned to the necessity for winning the war, hating it, seeing no end to it, no longer able to understand it by standards that once seemed so brilliantly clear. Now it was only necessary to get the thing over with, to sweep it out of existence, and try, somehow, to restore life to normal."⁵⁴

It is tempting to say that Thoreau and his experience at Walden Pond held out to British readers trapped in the wasteland of the Great War in 1917 an encouraging reminder in his writings of the peace and tranquility of a time when life was "normal," a time for which the British people were justifiably nostalgic. Two items from numerous references to Thoreau in the press that suggest some relationship between the climate of the war and the favorableness toward his life appeared in newspapers on 13 July. In the first one, in the *Birmingham Gazette*, an anonymous writer of a page-two item titled "A Pioneer of the Simple Life" called attention to an allusion to the war by way of Thoreau's ancestors: "The Centenary of the birth of Henry David Thoreau yesterday had a direct interest for three of the Allies. His mother was of Scotch descent, his father was a Jerseyman of French parentage, and he was born at Concord."⁵⁵ The second item was printed in *The Bath Herald* as "London Letter," with the unnamed writer making the connection between Thoreau's popularity with British readers and the relevance of his ideas about Nature to persons affected by the war. This writer says:

Homage has just been paid to Thoreau with an enthusiasm which perhaps owes something to our awakened interest in things American. Nothing could be more remote from the spirit of wars and revolutions than the record of that retired life in the shanty by Walden Pond. But that Thoreau is widely read in England, I think any bookseller will testify. He is, I believe, a favourite in the trenches, where men's thoughts turn instinctively to unspoilt nature. There has certainly been a great revival of interest in wild things since those of us who are not war workers became agriculturalists. Friends of the late Lord Lucas recall his remark, on finding a pair of rare hawks breeding in a

certain fen in East Anglia, that “this is the biggest thing next to the war.” This is a saying. . . many can understand to-day who would have found it quite cryptic a couple of years ago.⁵⁶

Of course, once the position on both Thoreau’s reputation in Britain and his timely value as a reminder of Nature’s presence has been taken in a passage like this one, there is yet the question: Were these varied references to Thoreau being followed and read by the British people? I think one indication that they were can be found in occasional dialogues about Thoreau taking place among readers in the papers.

For example, on 12 July 1917 William Romaine Paterson published an extended article, “Thoreau: The Man and His Look,” in *The Glasgow Herald*, and it gave rise to a discussion over a minor point which arose from close reading. Paterson was born in 1871 and was an intellectual who wrote on higher themes in books like *What Lies Beneath* (1917) in which he speculates on the harm done to truth by creeds, but he also published popular novels under the pseudonym “Benjamin Swift.” Paterson’s article on Thoreau is well worth reading, for it is a dense and sensitive appraisal of Thoreau’s character. He begins by appealing to Baudelaire’s definition of genius in *Journal Intime* and debates in what manner Baudelaire would have considered Thoreau a genius, even though it “is unlikely Baudelaire had ever heard of him.” Paterson dismisses the “sneers of Russell Lowell” and finds that other negative judgments of Thoreau by Robert Louis Stevenson and Lord Morley were unfounded. Thoreau, he says, “has at last taken his place among the five men of dominant personality whom America produced in the nineteenth century,” the other four being Poe, Hawthorne, Emerson, and Whitman. He finds that in *Walden* Thoreau “revealed that without which nothing that may be called literature can exist at all—a new sensibility.” Paterson then weaves his discussion of the Thoreauvian sensibility into his detailing of Thoreau’s life story.⁵⁷

On the same day that Paterson’s essay appeared in *The Glasgow Herald*, a reader, C.M. Scrimgeour, sat down and wrote a letter to the editor which appeared in the paper on the following day, 13 July. This reader had found an “error” in the biography. He said: “Allow me, in paying my tribute as an old fellow-student of Mr. Romaine Paterson’s to his admirable centenary sketch, to point out

one slight inaccuracy. He says that Thoreau took his degree at Harvard." Scrimgeour then quotes from H.S. Salt's "monumental biography" the statement that Thoreau "refused to take his degree, on the ground that five dollars was too high a price to pay for this honour," perhaps confused by Thoreau's refusal of the M.A. degree. This reader ends his letter with an allusion to an oration by Mr. Paterson, apparently on Thoreau, which reminds him that "Thoreau did love mankind more than he loved animals, great as that love was. . . ."58

Three days later, on 16 July in a letter to the editor of *The Glasgow Herald*, a new voice takes up the issue of Thoreau's graduation. This reader's letter is signed only "A.M." and states: "The question raised by Mr. Scrimgeour in your issue of this morning as to whether or not Thoreau was a graduate of Harvard is settled by reference to F.B. Sanborn's monograph in the 'American Men of Letters' Series, where on page 61 is given a certificate, granted on March 26, 1838, to Thoreau by Josiah Quincy, President of the University, in which it is stated that he graduated at that University in August, 1837."⁵⁹ One might think this settles the matter, but not necessarily so.

