



The Hawthorne House 1891

Courtesy: Nathaniel Hawthorne Community Association

*'A Day in the Life of Nathaniel Hawthorne'*¹

a Moment in His Lifetime'

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Background

“On the banks of Sebago Lake, in Maine...here I ran quite wild...fishing all day long, or shooting with an old fowling piece, but reading a good deal too on rainy days. Those were delightful days; for that part of the country was wild then, with only scattered clearings, and nine-tenths of it primeval woods.” (Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife 95) ²

“I lived in Maine like a bird of the air, so perfect was the freedom I enjoyed. Ah, how well I recall the summer days...when with my gun, I roamed at will through the woods of Maine.” (Yesterdays With Authors 113) ³

The above quotes from Hawthorne’s reminiscing on his time spent in, and around Raymond, show how fondly he retained the personal memories of the surroundings.

Introduction

Nathaniel Hawthorne (Hawthorne) was born at 27 Union Street in Salem, Massachusetts, the residence of the Hawthorne family. After his father’s death in 1808, his mother, Betsey, moved with her children, Elizabeth, Nathaniel, and Maria Louisa (known as Louisa), to live with her Mannings’ lineage, at the house in Herbert Street; the rear gardens of the two houses being adjacent to each other. Already in residence at the Herbert Street house were Betsey’s parents, her four brothers and four sisters; with an additional four occupants, living space was at a minimum and for Nathaniel, it meant sharing a bedchamber under the eaves, on the third storey, with his Uncle Robert.

Richard Manning, Nathaniel’s maternal grandfather had been purchasing large tracts of land in Maine since the late 18th century. Following his death in 1813, his son, Richard relocated to Raymond to manage the Mannings’ lands and properties and began building a house for himself.

Betsey and her sisters had often talked of moving to Bridgton, a town near Raymond. In July 1816, Betsey and her three children visited Raymond, boarding at York Farm that was owned by the Manning family and situated on their land and spent time at Richard's new house. Consideration was still being given for a permanent move to Maine; however the move had not materialised.

In the summer of 1817, Betsey's brother Robert, who had adopted a paternal overseeing of Betsey's family, started to build a house for them in Raymond. Sited across the road from Richard's and over a hundred miles downwind of Salem, the house would offer the family their own space and independence, and Nathaniel a completely different mien; an untamed landscape waiting to be explored. Nathaniel was aware of the new house being built and, with exciting thoughts of reawakening memories of his earlier visit, wrote to his Uncle Robert asking when the house would be finished.⁴ Finally, in the Fall of 1818, the new house was almost completed and the Hathorne family made ready for their journey.

Raymond – A Winter Wonder Land

The journey from Salem to Raymond took in excess of two days of arduous travelling along the rough roads, on certain parts of the journey the terrain was extremely rutted causing the stagecoach to lurch from side to side. There were various tolls on the route and the stagecoach would stop at different stagecoach taverns to change horses and allow the passengers to rest and take nourishment. The weather was certainly given an impression of the oncoming winter and the stage's interior was freezing; the blankets the passengers had being insufficient to block the penetrating chill. On reaching their destination the family felt cold, tired, but very relieved at arriving safely and were more than ready to alight from the Bridgton stage. Their new house standing sturdily before them did not have the extravagant decor of Uncle Richard's dwelling however, it was a solid wood-frame and brick structure of

two and a half storeys, and both of its large, stacked chimneys⁵ offered assurance for lavish fires giving warmth and comfort. Stepping inside, the rooms gave ample space and liberty for the family, a relief from the cramped environment of the house in Herbert Street. The kitchen fire was already ablaze and gathered round immersed in the welcoming heat. It was a place to call their own.

Arriving at the house during the winter months meant enjoyable outdoor pastimes for Elizabeth, Nathaniel and Louisa by way of skating and sleighing. After a few weeks Nathaniel had become adept at skating, often skating alone at night, sometimes until midnight, when the moon reflected its shadowy form on the ice, the trees glistened with frost, and the Great Pond was sufficiently frozen solid to guarantee him a safe passage. His new ice-skates, a Christmas present, had helped him become even more proficient.

When the weather dictated time indoors, which Nathaniel thought an affront to his freedom and would venture outside with a determination to brave the elements, Betsey and the girls spent most of their time in the kitchen, which they felt to be the heartbeat of the house. Times when Nathaniel had no choice but to remain indoors, the youngsters would lie on the big cream coloured, fluffy rug in front of the blazing fire, relishing in its warmth and with the aroma of the burning pine logs permeating the room. From an early age, Nathaniel had a passion for watching fires, fascinated by their flickering flames and sparks travelling up the chimney, heading skywards. During a Thanksgiving Day festival on Salem Common, he had rushed from the house in great excitement to gaze in awe at the blazing magnitude of the bonfire.

