

GIOVANNI BATTISTA BELZONI



**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**



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Waldo Emerson makes much use of Giovanni Battista Belzoni, whereas Henry Thoreau never anywhere refers to the man:

ESSAYS: 1ST SERIES: All inquiry into antiquity, – all curiosity respecting the Pyramids, the excavated cities, Stonehenge, the Ohio Circles, Mexico, Memphis, – is the desire to do away with this wild, savage, and preposterous There or Then, and introduce in its place the Here and the Now. Belzoni digs and measures in the mummy-pits and pyramids of Thebes, until he can see the end of the difference between the monstrous work and himself. When he has satisfied himself, in general and in detail, that it was made by such a person as he, so armed and so motivated, and to ends to which he himself should also have worked, the problem is solved; his thought lives along the whole line of temples and sphinxes and catacombs, passes through them all with satisfaction, and they live again to the mind, or are **now**.



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ESSAYS: 2D SERIES: Half the world, it is said, knows not how the other half live. Our Exploring Expedition saw the Feejee islanders getting their dinner off human bones; and they are said to eat their own wives and children. The husbandry of the modern inhabitants of Gournou (west of old Thebes) is philosophical to a fault. To set up their housekeeping, nothing is requisite but two or three earthen pots, a stone to grind meal, and a mat which is the bed. The house, namely, a tomb, is ready without rent or taxes. No rain can pass through the roof, and there is no door, for there is no want of one, as there is nothing to lose. If the house do not please them, they walk out and enter another, as there are several hundreds at their command. "It is somewhat singular," adds Belzoni, to whom we owe this account, "to talk of happiness among people who live in sepulchres, among the corpses and rags of an ancient nation which they know nothing of." In the deserts of Borgoo, the rock-Tibboos still dwell in caves, like cliff-swallows, and the language of these negroes is compared by their neighbors to the shrieking of bats, and to the whistling of birds. Again, the Bornoos have no proper names; individuals are called after their height, thickness, or other accidental quality, and have nicknames merely. But the salt, the dates, the ivory, and the gold, for which these horrible regions are visited, find their way into countries, where the purchaser and consumer can hardly be ranked in one race with these cannibals and man-stealers; countries where man serves himself with metals, wood, stone, glass, gum, cotton, silk, and wool; honors himself with architecture; writes laws, and contrives to execute his will through the hands of many nations; and, especially, establishes a select society, running through all the countries of intelligent men, a self-constituted aristocracy, or fraternity of the best, which, without written law or exact usage of any kind, perpetuates itself, colonizes every new-planted island, and adopts and makes its own whatever personal beauty or extraordinary native endowment anywhere appears.



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CONDUCT OF LIFE: To be rich is to have a ticket of admission to the master-works and chief men of each race. It is to have the sea, by voyaging; to visit the mountains, Niagara, the Nile, the desert, Rome, Paris, Constantinople; to see galleries, libraries, arsenals, manufactories. The reader of Humboldt's "Cosmos" follows the marches of a man whose eyes, ears, and mind are armed by all the science, arts, and implements which mankind have anywhere accumulated, and who is using these to add to the stock. So is it with Denon, Beckford, Belzoni, Wilkinson, Layard, Kane, Lepsius, and Livingston. "The rich man," says Saadi, "is everywhere expected and at home." The rich take up something more of the world into man's life. They include the country as well as the town, the ocean-side, the White Hills, the Far West, and the old European homesteads of man, in their notion of available material. The world is his, who has money to go over it. He arrives at the sea-shore, and a sumptuous ship has floored and carpeted for him the stormy Atlantic, and made it a luxurious hotel, amid the horrors of tempests. The Persians say, "'Tis the same to him who wears a shoe, as if the whole earth were covered with leather."



