

# Appendix 1 - Excerpts from Thoreau's Journal for the River Years

Online Appendix to *The Boatman: Henry David Thoreau's River Years* (Harvard, 2017)

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This appendix explains the specific methods I used to investigate a subset of Thoreau's *Journals* from October 22, 1837 to November 3, 1861. This was the primary source document for *The Boatman*. This appendix also explains the data matrix used to sort and evaluate journal entries, which is available from the author by request.

## Data Set

**6757** My main source was the 1906 *Journal* for the period when it is fairly complete, from May 12, 1850 through June 7, 1861. For this interval, I extracted 6757 entries deemed relevant to the work. Informally, these were his "river years, also known as the "wondrous decade." Only during this interval were the journal entries regular enough to be treated statistically. For this interval, the missing journal segments were incorporated into his travel works beyond Concord, hence were not relevant to this study

**3,653** These 6757 entries were spread out over 3,653 calendar days

**697** of these 6757 entries spanned the period of Thoreau's River project from March 17, 1859 (first river work) to October 19, 1859 (John Brown day, when news of his capture reached Concord). Much of Thoreau's data for this interval was excised by Torrey and Allen for the 1906 *Journal*, so instead I relied on the Princeton draft transcripts of volume 15 folio 1-3 (v15f1-f3) and volume 15, folio 4-6 (v15f4-f6) exclusively. These were incorporated into the total, and do not count extra.

**148** For entries beginning Jun 8, 1861 and extending to his last entry on Nov 3, 1861, inclusive, these were read exclusively from the draft Princeton *Journal* volume 16, folio 7 (16f7). These were part of the total.

**120** For entries prior to May 12, 1850, I relied entirely on the Princeton *Journal* as published in hardbound volumes, extracting 120 quotes and notes.. These count as additions.

**81** Because his journal entries were excised for *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, I treated its text excerpts as journal entries. They were indexed by page number only and treated separately.

The total for row entries is **6958**, nearly seven thousand entries.

## Sorting and Searching

To manipulate these entries, , I created a sortable spreadsheet matrix in Microsoft Excel Consisting of **67** sixty seven columns

### **Basic Data and Sojourning Geography**

**4** Four referenced the quote or note to its chronology, using the calendar year, name of month, numerical month, and date.

**3** Three more were needed to link that information to its corresponding volume and page number of the *Journal* or in *A Week*.

**11** The next eleven columns were used to source the information to an activity. First I noted if there was a journal entry made on that date.

If so, I entered a required yes-no answer for whether that journal entry

- described Concord & vicinity
- mentioned the river in some notable way, rather than merely crossing it
- indicated if he was traveling by boat, most often by an explicit statement,
- indicated if he went to Fair Haven Pond
- indicated if he went to Walden Pond
- Indicated if he explicitly mentioned surveying work

In this section, I also entered I kept optional columns for

- other means of travel, for example skating
- A destination if mentioned
- and whom he was traveling, if it could be identified
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**3** I reserved three columns for optional descriptions of the sojourning travel: If there was nautical language being used; other descriptions of travel, and if any unusual conditions were encountered.

### **Writing**

**3** The next three columns were reserved for comments related to his writing, whether in: the *Journal*, to *Walden*, and to some other purpose.

### **Specific Places**

**1** I reserved one column for specific places mentioned.

### **Concord Village**

7 The next seven columns recorded social activity: History of Concord, Description of the village, references to his Domicile at the time, explicit Social criticism, his Friends, his Self, and entries involving Romance or the human sexual act .

### **Philosophical Considerations**

3 I reserved three columns for explicit statements on aesthetics: Beauty, Solitude, and Philosophy.

### **Natural Environment**

The bulk of the rest of the columns involved description of the natural environment of the Concord River and its watershed.

3 Three recorded acute observations of meteorological effects: Daytime, Nighttime, and Wind.

4 Four recorded phenomenon having to do with surface water: Rain or drought, using an R or D in the cell, Fog; Snow, or Frost or dew, using an F or D.

7 Seven columns were used to describe the catchment (or watershed) of the Concord River, the : Divides (or watershed ridges); the Terrain or land surface; the Soil; the action of Groundwater, Descriptions of Ponds; Swamps; and Brooks/rills.

3 Three columns were used to record entries on the reaches of the river, whether : Natural; Bridged; or Dammed up.

5 Five columns were devoted to describing properties of the river, namely : Physical aspects of the water such as clarity or temperature; Chemical aspects such as sudsiness or color, Stage or height of the river in its channel; biological indicators within the channel; and human impacts on the water, for example sawdust.

10 Ten columns were reserved for the ten identified moods of the river, which are related to the seasons, but are not necessarily follow the calendar. These are: Freeze-up, Winter, Breakup, the aquatic Spring, the aquatic Summer, the aquatic fall, the herbaceous fall on the river banks; times of high water which were either Active with waves, usually during the freshet, or Quiet, where the mood was more about aesthetics.; and Drought within the channel and on the meadows.

2 I reserved two columns for the meadows which, though part of the river, benefit from distinct notes: Natural aspects of the meadow; and Human aspects, for example the raking of hay.

4 Four columns were reserved for the activities of Thoreau as a "naturalist:" Archaeology; Geology; specific descriptions, rather than mere mentions, of Vegetation, and ditto for Animals.

2 The final two sorting columns were reserved for Thoreau's interest in the changing of the seasons as a general phenomenon, with an emphasis on the terrestrial. These seasonal descriptions provide the context for the river moods. Seasons were entered as F, W, Sp, Su. The final column for the entries was for general remarks about phenology.

### Quotes and Notes

2 The last two columns contained either the Quote or note, and my comment about that note.

### Grand Sum

The grand sum is **466,186** cells that typically sorted by chronology, activity, or content.