There was also a plentiful array of books providing substantial reading matter. Nathaniel, always a great reader, devoured books on any subject from Cookery Books to the Newgate Calendar and Shakespeare to 'The Pilgrims Progress.' For Christmas he had

received the Walter Scott novel, 'Rob Roy,' recently published in America. On Sundays Betsey imposed a strict regime of only reading books with a religious theme.

Nathaniel had a noticeable habit of covering the margins and flyleaves of every book, including his father's naval travel logs, with lines of poetry, quotations, and names of people, including his own. The books at the new house had not escaped the same fate. Nathaniel found another use for the books, standing them up to make tunnels for their new kitten to run through. He had played the same game with Rag, Tag and Bobtail, the three cats at the house in Herbert Street. During his exploration of the new house, Nathaniel had discovered a number of old colonial newspapers at the back of a cupboard that the builders had left behind; sitting in his great grandmother's chair in the corner of the kitchen, he had scrutinised their contents from cover to cover.

Forget the Past

Forgotten ... the unpalatable engagement in educational studies and the few weeks he had spent at the school in Stroudwater shortly after their arrival in Raymond, and from which, he had returned homesick and despondent. Although in his heart Nathaniel knew at some time in the not-too-distant future, he would have to resume his education and prepare for college; but not today. Today gave an opportunity to look for a different type of learning experience, one that was waiting invitingly in the wilderness, beyond the boundaries of the house.

Forgotten ... the many months of lameness Nathaniel had suffered, following an injury to his foot, the wooden crutches, now stored away, out of sight. He had grown taller and stronger, and his family hoped, with the help of this rural landscape, his strength would increase further.

The scene is set for us take a nostalgic journey alongside Nathaniel on Monday April 19th, 1819, whilst he explores Raymond and its environs in:

“A Day in the Life of Nathaniel Hathorne”

The Springtime Sun and Betsey’s Son Rise Together in Raymond

The sun rose shortly before six o’clock, its early radiance filtering through the curtains, and Betsey Hathorne’s son rose with it. Waking in his own bed, Nathaniel threw back the woven blankets and headed for his first-floor, chamber window. He drew back the curtains and, as his chamber was located at the front of the house Nathaniel had a bird’s eye view across the road into the garden of his Uncle Richard’s house, situated by Dingley Brook. Scanning further afield, Nathaniel looked wistfully in the direction of the wild landscape, its surrounding forests stretching as far as the distant White Mountains of New Hampshire and beyond. So different to the view from the window in the shared chamber of the house in Herbert Street, where he could look towards the wharf at the corner of the busy narrow street. In stark contrast, this panoramic view was akin to Mother Nature’s unspoilt paradise.

Today, there was no sign of rain and although the tops of the highest peaks of the White Mountains retained a glacial dusting of snow, any ice on the Great Pond had melted, its memory evaporated into the past. Today was a day for the big outdoors, and Nathaniel could enjoy his freedom for over thirteen hours of daylight before the sun started to set around half past seven. Nathaniel was pleased that Spring had shown its refreshing scent of renewed growth; he was tired of winter.

Hearing movement and voices downstairs Nathaniel took the stairs two at a time, his sisters closely behind. They found their mother and Jane, Betsey’s helper who had travelled with them from Salem, busy in the kitchen. In spite of the pleasant weather, the greeting from the fire burning with locally hewn logs gave a cheerful glow across the kitchen in the early

morning. Jane was preparing a tasty breakfast of oatmeal porridge, delicious Johnny cakes and an Indian cake, made with bright yellow butter, along with tea, coffee, and buttermilk. Nathaniel always had a good appetite, and he dispensed with his breakfast in an instant. Sometimes there were fish for breakfast; if the trout were biting today, there may be some on tomorrow's breakfast menu.

Before he embarked on his expedition, the expansive outdoors ready and waiting, his mother reminded him to take a coat, calling, "it's not quite summer yet," and he rushed back upstairs to find his jacket and cap. At fourteen, coming fifteen on July 4th, Nathaniel was classed as an adult for clothes, and having grown taller, his present jacket was too short. For special occasions Robert had recently bought him a frock coat, midnight blue with a black velvet collar, and although usually feeling ill at ease in new clothes, Nathaniel had taken a liking to this new coat. Deciding it was too good for adventuring, he picked up his old jacket and cap and returned downstairs with a hop, skip and jump.

Into the Environs of Maine

Giving the kitten a stroke and shouting, "see you later" to whomever was listening, Nathaniel Hathorne disappeared out of the kitchen door and into the big wild world of Maine.