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"Thoughts On Modern Literature": There is no better illustration of the laws by which the world is governed than Literature. There is no luck in it. It proceeds by Fate. Every scripture is given by the inspiration of God. Every composition proceeds out of a greater or less depth of thought, and this is the measure of its effect. The highest class of books are those which express the moral element; the next, works of imagination; and the next, works of science; – all dealing in realities, – what ought to be, what is, and what appears. These, in proportion to the truth and beauty they involve, remain; the rest perish. They proceed out of the silent living mind to be heard again by the living mind. Of the best books it is hardest to write the history. Those books which are for all time are written indifferently at any time. For high genius is a day without night, a Caspian Ocean which hath no tides. And yet is literature in some sort a creature of time. Always the oracular soul is the source of thought, but always the occasion is administered by the low mediations of circumstance. Religion, Love, Ambition, War, some fierce antagonism, or it may be, some petty annoyance must break the round of perfect circulation, or no spark, no joy, no event can be. The poet rambling through the fields or the forest, absorbed in contemplation to that degree, that his walk is but a pretty dream, would never awake to precise thought, if the scream of an eagle, the cries of a crow or curlew near his head did not break the sweet continuity. Nay the finest lyrics of the poet come of this unequal parentage; the imps of matter beget such child on the soul, fair daughter of God. Nature mixes facts with thoughts to yield a poem. But the gift of immortality is of the mother's side. In the spirit in which they are written is the date of their duration, and never in the magnitude of the facts. Everything lasts in proportion to its beauty. In proportion as it was not polluted by any wilfulness of the writer, but flowed from his mind after the divine order of cause and effect, it was not his but nature's, and shared the sublimity of the sea and sky. That which is truly told, nature herself takes in charge against the whims and injustice of men. For ages, Herodotus was reckoned a credulous gossip in his descriptions of Africa, and now the sublime silent desert testifies through the mouths of Bruce, Lyons, Caillaud, Burckhardt, Belzoni, to the truth of the calumniated historian.



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1778




November 5, Thursday: [Giovanni Battista Belzoni](#) was born in Padua, [Italy](#).

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT



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 [Giovanni Battista Belzoni](#) went from [Italy](#) to England to join a religious order and wound up as a circus strong man (close, but no ceegar). While working for this circus, and giving demonstrations of holding aloft up to a dozen individuals at once by means of a steel platform suspended from his waist, he would also demonstrate hydraulic engines.








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Table of Altitudes

	Yoda	2 ' 0 "
	Lavinia Warren	2 ' 8 "
	Tom Thumb, Jr.	3 ' 4 "
	Lucy (Australopithecus Afarensis)	3 ' 8 "
	Hervé Villechaize ("Fantasy Island")	3 ' 11"
	Charles Proteus Steinmetz	4 ' 0 "
	Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (1)	4 ' 3 "
	Alexander Pope	4 ' 6 "
	Benjamin Lay	4 ' 7 "
	Dr. Ruth Westheimer	4 ' 7 "
	Gary Coleman ("Arnold Jackson")	4 ' 8 "
	Edith Piaf	4 ' 8 "
	Queen Victoria with osteoporosis	4 ' 8 "
	Linda Hunt	4 ' 9 "
	Queen Victoria as adult	4 ' 10 "
	Mother Teresa	4 ' 10 "
	Margaret Mitchell	4 ' 10 "
	length of newer military musket	4 ' 10"
	Charlotte Brontë	4 ' 10-11"
	Tammy Faye Bakker	4 ' 11"
	Soviet gymnast Olga Korbut	4 ' 11"
	jockey Willie Shoemaker	4 ' 11"
	Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec	4 ' 11"
	Joan of Arc	4 ' 11"
	Bonnie Parker of "Bonnie & Clyde"	4 ' 11"
	Harriet Beecher Stowe	4 ' 11"
	Laura Ingalls Wilder	4 ' 11"
	a rather tall adult Pygmy male	4 ' 11"
	Gloria Swanson	4 ' 11"1/2
	Clara Barton	5 ' 0 "
	Isambard Kingdom Brunel	5 ' 0 "
	Andrew Carnegie	5 ' 0 "
	Thomas de Quincey	5 ' 0 "
	Stephen A. Douglas	5 ' 0 "
	Danny DeVito	5 ' 0 "
	Immanuel Kant	5 ' 0 "
	William Wilberforce	5 ' 0 "