On 19 July Mr. Scrimgeour was back in the *Herald*, not entirely satisfied, again having sat down immediately and penned a letter showing an insider's knowledge of the academy, and concluding with a personal advertisement for reading *Walden*. He continued:

I wish to thank "A.M." for his quotation from Sanborn to-day, and to say that I have since found Thoreau's name among the list of B.A. graduates under 1837 (Harvard Quinquennial Catalogue) in our University Library. This clinches the matter—though the statement of his graduating does not, as "A.M." concludes, in itself quite settle the question. Salt, in the citation I gave, states that:—"He graduated in August, 1837. He is said to have refused to take his degree," etc. This seemed to me much on the same lines as to say, by a stretch of courtesy (which the University authorities would certainly not allow), that one of our own students had graduated who had passed all the necessary examinations, but had not paid the final fee of £1 for enrolment in the General Council, and, as a necessary corollary to such unfilial conduct, lost the imprimatur of the Vice-Chancellor's "tammy." I trust that Mr Paterson's appreciation and other contemporary notices will make many who have not read "Walden," or forgotten it, take with them on their holiday trips the immortal book of him who "Made one small spot a continent."⁶⁰

Reading these letters today in *The Glasgow Herald* one gains some sense of the keen interest that British readers in 1917 brought to Thoreau's works, and the importance of the Thoreau Centenary in July of that year cannot be overemphasized in considering ways in which 1917 became the year of Thoreau in Britain. The effects of the war on the public clearly helped make both Thoreau's thoughts about the citizen's relationship with the State and his experiences with Nature especially relevant and appealing. The newly-realized interest in Thoreau continued to generate essays, articles, and books on Thoreau during the remainder of 1917; the focus on the Centenary as created by the Humanitarian Society's program at Caxton Hall in London deserves our remembrance.

However, it is an irony that the Thoreau Centenary seems also to mark the summit of interest in Thoreau among British readers; research in newspapers and magazines beyond the conclusion of the Great War indicates a diminishing of both popular and critical attention to his works. Both Thoreau's name and quotations from *Walden* fade from view in the years following the War. The reason for this falling away of interest in Thoreau's ideas in Britain after the end of that decade may be suggested in a letter written to me by William Condry, the Welsh writer of a Thoreau biography. Mr. Condry states:

My hunch is that after 1917 there was a rapid falling off of working-class interest in Thoreauvian ideas. . . . The 14-18 war was a huge turning point in so many facets of British life. It was a different world here from that of 1913. What may possibly illustrate this is a note I scribbled on a bit of paper one day in 1953 in the Birmingham Reference Library. I was reading Salt's life of Thoreau and I noted down the dates stamped inside the book recording how often it had been used for reference. They showed that it had been used frequently until 1920 but very seldom 1920-53.⁶¹

The world had changed, and one of the changes most crucial for Thoreau's reputation was the loss of working-class interests in his ideas. Clearly, many of Thoreau's theories about economic and social reform had found their appeal among a large class of society that sympathized out of personal interest, and—interestingly—this appeal may provide a comparison with the critical experience in Britain of another major American writer, Walt Whitman.

Some of the writers inspired by the events of the Centenary make a clear argument for the importance of the working class to Thoreau's reputation. For example, John Edwards in the July-September 1917

issue of *The Socialist Review*, published by the Independent Labour Party, describes in detail Thoreau's appeal to one large class of workers. Edwards maintains that Thoreau was "beloved" of English Socialists of the eighteen-eighties and nineties, mainly because of the "simple life" described in *Walden*. Edwards writes:

Our yearnings for a Socialist State were not limited by the nationalisation of the means of production; they reached out beyond the mechanism of the ideal society towards a freer and more leisurely life. We were disgusted with the industrial town, with the slums, and the poverty; with the incessant and unlovely toil; with the despoiling of nature and the indifference of "business" to beauty. Underlying the demand for an "eight-hour day" and national control of the great industries, there was the longing for a simpler life nearer to the beauty of the earth.⁶²

Here in Edwards' definition of Thoreau's appeal to late-Victorian workers one finds a catalogue of the major principles with which British readers identified Thoreau: freedom from crushing labor, a damning of industrialism and materialism, the beauty of nature, and values of the Simple Life philosophy. Yet, whatever the social prophecies Thoreau had offered for workers in Britain, they had not come to fulfillment by the end of the War.