Uncle Richard owned a blacksmith's shop at the outlet of Dingley Brook and had opened a small country store, selling West Indie goods and groceries and where Betsey had an account. Nathaniel decided to call at the store and say "Hi" to his friend, Mark Leach Junior. Mark was helping his father in the store. Mark's father had taken over the store's management from Nathaniel's Uncle Samuel who had returned to Salem. Nathaniel observed a local farmer slowly approaching the store, tethering his horse to the trough near the front entrance. Whilst Mark was serving the farmer, Nathaniel decided to introduce himself to the horse. The horse was old and shivering in spite of the pleasant weather and looked half-

starved, its expression giving an impoverished appearance. Nathaniel thought the horse looked really sad and felt sorry for it. Avoiding the farmer's vision, Nathaniel crept quietly back in the store, picked up a carrot and an apple and fed them to the horse. The farmer returned and led the horse away. Nathaniel decided he would compose a story about the horse⁶ and record it in his diary⁷ hoping his Uncle Richard would read it.

Nathaniel enjoyed inventing wild and fanciful stories, telling of faraway places where he was going when he grew up, and always ending with the line, "*And I'm never coming back again.*"⁸ (A Life In Letters 141) Nathaniel would decide whether that ending would be suitable for his story about the horse.

Nathaniel thought of writing a poem about the horse. He had composed poems from an early age, one of which he recalled. Its title was "Moderate Views" and, he could remember he had written it with a flourishing hand. At the time he had not shown his poem to anyone; instead, he had folded it inside one of his books; now he just needed to remember which book.

Sitting on the store's wooden steps waiting for Mark gave Nathaniel an opportunity to make further observations of his surroundings and the Raymond residents going in and out of the store. A couple he recognised had shared stories of the area's folklore with him during his previous visit. In his line of sight were a pair of kingbirds nesting in the eaves of the store, watching and waiting, hoping to be able to feed their young on seed and crumbs that may have escaped unknown from the shoppers' baskets. Nathaniel had plenty of material for his diary.

A short distance from the house was Dingley Mill and at the outlet of the Dingley Mill stream the water flowed into the Great Pond. The sound of the flowing water reached Nathaniel's ears and offered an invitation for a fishing excursion. When Mark appeared, there

was agreement for Nathaniel's suggestion of fishing and both boys dashed home to collect their poles and lines. After buying some bait from the store, they made their way to the wooden bridge near Dingley's grist mill, meeting on the way another friend, Robinson Cook who immediately jumped at the decision made for some fishing and rushed to his nearby home to get his own pole and lines. Leaning carefully over the wooden bridge's fragile rails, they dropped their lines into the running water below. Unfortunately, on this occasion, the fish were not interested in taking the bait, but Nathaniel suddenly shouted excitedly as he reeled in an extraordinarily large eel which was writhing angrily in recognition of being hooked. The eel was released back in the water being supremely thankful for its liberation and slithered away at great speed.

The Flat Rock

During a previous adventure when Nathaniel had wandered nearly half a mile to the north of the house, he had discovered a large flat rock partially sitting in the water at the outlet of Thomas Pond. On more than one occasion since his discovery he had found himself sitting, often alone enjoying the peace and serenity that fishing offered. His sensitive nature being a source for throwing his fish back in the water, especially if he did not feel they were good for eating.

The water at the outlet from Thomas Pond coursed into the Great Pond which resulted in some unsuspecting fish being swept with it; the fish left behind may be more than happy to take the boy's bait. Nathaniel suggested they may have better luck at the flat rock and consequently they headed for the rock hoping it would offer a better opportunity for a good catch.

The level of the water between the bank and the flat rock was sufficiently low to allow the boys to make the short leap without trouble. Whilst waiting for the fish to bite, the

boys talked of the history of ‘the ridges,’ the name given to a nearby grassy knoll surrounded by trees. Uncle Richard had told Nathaniel the knoll was an Indian burial ground, another piece of Indian folklore that fascinated Nathaniel. The boys were finally rewarded with a catch of a few trout, although the perch were not so obliging in taking the bait. These were not thrown back in the water and Nathaniel, Mark and Robinson returned to their respective homes proudly carrying their trophies to be made ready for tomorrow’s breakfasts.

After handing the fish to Jane, Nathaniel headed off alone in the direction of the Great Pond located around five miles away, remembering his love of roaming along its edges during his summertime visit. When Robert had the house built, part of the surrounding forest had been cut away in the direction of the Great Pond, allowing a partial view of its waters from the rear of the house. There was no direct walking route to the Great Pond’s shoreline and Nathaniel took the road via Raymond Cape, the beginning of which was located almost at the side of the house.