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Dollie Parton	5' 0 "
Mae West	5' 0 "
Pia Zadora	5' 0 "
Deng Xiaoping	5' 0 "
Dred Scott	5' 0 " (±)
Captain William Bligh of HMS <i>Bounty</i>	5' 0 " (±)
Harriet Tubman	5' 0 " (±)
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (2)	5' 0 " (±)
John Brown of Providence, Rhode Island	5' 0 " (+)
John Keats	5' 3/4 "
Debbie Reynolds (Carrie Fisher's mother)	5' 1 "
Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher)	5' 1 "
Bette Midler	5' 1 "
Dudley Moore	5' 2 "
Paul Simon (of Simon & Garfunkel)	5' 2 "
Honore de Balzac	5' 2 "
Sally Field	5' 2 "
Jemmy Button	5' 2 "
Margaret Mead	5' 2 "
R. Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller	5' 2 "
Yuri Gagarin the astronaut	5' 2 "
William Walker	5' 2 "
Horatio Alger, Jr.	5' 2 "
length of older military musket	5' 2 "
the artist formerly known as Prince	5' 2 1/2 "
typical female of Thoreau's period	5' 2 1/2 "
Francis of Assisi	5' 3 "
Voltaire	5' 3 "
Mohandas Gandhi	5' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5' 3 "
Kahlil Gibran	5' 3 "
Friend Daniel Ricketson	5' 3 "
The Reverend Gilbert White	5' 3 "
Nikita Khrushchev	5' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5' 3 "
Truman Capote	5' 3 "
Kim Jong Il (North Korea)	5' 3 "
Stephen A. "Little Giant" Douglas	5' 4 "





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	Francisco Franco	5 ' 4 "
	President James Madison	5 ' 4 "
	Iosef Vissarionovich Dzugashvili "Stalin"	5 ' 4 "
	Alan Ladd	5 ' 4 "
	Pablo Picasso	5 ' 4 "
	Truman Capote	5 ' 4 "
	Queen Elizabeth	5 ' 4 "
	Ludwig van Beethoven	5 ' 4 "
	Typical Homo Erectus	5 ' 4 "
	typical Neanderthal adult male	5 ' 4 1/2 "
	Alan Ladd	5 ' 4 1/2 "
	comte de Buffon	5 ' 5 " (-)
	Captain Nathaniel Gordon	5 ' 5 "
	Charles Manson	5 ' 5 "
	Audie Murphy	5 ' 5 "
	Harry Houdini	5 ' 5 "
	Hung Hsiu-ch'üan 洪秀全	5 ' 5 "
	Marilyn Monroe	5 ' 5 1/2 "
	T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia"	5 ' 5 1/2 "
	average runaway male American slave	5 ' 5-6 "
	Charles Dickens	5 ' 6? "
	President Benjamin Harrison	5 ' 6 "
	President Martin Van Buren	5 ' 6 "
	James Smithson	5 ' 6 "
	Louisa May Alcott	5 ' 6 "
	Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	5 ' 6 1/2 "
	Napoleon Bonaparte	5 ' 6 1/2 "
	Emily Brontë	5 ' 6-7 "
	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	5 ' ? "
	average height, seaman of 1812	5 ' 6.85 "
	Oliver Reed Smoot, Jr.	5 ' 7 "
	minimum height, British soldier	5 ' 7 "
	President John Adams	5 ' 7 "
	President John Quincy Adams	5 ' 7 "
	President William McKinley	5 ' 7 "
	"Charley" Parkhurst (a female)	5 ' 7 "
	Ulysses S. Grant	5 ' 7 "
	Henry Thoreau	5 ' 7 "



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the average male of Thoreau's period	5' 7 ¹ / ₂ "
Edgar Allan Poe	5' 8 "
President Ulysses S. Grant	5' 8 "
President William H. Harrison	5' 8 "
President James Polk	5' 8 "
President Zachary Taylor	5' 8 "
average height, soldier of 1812	5' 8.35 "
President Rutherford B. Hayes	5' 8 ¹ / ₂ "
President Millard Fillmore	5' 9 "
President Harry S. Truman	5' 9 "
President Jimmy Carter	5' 9 ¹ / ₂ "
Herman Melville	5' 9 ³ / ₄ "
Calvin Coolidge	5' 10"
Andrew Johnson	5' 10"
Theodore Roosevelt	5' 10"
Thomas Paine	5' 10"
Franklin Pierce	5' 10"
Abby May Alcott	5' 10"
Reverend Henry C. Wright	5' 10"
Nathaniel Hawthorne	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Louis "Deerfoot" Bennett	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Friend John Greenleaf Whittier	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
President Dwight D. Eisenhower	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots	5' 11"
Sojourner Truth	5' 11"
President Grover Cleveland	5' 11"
President Herbert Hoover	5' 11"
President Woodrow Wilson	5' 11"
President Jefferson Davis	5' 11"
President Richard Milhous Nixon	5' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
Robert Voorhis the hermit of Rhode Island	< 6'
Frederick Douglass	6' (-)
Anthony Burns	6' 0 "
Waldo Emerson	6' 0 "
Joseph Smith, Jr.	6' 0 "
David Walker	6' 0 "
Sarah F. Wakefield	6' 0 "
Thomas Wentworth Higginson	6' 0 "