Walt Whitman's reputation among British readers appears to have suffered alongside the decline of Thoreau and for similar reasons. With the exception of discussions of Emerson's reputed "influence" on Thoreau, Walt Whitman is the American writer most often mentioned in the same breath with Thoreau among British periodical writers. A common frustration of the searcher for Thoreau in an essay about nature in a British periodical is to find more Whitman, less Thoreau.

It is also common to find among these same publications striking contradictions of opinion regarding qualities of these writers. In his Centenary-inspired article in *The Glasgow Herald* for 12 July, 1917, "Thoreau: The Man and His Look," William Romaine Paterson uses Whitman as a metaphorical thermometer to gauge Thoreau's energy. "In his horror of convention and in his idolatry of Nature [Thoreau] comes nearest Whitman, but he is at a far lower temperature. He is no democrat, and sits aloof from his fellow-man. He has neither Whitman's barbaric joy in life, nor his restlessness, nor his massiveness, nor his momentum."⁶³ But William Jesse Jupp offers

an opposite evaluation the following year in his book *Wayfarings*. Jupp's chapter on "The Greater Comrades" begins with a straightforward declaration that Henry Thoreau was "greater" than Emerson, then continues an encomium for Thoreau who asserts a "robust self-reliance" of the kind expressed in Wordsworth's line, "True dignity abides with him alone." Unlike Paterson, Jupp finds Thoreau to be a contrast with Whitman in the energy department. "[Thoreau] had disentangled himself, had claimed and secured a 'broad margin' for his life. He was no loafer, as many have judged him; he could hardly have written Whitman's serene boast, 'I loaf and invite my soul.' He was a keen and strenuous worker. . . ." ⁶⁴ W.J. Jupp, who was not on the platform at Caxton Hall but had a letter read from there, is late in writing his flattery of Thoreau.

Whitman had also suffered adulation and servile praise early on among certain groups of British admirers from the educated classes. M. Wynn Thomas points out that the appeal of Whitman in Britain had first been to "a small, maverick, middle-class elite of academics, bohemian artists, and men of letters."⁶⁵ Doubtless, Thoreau's largest appeal had never been directed to this audience. And yet, Whitman's reputation had favorably evolved along a line toward Thoreau's public. Between the late eighteen-seventies and eighties, the adulation of Whitman partisans had cloyed so that even Swinburne, for example, raised objections to Whitman's poetry. It was, said Swinburne about Whitman's style, "one thing to sing the song of all trades, and quite another thing to tumble down together the names of all possible crafts and implements in one unsorted heap."⁶⁶

One result of the criticisms of Whitman's poetry apparently was that he was taken up by new audiences, including those workers who by 1885 began to study his work. "Many of them," notes Wynn Thomas, "saw in him a great prophet of the new socialist 'religion,' and they succeeded in spreading his 'gospel' of universal brotherhood to the Labour Church and to the Independent Labour Party. . . ." The movement spread, taking in "radical Liberals, utopian socialists, supporters of Lib-Lab politics, and members of the Independent Labour Party."⁶⁷ The central person in the story of Whitman's exposure to these groups was Edward Carpenter, the English radical who wrote *Toward Democracy* and espoused the simple life and sexual freedom, and who also figures in other narratives where the paths of Thoreau and Whitman cross.

Carpenter, like Thoreau, affected a life of simplicity, trying to strip unessentials from his life, even making his own shoes. He confessed that after he first read *Walden* he thought his own aim to live a natural life had failed. John Edwards in *The Socialist Review* maintains that if Carpenter had come onto *Walden* a year earlier, it might have changed the course of his life. "But now looking back [in 1917] he thinks it is lucky he was not drifted away by Thoreau and stranded too far from the currents of ordinary life."⁶⁸ Of course, Carpenter had by that time fallen under the influence of Whitman's star.