The Inspirational Rock Chair

With a spritely step towards the Cape road, Nathaniel suddenly remembered another large rock at the side of Thomas Pond that he had discovered on a previous hiking trip and he detoured back towards Thomas Pond. At that time, he had sat on its firm surface looking out across Thomas Pond, observing the environment in quiet contemplation and feeling inspirational to create wild, make-believe stories and fables with hidden messages behind the narratives. The rock was set deep in the surrounding ground, on the other side of a grassy knoll and partially hidden by shrubs and trees. It gave the appearance of having been in the same place from time immemorial, so well-weathered was its make-up. Over the years the weather and subsequent erosion had formed the rock into what appeared to be the shape of a chair. It had smoothed the very rough stone giving an impression it was the texture of the

shell of an egg, although as Nathaniel noticed, as a seat, it was still extremely hard. Old newspapers and books on the history of the area had not revealed the origins of the rock, however using his creativity, Nathaniel decided he would write a story and invent his own mythical legend around the rock's appearance. It would symbolise the rock chair's passage through time, and the people who may have sat where he was sitting today. Looking around at the wild scenery and listening to the sound of silence, the natural genius for creativity in Nathaniel's mind started to shape the storyline, what structure should it take, in what historical time periods should it be set and, should he incorporate factual, or fictional characters? Sitting gazing out over the water, various titles for his story came to him, 'The Rock Chair,' 'The Rocking Chair;' he finally decided on 'Grandfather's Rocking Chair.'⁹

“Like a Bird of the Air”³

Leaving the rock chair but with a determination to return for further inspiration, Nathaniel quickened his step back to the road via Raymond Cape. Covering the distance of around five miles in no time at all he had arrived at the fringes of the Great Pond. Nathaniel knew this secluded area and its surrounding wilderness promoted an air of solitude whilst recognising this atmosphere and solace was another place where his imagination could become ever more fertile for his future compositions.

The backdrops of the Great Pond proffered ample suggestions for adventure seeking. There was a temperate breeze carrying the waves over the shoreline and splashing between the rocks. The sound of the surf, although muted due to the closeness of the deep forest, reminded Nathaniel of the echoes from the waves as they dispersed after encountering the Salem wharves. Continuing along the shoreline, Nathaniel remembered the uneven, weather-beaten rocks formed in the distant past. Time and the waters lapping over these age-old rocks had ground some of them into a sandy, grit-like substance, and walking along left

indentations from Nathaniel's tread, similar to when he left his footprints on the seashore. This sandy substance had fused with the small pebbles and rocks of a more generous size and the roots of the trees grazing the pond's outer reaches, presented an unstable pathway around the water's edge; however, Nathaniel's nimble movement enabled him to skip vigorously along. Contrasting with the clear vista of open water, the white pines stood majestically amongst the ancient elms; the dense expanse of forest offering an air of tranquillity and the trees extending their branches to welcome Nathaniel's return to their domain. Summer had been the season for harvesting the various berries that grew in abundance throughout the primeval woods and Nathaniel was able to pick them during his walk, being mindful of the poisonous varieties that he had read about in his Uncle Robert's horticultural books. April, however, was not the time of year for those berries to reveal themselves; the bushes and shrubs were only now preparing themselves for the new season, and the roots of the trees in the forest were protruding after the recent covering of snow. Nathaniel was animated and free, and ready to live "like a bird of the air." (Yesterdays With Authors 113)

Nathaniel wished he had helped himself to some of Jane's homemade butter biscuits from the jar on the kitchen shelf; they would have tempered his hunger until dinner time. Nathaniel also missed carrying the old fowling piece that had belonged to his father and had been presented to him by his Uncle Richard during the summer visit. Nathaniel had carried it when hunting in the woods and shooting at wild birds, although his family knew due to his underlying character, he would as likely withhold from pulling the trigger. He thought he must write to his Uncle Robert telling him the gun was stored in the closet in Uncle Richard's house, and warning of its very large charge and kick, should he want to use it on his next visit to Raymond.¹⁰

Wandering deeper among the diverse varieties of trees and extensive undergrowth that made up the thick forest, Nathaniel was enjoying the springtime fragrance of the

aromatic woodland foliage. His eyes were always on the lookout for creatures that lived obscurely on the forest floor. People had commented Nathaniel's eyes changed colour from dark blue to shades of grey depending on the light and his disposition at the time. Nathaniel was aware that rattlesnakes were frequent visitors, and although they were not known for hibernating during the winter months, they did become much less active and would start to stir again in the spring with the warning rattle on their tale.