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President James Buchanan	6 ' 0 "
President Gerald R. Ford	6 ' 0 "
President James Garfield	6 ' 0 "
President Warren Harding	6 ' 0 "
President John F. Kennedy	6 ' 0 "
President James Monroe	6 ' 0 "
President William H. Taft	6 ' 0 "
President John Tyler	6 ' 0 "
John Brown	6 ' 0 (+)"
President Andrew Jackson	6 ' 1 "
Alfred Russel Wallace	6 ' 1 "
President Ronald Reagan	6 ' 1 "
Venture Smith	6 ' 1 1/2 "
John Camel Heenan	6 ' 2 "
Crispus Attucks	6 ' 2 "
President Chester A. Arthur	6 ' 2 "
President George Bush, Senior	6 ' 2 "
President Franklin D. Roosevelt	6 ' 2 "
President George Washington	6 ' 2 "
Gabriel Prosser	6 ' 2 "



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Dangerfield Newby	6 ' 2 "
Charles Augustus Lindbergh	6 ' 2 "
President Bill Clinton	6 ' 2 1/2"
President Thomas Jefferson	6 ' 2 1/2"
President Lyndon B. Johnson	6 ' 3 "
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.	6 ' 3 "
Richard "King Dick" Seaver	6 ' 3 1/4"
President Abraham Lincoln	6 ' 4 "
Marion Morrison (AKA John Wayne)	6 ' 4 "
Elisha Reynolds Potter, Senior	6 ' 4 "
Thomas Cholmondeley	6 ' 4 " (?)
William Buckley	6 ' 4-7"
Franklin Benjamin Sanborn	6 ' 5 "
Peter the Great of Russia	6 ' 7 "
Giovanni Battista Belzoni	6 ' 7 "
Thomas Jefferson (the statue)	7 ' 6"
Jefferson Davis (the statue)	7 ' 7"
Martin Van Buren Bates	7 ' 11 1/2"
M. Bihin, a Belgian exhibited in Boston in 1840	8 ' "
Anna Haining Swan	8 ' 1"



LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?
— NO, THAT'S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN'S STORIES.
LIFE ISN'T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.



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1814



In Upper Mall, Hammersmith, the Reverend Dr. Theophilus Lane, rector of St. Michael's, Crooked-lane, Cannon-street died in the 76th year of his age. After his father's demise [Edward William Lane](#) would be sent to grammar school at Bath and then Hereford and would exhibit a talent for mathematics. He would visit Cambridge as more or less a tourist, and then join his brother Richard in London to study to support himself through engraving. An interest in ancient [Egypt](#) would be perhaps aroused by visiting a presentation by [Giovanni Battista Belzoni](#) in about 1821 or so and, on his own, he would begin to study Arabic. When he would set sail for Egypt, this would be for the hot climate as a corrective for fragile health, as well as in the hope of a career.

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





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1815



Summer: [Giovanni Battista Belzoni](#) went to Cairo, ostensibly to sell hydraulic engines for irrigation although there in [Egypt](#) he would wind up as a sophisticated graverobber.



While visiting a pyramid he would wedge his immense body so tightly into an internal passage that to extricate him required the assistance of his guides.

THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





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1816



Muhammad Ali, the Albanian governor of [Egypt](#), established the Islamic world's initial secular military academy, in Cairo. While the instruction was in Turkish –native Egyptians would be unwelcome in these classes until the 1860s– most of the original teachers were French soldiers who spoke through interpreters. The essentially military role of secular mass education was apparent in the fact that the ministry of education would until 1837 be a division of the Ministry of War.