However, the influence of Whitman's star had waned in Britain by 1917. The poetics of *Leaves of Grass* was "much derided" by the time "the First World War was pulverizing the world of liberalism," says Thomas.⁶⁹ Whitman and Thoreau seem to have declined with the British public at the same time and under some of the same influences.

Thoreau's decline in the venue of British literary criticism may come as a surprise when one contemplates the breadth of attention his life and writing received in the edition of *The Cambridge History of American Literature* which was in preparation at the time of the Centenary in Britain. The first volume of *The Cambridge History* appeared in 1917, its subsequent annual impressions coming in 1918, 1919, then into the twenties; the second volume came out in 1918, also followed by subsequent impressions. Thus, the second volume (1918), which began with chapter ten, devoted that entire opening chapter to Thoreau, fifteen pages of a careful devotion to Thoreau in light of his comparison almost totally with British writers.⁷⁰ Emerson, Lowell, and Channing appear largely in biographical references. But it is Keats, maintains the *Cambridge History*, who equals Thoreau's enthusiasm, it is young Tennyson's letters from Trinity that remind one of Thoreau's Harvard letters, and it is the atmosphere of *As You Like It* that is sensed in *Walden*. Thoreau at Walden Pond felling pines and raising his hut becomes Robinson Crusoe: "Henry Thoreau in Walden wood is the same as the mariner of York on the Island of Desolation." Thoreau's nature is compared to Wordsworth's, and neither is superior to the other, only different. And if Thoreau had possessed the discipline and craft of Stevenson, his *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* would have been such a masterpiece as *An Inland Voyage*.⁷¹

Considering the many comparisons with British poets and writers, Thoreau's image is a positive one, the editors of the *Cambridge History* only gently reminding the reader at the end of chapter ten that "Lowell and Stevenson have appraised his character and his work, none too gently." Ironically, those words from the *Cambridge History* fit the fading image one carries off the heights of Henry David Thoreau's reputation at the time of his Centenary in Britain. That may have been the last time Thoreau spoke with intensity to British readers; for all his value to the British public going into and through the years of the Great War, the words "none too gently" appear to describe their attitude in the years following.

¹ Walter Harding, ed., *Thoreau: A Century of Criticism* (Dallas: SMU Press, 1954).

² Harding, "Thoreau's Fame Abroad," *The Recognition of Henry David Thoreau*, ed. Wendell Glick (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969).

³ William Condry, "Thoreau's Influence in Britain," *Thoreau Society Bulletin*, no.157 (fall 1981): 1-5.

⁴ *Vegetarian Messenger and Health Review* 14 (May 1917): 97.

⁵ For a sampling of these small-print notices see *The Christian Commonwealth*, 4 July 1917, p. 496; *The Westminster Gazette*, 7 July 1917, p. 8; *The Daily News and Leader*, 14 July 1917, p. 3.

⁶ *The Humanitarian* 8 (November 1917): 69.

⁷ *The Humanitarian* 8 (September 1917): 55.

⁸ Henry S. Salt, *Henry David Thoreau: A Centenary Essay* (London: The Humanitarian League, 1917).

⁹ John Flanigan, "Henry Salt and His Life of Thoreau," *The New England Quarterly* 28 (June 1955): 237-246.

¹⁰ Salt, "Henry David Thoreau: The Apostle of Simplicity." *The Humanitarian* 8 (February 1917): 7-9.

¹¹ *The Publishers' Circular and Booksellers' Record*, 23 June 1917, p. 605.

¹² *The Athenaeum*, no. 4619 (July 1917): 365.

¹³ *The Humanitarian* 8 (July 1917): 41.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *The Christian Commonwealth*, 27 June 1917, p. 479.

¹⁶ "The I.L.P. at Work," *The Labour Leader*, 5 July 1917, p. 8.

¹⁷ *The Common Cause of Humanity: The Organ of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies*, 6 July 1917, p.171.

¹⁸ "Letters to the Editor," *The Publishers' Circular*, 7 July 1917, p. 9.

¹⁹ *The Christian Commonwealth*, 11 July 1917, p. 502.

²⁰ Dugald Semple, *Joy in Living* (Glasgow: Maclellan, 1957): 52.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 510.

²² *The Times*, 11 July 1917, p. 8.

²³ "Thoreau Centenary," *The Times*, 12 July 1917, p. 9.

²⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, 12 July 1917, p. 7.

²⁵ "The Thoreau Centenary," *The Animal World* 12 (July 1917): 82.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Dugald Semple, "Thoreau's 'Walden'," *The Christian Commonwealth*, 20 June 1917, p. 267.