Hearing bird song above him, Nathaniel glanced up into the high boughs for sight of any birds feeding their young in their nests. The haunting environment generated a feeling of time standing still, and Nathaniel, lost in his own thoughts, suddenly heard the sound of someone approaching through the trees. Turning, he saw Elizabeth running towards him, shouting that dinner was almost ready. She had occasionally accompanied her brother on his wanderings and hunting trips and knew the various routes amongst the trees and compact undergrowth. Before returning to the house, they decided to play a game of skimming stones to see who could get most skips as the stones topped the waves. Following a 'dead-heat, brother and sister ran back to the house in time for dinner consisting of Jane's delicious rabbit pie, fresh parsnips, and potatoes, followed by baked apples. Betsey had brewed some tea and there was buttermilk in a tall glass pitcher.

The Images in Nathaniel's imagination

After dinner, Nathaniel called on Mark and Robinson and they walked towards the nearby barn where Mr Watkins was busy making bricks. Nathaniel wondered why Mr Watkins was adding straw to his brick mixture; however, he decided it best not to disturb him and to save the question for another day.

The boys saw Peter White's boat moored in Dingley Brook. He had called to see Captain Dingley to advise him he was going out to one of the Dingley Islands to check on the

sheep who were being pastured there. A while back a local farmer had moved his sheep on to one of the islands to keep them safe from the bears and wolves who roved the forests, and it became a customary practice among the farmers to keep their sheep on the islands.

When the boys reached the boat, Peter explained he was to make sail for the Great Pond, moor the boat at the Dingley Island to check the sheep, and then return home via the Images. Nathaniel knew of the Images; ancient drawings etched and painted on the face of an exceptionally large rock standing strikingly across the Great Pond from Frye's Island. Nathaniel had discovered a cave near the base of the enormous rock when he was adventuring during the summer. The cave had been large enough for him to clamber into, and using the pocket-knife he had previously swapped with Robinson, he had scratched "NH" on its age-old wall. He had wanted to return to the cave to see if it was still accessible and the historical background of the Images had continued to fascinate Nathaniel.

Peter asked the boys along for the ride and Nathaniel, knowing of his mother's concerns for his welfare, ran to ask her permission. When told the other boys were going, she agreed, and Peter set the sail for the open water of the Great Pond; Nathaniel looking towards the distant White Hills to the Northwest and Rattlesnake Mountain to the Northeast, both clearly defined against the blue sky.

The strengthening breeze carried the untainted air across the Great Pond and encouraged small wavelets on the surface of the water. Although it was warm, Nathaniel was glad he had brought his cap. As the boat sailed on, Nathaniel talked of the day he had seen the lumbermen moving their heavy logs through the water. That day, the strength of a sudden squall had sent the logs spinning wildly towards Dingley Brook, as if they were made of tissue paper, and the men had to exercise quick thinking in order to retrieve them. Maine had a history of supplying wood for refining into ships' masts. The ever-growing demand for

sailing ships meant that the strength of the wood from the massive trees growing in the Maine forests were greatly sought after. Today however, there were no lumbermen and no logs heading down river towards the shipyards in Portland harbour.

Nathaniel shared a story he had been told by an elderly Raymond resident who was shopping in Uncle Richard's store. He told of past times when the logs were transported by road in a day-long journey, using teams of oxen to haul them on a wagon. A section of road on the way to Pulpit Rock, adjacent to Mr. Gay's farm, has an extremely sharp bend that the locals call Gay's Pinch. One day, when transporting a consignment of especially long logs around this bend, the wagon had become stuck, and the neighbours had turned out in droves to help manoeuvre the wagon in order for it to continue on its journey. Nathaniel had noticed the extreme curvature of the road during the family's journeys to Raymond when their driver had to slow the horses to walking pace in order to negotiate the stagecoach round that tight bend.

After a brief call at the Dingley Island, with Peter content the sheep were safe and well, the boat sailed towards the Images on the shoreline of Raymond Cape. The expansive rock, known as the Images due to the drawings on the rock face rose imposingly out of the depths of the Great Pond to the great height of around sixty feet. The depth of the water at the edge of the rock was around fifty feet and due to that and the absence of any type of shoreline or landing place it was difficult to moor the boat. At the insistence of the boys, Peter considered alternatives to anchor the boat safely and allow them to climb off. At the side of the Images and along the edge of the Pond were masses of huge boulders randomly scattered as if some great force had pushed them from the summit of the Images and they had landed randomly in a total abstract manner. Some boulders lay partially below the waterline, while others were on dry land amongst the course underbrush framing the forest.