The tomb of Pharaoh Kheperkheprure Ay (1,325 BCE-1,321 BCE) in the Western Valley (#23) near [Thebes](#) was re-excavated by [Giovanni Battista Belzoni](#).

DIGGING UP THE DEAD


Do I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.



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1817

 In Egypt, Giovanni Battista Belzoni made his first big scores in the looting of ancient graves.



He re-excavated the tombs of Pharaoh Ramses I (1,292 BCE-1,290 BCE) and of Pharaoh Seti I (1,290 BCE-1279 BCE) in the Valley of the Kings (#16 and #17 respectively) for Henry Salt.

Giovanni's first ethical principle seems to have been "Is it nailed down?" Difficulties were to arise, as might have been anticipated, over whether he was Salt's partner or his employee.

The tomb of Pharaoh Ramses II, "Ramses the Great" (1,279 BCE-1,213 BCE), in the Valley of the Kings (#7), open in antiquity, had become almost completely filled with debris from at least ten major flooding events. In this year it was re-excavated by Henry Salt (1780-1827). In 1881 the mummy of the pharaoh would be located, in the tomb of Queen Ahmose-Inhapy at Dayr al Bahri, #320 in the Theban Necropolis.

DIGGING UP THE DEAD

**WHAT I'M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF**

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Having returned in triumph (*i.e.*, bearing loot) to colonial England from colonized [Egypt](#), [Giovanni Battista Belzoni](#) was able to brag up his theft of the giant head of [Ramesses II](#) (British Museum), his theft of the sarcophagus of Pharaoh Seti I from the Valley of the Tombs of Kings (Soane Museum in London), his theft of an obelisk from ruins on an island in the Nile near Aswan (this obelisk was re-stolen by an armed gang of French colonialists, there being no honor among thieves), and his being the first to achieve penetration of the pyramid tomb of Pharaoh Khafre at Giza.

**CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT**



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1820



[Giovanni Battista Belzoni](#) issued his brag of the theft of a giant “head of [Memnon](#)” (actually this was a head of [Ramesses II](#), pharaoh *circa* 1292BCE-1225BCE, now at the British Museum), the theft of the sarcophagus of Pharaoh Seti I from the Valley of the Tombs of Kings (Soane Museum in London), the theft of an obelisk from ruins on an island in the Nile near Aswan (this obelisk was re-stolen by an armed gang of French colonialists, there being no honor among thieves), and of being the first to achieve penetration of the pyramid tomb of Pharaoh Khafre at Giza, as a two-volume NARRATIVE OF THE OPERATIONS AND RECENT DISCOVERIES WITHIN THE PYRAMIDS, TEMPLES, TOMBS AND EXCAVATIONS, IN [EGYPT](#) AND NUBIA

[Jo] was prevailed upon to escort Miss Crocker to a lecture, and in return for her virtue was rewarded with a new idea. It was a People’s Course — the lecture on the Pyramids, — and Jo rather wondered at the choice of such a subject for such an audience, but took it for granted that some great social evil would be remedied or some great want supplied by unfolding the glories of the Pharaohs to an audience whose thoughts were busy with the price of coal and flour, and whose lives were spent in trying to solve harder riddles than that of the Sphinx. ... Here the lecture began, but Jo heard very little of it, for while Professor Sands was prosing away about Belzoni, Cheops, scarabei, and hieroglyphics, she was covertly ... deep in the concoction of her story, being unable to decide whether the duel should come before the elopement or after the murder.



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1821

→ William Bullock's Piccadilly Egyptian Hall in London was the venue for an exhibit by Giovanni Battista Belzoni of his recent discovery, the inscriptions in the tomb of Seti I.



(Before)



(After)



Presumably, this was the exhibit that Edward William Lane visited that gave him the idea of Egypt and caused him, on his own, to begin to study Arabic. When he would set sail for Egypt, this would be for the hot climate as a corrective for fragile health, as well as in the hope of a career.



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[Joseph Wolff](#) toured Egypt, the Sinai Peninsula, Jerusalem, Aleppo, Mesopotamia, Persia, Georgia, and the Crimea.