²⁸ "Our Life is Frittered Away by Detail," *Public Opinion*, 6 July 1917, p. 12.

²⁹ "Nature's Priest and Rebel," *The Nation*, 7 July 1917, pp. 345-346.

³⁰ "The Great Air Raid on London," *Yorkshire Herald*, 9 July 1917, p. 3..

- ³¹ Sir John L. Otter, "Thoreau as Thinker," *The Humanitarian* 8 (October 1917): 62-65.
- ³² *Echo*, 20 July 1883 [n.p.].
- ³³ ["Thoreau's Centenary"], *The Humanitarian* 8 (August 1917): 47.
- ³⁴ "Thoreau as Thinker."
- ³⁵ Salt, "Thoreau as Pioneer." *The Humanitarian* 8 (September 1917): 59-60.
- ³⁶ Harding, "Seven Britons and Thoreau." *Folio*. This issue was not located in the British Library where this research was conducted. However, a study of other issues indicates the date for this issue to be October, 1980.
- ³⁷ "Other Celebrations," *The Humanitarian* 8 (August 1917): 49.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ A. S. Toms, "Thoreau," *The Humanist* (November 1917): 162-164.
- ⁴¹ *The Humanist* (August 1917): 126.
- ⁴² *The Humanist* (October 1917): 159.
- ⁴³ *The Humanist* (April 1918): 62.
- ⁴⁴ "An Idyll of Simplicity," *Brighton Gazette, Hove Post, Sussex and Surrey Telegraph*, 18 July 1917, p. 4.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁷ "The Centenary of Thoreau," *Abstracts of Papers Read Before the Society*. This item printed by *Brighton Herald* for Brighton Natural History and Philosophical Society (1917): 18.
- ⁴⁸ "Thoreau's Centenary," *Bolton Evening News*, 23 July 1917, p. 4.
- ⁴⁹ "Report of the Committee," *Papers and Proceedings of the Manchester Field Naturalists and Archaeologists' Society* (1917): 19-20.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.
- ⁵¹ "Under the Clock," *The Daily News and Leader*, 12 July 1917, p. 2.
- ⁵² Frederick Rockell, "The Centenary of Thoreau: How by His Walden Experiment He Set Out to Prove that Simplicity of Life Means Fulness of Life," *The Co-Operative News*, 14 July 1917, p. 684.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁴ Leon Wolff, *In Flanders Fields* (London: Penguin Books, 1979): 42.
- ⁵⁵ "A Pioneer of the Simple Life," *Birmingham Gazette*, 13 July 1917, p. 2.
- ⁵⁶ "London Letter," *The Bath Herald*, 13 July 1917, p. 1.
- ⁵⁷ William Romaine Paterson, "Thoreau: The Man and His Look," *The Glasgow Herald*, 12 July 1917, p. 4.
- ⁵⁸ C. M. Scrimgeour, "Thoreau," *The Glasgow Herald*, 13 July 1917, p. 3.
- ⁵⁹ [A.M.], "Thoreau," *The Glasgow Herald*, 16 July 1917, p. 3.
- ⁶⁰ Scrimgeour, "Thoreau's Graduation," *The Glasgow Herald*, 19 July 1917, p. 2.
- ⁶¹ Personal letter from William Condry to the author, dated 27 October 1997.
- ⁶² John Edwards, "Henry David Thoreau," *The Socialist Review* 14 (July-September 1917): 240.
- ⁶³ Paterson, "Thoreau," p. 4.
- ⁶⁴ William Jesse Jupp, "The Greater Comrades," *Wayfarings* (London: Headley Brothers, 1918): 118, 128.
- ⁶⁵ W. Wynn Thomas, "Whitman in the British Isles," *Walt Whitman and the World*, ed. Gay Wilson Allen and Ed Folsom (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1995): 12.
- ⁶⁶ Algernon Charles Swinburne, "Under the Microscope," in *Walt Whitman and the World*, ed. Gay Wilson Allen and Ed Folsom (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1995): 30.
- ⁶⁷ Thomas, "Whitman," pp. 12-13.
- ⁶⁸ Edwards, "Thoreau," p. 242.
- ⁶⁹ Thomas, "Whitman," p. 14.
- ⁷⁰ William Peterfield Trent, et. al., ed., *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, vol 2 (Cambridge, England: University Press, 1918): 1-15.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.