The substantial boulders were sufficiently sturdy and stable to give Peter the confidence that he could safeguard the boat by securing it to one. He found a suitable boulder relatively close to the shore's edge and only a small part protruding from below the water. Its largest area was laying within a morass of underbrush. Using the strong rope Peter kept on the boat all hands were on deck to secure it to a part of the boulder that projected sideways. For extra reassurance and stabilisation, Peter dropped the anchor over the side.

Nathaniel located his previously discovered cave the entrance of which was by way of a number of the randomly placed boulders. The boys were able to carefully scramble over the boulders and found the cave was still easily accessible and Nathaniel showed his friends the "NH" he had scratched on the wall. The cave's interior continued between the boulders and disappeared deep into the murky recesses where the sun's rays never reached. The boys did not venture far inside but sat on a boulder at the entrance imagining the cave's occupants from past generations and creating tales of their history. Nathaniel's tale was about the cave being haunted by an old cave dweller from days of yore, who would on moonlit nights, appear at the mouth of the cave only to fade into a transparent spectre and disappear. The boys did not believe him, although as they peered into the cave's dark crevices, they were not so sure.

The boys knew the rock was called the 'Images' because of the drawings on the rockface, however these drawings were only visible offshore. They climbed back on the boat, gaining an advantage point from which to view and consider the drawings in more detail. The original bright colours of the painted drawings had faded over time but were still distinguishable. Peter called the drawings, inscriptions and paintings 'glyphs' and explained they had been crafted by past generations of Indians. Nathaniel decided he was going to look the word 'glyphs' up in the dictionary on his return home. With the boys taking a last glance at the Images, Peter untied the boat from the boulder, pulled up the anchor and sailed the boat

away. The gigantic rock was reflected in the water and the wash from the boat's movement caused the drawings to perform ghostly imitations of animation.

During the journey home, Peter explained why the summit of the Images was called Frye's Leap and the island shore they could see across the Great Pond was called Frye's Island. They were named after a certain Captain Joseph Frye who had had leapt from the top of the immense rock into the silent the waters below and swam to the island opposite to escape from the Indians; subsequently both locations bore his name. Considering this, Nathaniel secretly wondered if anyone found the "NH" he had scratched on the wall, they would connect it to the boy who once lived in Raymond with his mother and sisters called Nathaniel Hathorne; and name the cave after him.

Family Time

Returning home, the boys jumped on to dry land at the entrance to Dingley Brook, and thanking Peter went their separate ways, Nathaniel ready to document the whole journey in his diary. He walked through the pear trees, which had been transported from Uncle Robert's orchard in Salem and the row of butternuts that were ready to produce their fruit when the time was right. The small lamb Nathaniel had saved after finding it stranded on the roadside a few days ago, was happily feeding on the grass around the trees. Betsey's vegetable patch had survived the winter months and was springing into life, and the spring bulbs were beginning to exhibit their colourful blooms in the garden. An attractive white picket fence had been erected around the garden's boundary making it off limits to the lamb and Louisa's pet goat. Jane was milking the goat with Louisa watching on, and they told Nathaniel the afternoon's incident with the well. The bucket had become unlinked from its chain and had plunged deep into the water below. Nathaniel knew that if he had been around and had volunteered to retrieve the bucket, his mother would never have let him go down into the

penetrating darkness. A neighbour had come to the rescue, performing a daring recovery of the bucket, following which the family made a quick decision that a pump was needed and must be urgently fitted in the well.

Nathaniel had a job to carry out before supper. Richard had given the family four hens from his flock, and Nathaniel had the daily task of collecting the eggs from the wooden coop; today's collection consisted of six large brown eggs. Elizabeth and Louisa were helping Jane serve supper that included a squash pie Jane had made with the last of the winter squashes, as well as boiled potatoes and corn; apple dumpling and cream were for dessert with coffee, tea or buttermilk to finish. Nathaniel enjoyed the meal immensely. Squash pie and apple dumpling were two of his favourite foods; having previously read how to make them from the selection of old cookery books.

Roaming surrounded by peace and tranquillity

After supper, Nathaniel ventured out alone towards the edge of the Great Pond. A love of walking and being out-doors had taken hold of Nathaniel since the recovery from his lameness, and he vowed that he would walk whenever and wherever he could throughout his life. Roaming along the shoreline at this time of day emitted a different aura. By the time Nathaniel had walked a fair distance along the shore, the sun was beginning to set, lengthening the shadows of the trees. The intensity of the forest surrounding the water's edge ensured any remaining brightness was limited and the countless branches did not appear as keen to offer so vivid a welcome as they had that morning. There was an overwhelming quietness as the wind dropped to a slight murmur, and the birdsong had ceased as the vocalists had gone to roost; the whole environment afforded an air of peace. Nathaniel was not fazed by the stillness but sensed an even greater remoteness from civilisation. There were only two small homesteads relatively close, but the nearest village was two miles away. He

wished he was carrying the old fowling piece, which gave him a feeling of protection and made him feel like a real hunter, but it remained stowed away in the closet.