From this year into 1829, with significant outside assistance –literary philhellenes included Lord Byron and Victor Hugo, and foreign militaries involved included the British and French navies and the Russian army– the Greeks would be freeing themselves from Ottoman Turkish rule. A heroine of the war would be Lascarina Bouboulina, a Spetsiot woman who commanded ships in battle against the Turks and Egyptians, and took pride in being able to take and discard lovers like a man.



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1823



December 3, Wednesday: Franz Liszt offered the 1st of a pair of concerts in Strasbourg.

Back in [Egypt](#) a mummy must have muttered a curse, for the famous graverobber [Giovanni Battista Belzoni](#) died while on an adventure to Timbuktu (Tombouctou in present-day Mali). —Let us trust that in Gwato in Benin, which is now Nigeria, this man was buried in an appropriately unmarked grave with everything of value already stripped from his sorry corpse.

[Jo] was prevailed upon to escort Miss Crocker to a lecture, and in return for her virtue was rewarded with a new idea. It was a People's Course — the lecture on the Pyramids, — and Jo rather wondered at the choice of such a subject for such an audience, but took it for granted that some great social evil would be remedied or some great want supplied by unfolding the glories of the Pharaohs to an audience whose thoughts were busy with the price of coal and flour, and whose lives were spent in trying to solve harder riddles than that of the Sphinx. ... Here the lecture began, but Jo heard very little of it, for while Professor Sands was prosing away about Belzoni, Cheops, scarabei, and hieroglyphics, she was covertly ... deep in the concoction of her story, being unable to decide whether the duel should come before the elopement or after the murder.



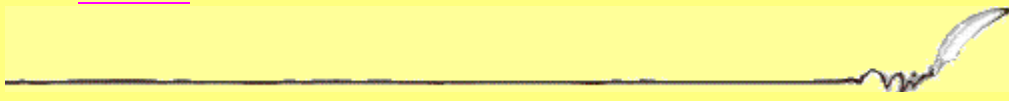
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GIOVANNI BATTISTA BELZONI

1838

October 10, Wednesday: [Waldo Emerson](#) to his journal:

"Everything must come round, & be told in proper time"
said [Belzoni](#).





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1861

July 10, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) and Horace Mann, Jr., age 17, returned home from the [Minnesota](#) trip in time for [Edward Waldo Emerson](#)'s birthday party. Their fare on the Fitchburg RR from Boston to Concord for the last leg of their long trip was \$1.¹⁰. The trip cost Thoreau the entire \$150.⁰⁰ he had taken with him but he was not in any better condition than before:

"I have been sick so long that I have almost forgotten what it is to be well."

There are indications that Mann had gone on this adventure among other reasons also for his health, and a few years later he also would die — of tuberculosis.

Since [Waldo Emerson](#) was giving a commencement address "Celebration of Intellect" in Ballou Hall at Tufts College in Medford, at a distance of 14 map miles on the Concord Turnpike, it seems possible that he was able to return by a 2-to-3-hour carriage ride and be present for his son's birthday party in Concord:

When you say the times, the persons are prosaic; where is the feudal, or the Saracenic, or the Egyptian architecture? where the romantic manners? where the Romish or the Calvinistic religion, which made a kind of poetry in the air for Milton, or Byron, or [Belzoni](#)? but to us it is barren as a dry goods shop; — you expose your atheism.

However, [Thoreau](#) filled in for [Waldo](#) by offering [Eddie](#) a memorable piece of fatherly reassurance:

On my birthday, in the early summer, just before I went to take my examination for Harvard, my father and mother invited Thoreau and Channing, both, but especially Thoreau, friends from my babyhood, to dine with us. When we left the table and were passing into the parlour, Thoreau asked me to come with him to our East door — our more homelike door, facing the orchard. It was an act of affectionate courtesy, for he had divined my suppressed state of mind and remembered that first crisis in his own life, and the wrench that it seemed in advance, as a gate leading out into an untried world. With serious face, but with a very quiet, friendly tone of voice, he reassured me, told me that I should be really close to home; very likely should pass my life in Concord. It was a great relief.

