



**FAMILY FEATURES:** (above) Aubyn Thoreau as a young man, (right) his sister Elize, and (below) Henry David Thoreau

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above the positive demands of necessity, the better for him and the community at large. He would have had the order of the week reversed—six days of rest for one of labour. In 1845 he made the famous experiment at Walden. He wanted to prove to himself and others that man could be as independent of his kind as the nest-building bird. He retired to a hut of his own construction on a pine slope on the shores of Walden Pond—a hut which he built, furnished, and kept in order entirely with his own hands. During his two years in Walden Woods he did a little surveying, a little job-work, and tilled a few acres of land which produced him his beans and potatoes.

"He read considerably, wrote abundantly, thought actively if not widely, and came to know beasts, birds, and fishes with an intimacy as extraordinary as that of St. Francis of Assisi. Birds came at his call, forgetting their hereditary fear of man; beasts caressed him; fish in lake and stream would glide, unfearful, between his hands. His *Walden* (published in 1854) is the record of this fascinating two years' experience."



Some years before Thoreau took to Walden Woods he made the chief friendship of his life, that with Emerson. He became one of the famous circle of transcendentalists. From Emerson he gained more than from any man, alive or dead. In 1847 he left Walden lake abruptly and for a time occupied himself with lead-pencil making, the parental trade. He never married, thus further fulfilling what one of his biographers has termed his policy of "indulgence in fine renouncements." At the age of 45 he died of tuberculosis. His grave is in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Concord.

## TALKS BY HECTOR BOLITHO

JUST before leaving for the United States last month, Hector Bolitho recorded a series of five talks for the NBS, the first of which will be heard from 3YA on August 16, at 7.15 p.m. In this talk, entitled "New Zealand Remembered," he speaks of his pride—even as a boy—in being a New Zealander of the third generation, recalls the days of full-rigged ships on the Waitemata, Auckland's Queen Street without trams, and Grafton Gully before the bridge was built. And he describes a boy's longing to see the world, how that dream came true, and his feelings on returning home again.

His second talk, "I Discover England," tells of his first flat in Chelsea, of the way in which he began his literary work at Windsor Castle, and the deep impression made on him by the English scene. In "Palestine Without Politics" he describes a winter spent at the court of

the Emir Abdullah, now ruler of Transjordan, and tells also of a stay near the Sea of Galilee, recalling scenes familiar to many Kiwis. On September 3, 1939, he enlisted in the R.A.F. and served there until last year. This chapter of his life is covered in his fourth talk, in which he tells a revealing story about Jimmy Ward, V.C., and gives the history of the prayer-stool (made from a beam from Windsor Castle) which he presented to 75 Squadron at Feltwell. This stool is now in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Wellington, as a memorial to Jimmy Ward and other New Zealand airmen of that famous squadron.

The last of the five talks is entitled "Three Thoughts on Leaving New Zealand," and represents the conclusions of a New Zealander viewing his own country again after a long sojourn overseas.

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