Nathaniel remembered his walk along the shoreline in the summer. It had been extremely late in the evening and the sun was quickly setting. By the time he realised how far he had walked it had been too late to make the return journey in the gathering gloom.

Nathaniel had spent the night in a settler's old wooden hut, enjoying watching the flames from the fire in the massive hearth dancing up the open chimney towards the sparkling stars in the clear night sky. On returning to his house the following morning, he had been met by his very agitated mother who had reprimanded him, trying her best to sound harsh, but without too much success.

This evening, as Nathaniel continued to wander along the shoreline, the size of the projecting rocks increased and, he had to clamber over them to continue on his journey. He came to a break in the shoreline where water was coursing down into the Pond making the adjoining rocks extremely slippery. It became obvious to him that it was impossible to go further and, as the twilight faded Nathaniel retraced his steps back to the house, his view of the path being aided with the moon's luminosity.

Lists, Lamps, Literature and Leisure

When Nathaniel walked through the backdoor the fire was still ablaze, its glowing embers giving a soft illumination to the homely scene as darkness fell. He found his family studying their shopping list. Certain items --- clothes, books, various foodstuffs that could not be purchased in Raymond --- had been carried from Salem. The list was in readiness for the next visit, and members of the family could add their requirements. Already included were a phial of essence of peppermint and soap, writing paper for Elizabeth and a new mixing bowl for Jane. A jar of guava jelly and drinking chocolate had been added by Nathaniel. He had

enjoyed the jelly when they were in Salem, and the tin of drinking chocolate on the shelf was almost empty. He also made a request for a larger jacket for daytime wear.

The oil lamps and the fire gave a cosy and relaxed atmosphere, and the family sat in the comfortable surroundings, listening to Nathaniel read aloud. He had chosen one of his real favourites, Spenser's 'Faerie Queene.' His overall stance when standing to read never faltered. He would hold the book firmly open with his left hand whilst clasping his fingers over the top of the pages to keep the book steady. When reading aloud, unknown to himself, but obvious to his audience, Nathaniel's voice took on a melodic tone and his facial expressions engaged a versatility that allowed each character and situation to come alive and give a visual image of the narrative. Even when reading to himself, his facial expressions would change with the fluidity of the story.

After reading, Nathaniel asked for a cup of hot chocolate and, as the tin was now completely empty, was pleased he had added it to the shopping list. Whilst waiting, he remembered to look up the word 'glyph' that Peter had used when talking about the Images. His dictionary gave the meaning as, 'an ornamented cavity in building.'¹¹

Nathaniel decided that tomorrow he would take his copy of 'Rob Roy,' walk up the hill to Pulpit Rock and sit and read. The history surrounding Pulpit Rock, an isolated but beautiful spot, greatly interested Nathaniel, and the older residents of Raymond had been ready to share its legends and sinister folklore with him. The atmosphere surrounding the rock had deterred some from visiting, but not Nathaniel; he relished the macabre ambiance.

At bedtime, the view from Nathaniel's chamber window had taken on a different manifestation from the morning. The onset of darkness and the breaking through of the moon's incandescence gave an illuminous glow, causing the scenery to emerge as a spectral manifestation. The remaining covering of powdery snow frosting the tops of the remote

White Mountains was illuminated in a fluorescent violet and the distinct branches of the distant trees were silhouetted against the backdrop of the moonlit sky.

Nathaniel drew the curtains and climbed into bed, thinking of more adventures tomorrow, and those trout for breakfast. Tired and contented he snuggled between the bedclothes and drifted into a dream-filled sleep reliving today's activities, roaming in the forest, sitting on the flat rock fishing and revisiting previously discovered haunts. He dreamt of future stories he could write, some featuring this wild landscape as a backdrop. He would never forget this area and its offer of freedom as long as he lived.

“Time Flies Over Us, But Leaves Its Shadow Behind”

The remaining days in this idyllic setting went all too soon for Nathaniel. Discussions had resumed about his education and by July 1819, he had returned to the house on Herbert Street to reengage with his education and prepare for College. Nathaniel enrolled in Bowdoin College in Brunswick in 1821, stopping at the house in Raymond on the journey to the college. By this time, he had not seen his mother for almost two years although they had continued to exchange letters in which Nathaniel had expressed his wish for his mother to remain in Raymond so he could spend his college vacations there. The family however returned to the house on Herbert Street in 1822, leaving behind a few items of furniture to be transported at a later date.