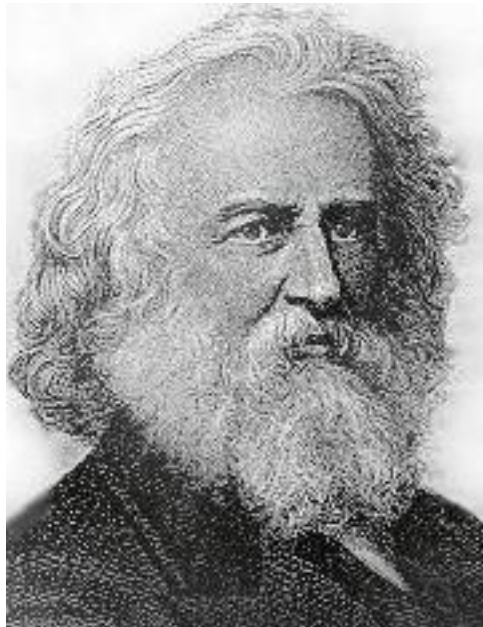
The likely story, and the official story, is that [Fanny Appleton Longfellow](#), as the result of the skin burns she had sustained on her body the previous day (her face was unmarked), went into a coma and died. In any event, for the rest of his life [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) would need to wear a full beard in order to conceal the facial scars he sustained as he rolled her in the carpet. And he would write his wife a memorial poem titled "Cross of Snow," remembering that her white soul had been as pure as snow and equating being hurt with being martyred: "soul more white never through martyrdom of fire was led to its repose." I must confess, however, that there seems to me to be a more likely story. Of course no-one will ever know for sure, but I feel it to be plausible that Fanny was taking an elixir because of the heat, that summer day in sweltering Cambridge, and that when her dress caught fire she was in no condition to do anything but sit and stare at the pretty flames,



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and that after she realized how seriously burned she was she went right back to the bottle of elixir and took what turned out to be an overdose. We must bear in mind that in those days there was a discreet and friendly dope pusher in every neighborhood, and his name was “chemist” and his place of business was “apothecary shop” and his main stock in trade was opium — and this tradesman kept no records and told none of the neighbors what decent people needed to do in order to get the most out of their day. Like so many things —like everything sexual— it wasn’t a problem and yet just wasn’t talked about.



The grieving husband/poet would write her, evidently on the anniversary date July 10, 1879, a memorial poem titled “Cross of Snow,” remembering not that before his second wife had gotten herself burned all black, she had been a white lady, but rather that her white soul had been as pure as snow: “soul more white never through martyrdom of fire was led to its repose.” Note that in such a frame of reference just about any sort of extreme pain (incurable cancer for instance) can get you termed not a mere sufferer but a martyr, and you don’t even need to display extreme fortitude — if your husband be a poet.¹

THE CROSS OF SNOW

In the long, sleepless watches of the night,
A gentle face —the face of one long dead—
Looks at me from the wall, where round its head
The night-lamp casts a halo of pale light.
Here in this room she died; and soul more white
Never through martyrdom of fire was led
To its repose; nor can in books be read
The legend of a life more benedight.
There is a mountain in the distant West
That, sun-defying, in its deep ravines
Displays a cross of snow upon its side.
Such is the cross I wear upon my breast
These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes
And seasons, changeless since the day she died.

¹. But, as we understand, if not, unfortunately, not. Incidentally, if you go on a guided tour of the mansion, which is a National Historical Landmark, please don’t ask the guide about the fire. She won’t say anything about it in front of the tourists and you shouldn’t either.



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1877

March: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part VII:i-xv of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Birth of the Levins' son). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xvi.)

In the March/April issue of the North American Review was an article by [Waldo Emerson](#) on "Demonology":

The long waves indicate to the instructed mariner that there is no near land in the direction from which they come. [Belzoni](#) describes the three marks which led him to dig for a door to the pyramid of Ghizeh. What thousands had beheld the same spot for so many ages and seen no three marks!



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1900

The tomb of [Queen Hatshepsut](#) (1,472 BCE-1,457 BCE) and her father Pharaoh Thutmose I (1,504 BCE-1,492 BCE) in the [Valley of the Kings](#) (#20) was re-excavated by Howard Carter (1874-1939) after having been documented by [Giovanni Battista Belzoni](#).

DIGGING UP THE DEAD

“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FANTASIZING: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY



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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: December 24, 2014



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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.



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Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.