After graduating at Bowdoin College in 1825, Nathaniel returned to Salem. He eventually found the book in which he had hidden ‘Moderate Views’ and shared the poem with his family; however, he could not remember the whereabouts of the diary, Richard had presented him with. He thought it had travelled with him on his return to Salem in July 1819, but it was nowhere to be found. It had not reappeared amongst the furniture items that had been left behind in 1822 and which had been transported back to Salem in August 1824.

Neither Uncle Richard nor Aunt Susan made mention of finding the diary when Nathaniel returned to Raymond for a visit a month before he left college in July 1825. He had to accept its loss but hoped it would turn up one day and he could relive the narrative he had recorded of his youth spent during those halcyon days in Raymond.

The Rest Is History

The extensive wilderness and chronicle of folklore that surrounded the small frontier town of Raymond stimulated Hawthorne's imagination and his aforethought for inclusion in many of his later literary creations compositions would allow him to craft a foothold between fiction and reality.

There is no doubt that the time Nathaniel spent in Raymond had an infallible impact on him and his writing throughout his life. Endorsements also remain from his time there --- Nat's Chair, Nat's Rock, and Nat's Cave --- although being able to find his initials scratched on its wall may not be possible. Albeit with major refurbishments to its interior⁵, the Hawthorne House in Raymond where Nathaniel and his family lived still stands proudly in the same location, thanks to the 'Hawthorne Community Association.' Their overall determination, boundless energy and enthusiasm in pursuit of renovating, preserving and continuing to raise interest in the property's functionality whilst helping to foster interest of future generations across the globe in becoming followers of Hawthorne cannot be underestimated.

'Moderate Views'

With passions unruffled untainted by pride,

By reason my life let me square,

The wants of my nature are cheaply supplied,

And the rest are but folly and rare,

Now vainly through infinite trouble and strife,

The many their labours employ,

Since all, that is truly delightful in life,

To what all if they please may enjoy.

Nathaniel Hathorne

Salem February 13th, 1817

Notes

1. As this article is set in 1819, it carries the name 'Hathorne.'
2. Excerpt from Hawthorne's letter to his friend, Richard Henry Stoddard in 1853.
3. Conversation between Hawthorne and James T Fields in December 1863.
4. Extract from Nathaniel's letter to his Uncle Robert, July 27th 1818 (CE15:107)
5. The stacked chimneys were removed during the redesign of the property's interior into the Radoux Meeting House during the early 1850s. The picture on the frontispiece of this article is from 1891 and therefore post the removal of the two original chimneys.
6. In 1851 Hawthorne wrote 'The Wonder Book for Girls and Boys' contained a story titled 'The Chimaera' which featured 'Pegasus the Winged Horse.' (CE7 144 -167)
7. Uncle Richard had given Nathaniel the diary at the start of their summer visit in 1816, writing on the first leaf: "*Presented by Richard Manning, to his nephew Nathaniel Hathorne, with the advice that he write out his thoughts, some every day, in as good words as he can, upon any and all subjects, as it is one of the best means of his securing for mature years, command of thought and language. Raymond, June 1, 1816.*" (Hawthorne's First Diary 37)
8. Nathaniel's finishing sentence, "And I'm never coming home again" was mentioned in 'A Life In Letters' by Elizabeth as follows: "*Perhaps, he said, never returning that we might value him the more while he stayed with us.*" (A life in Letters 141) Another reason, possibly due to his father not returning from his sea voyage when Nathaniel was only four years old; other members in Nathaniel's lineage had also perished at sea.
9. Hawthorne's 'Grandfather's Chair' was published in 1841
10. Extract from Nathaniel's letter to his Uncle Robert dated May 2nd, 1820 (CE15:122)

11. Noah Webster's dictionary, 'A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language' known as the first truly American dictionary, published in 1806.

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Disclaimer

The purpose of this article is to entertain by constructing a fictitious portrait of a day in the life of Nathaniel Hawthorne. It contains certain historical facts, such as locations and residents of Raymond are based on the time period in which the story is set and were available at the time of writing. The content around occurrences and dialogue, apart from those already written and published in the public domain, are products of the author's imagination and are not to be construed as being factual. All effort has been executed to present accurate, dependable, and complete information wherever possible. The author declares any disparities in timelines, distances, and name changes as her own.

Additional Note from the Author

Although this article draws on content and extracts contained in "Hawthorne's First Diary With An Account Of Its Discovery and Loss," it is with respectful acceptance that to the author's knowledge, any complete and official account of its authenticity has yet to appear.