



Unit: Daily Life

Lesson 4.2: Household Names

Aim: To become familiar with several major figures in New York history.

Objective: Students read short descriptions about the lives and accomplishments of several important household names in mid-19th-century New York and Brooklyn and try to match the bios to related primary source documents.

Materials:

1. Handout with household name bios (see next page)
2. Primary source documents related to household name bios
 - a) Walt Whitman poem
http://www.vasudevasever.com/home/sites/poetseers.org/html/earlyamericans/walt_whitman/index/crossing_brooklyn_ferry
 - b) Plymouth Congregational Church etching
<http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/civilwar/cwdoc012.html>
 - c) Mathew Brady Civil War soldier portrait of Private Charles Mitchell
<http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/civilwar/cwdoc044.html>
 - d) *New York Tribune* front page
 - e) “Boss Tweed” political cartoon
 - f) P.T. Barnum flier or advertisement
<http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/civilwar/cwdoc019.html>

Procedure:

1. Seat students in small groups of 4-6.
2. Explain to the class that each group must read the bios and try to match them with a corresponding primary source document, using clues from the text. Groups must reach a consensus about the matches before raising their hands to indicate that they have finished.
3. As each group finishes, they can record their pairs on the board.
4. When most groups have finished, go over the pairs together, discussing discrepancies. At this point the teacher should provide the correct answer, if necessary.
5. Teachers may wish to reward the “winning” group (first to finish with correct answers). As Whitman, Beecher, and Greeley were writers, a pencil might be a good reward. Other thematic rewards include a posed group photo in honor of Mathew

Brady, play money in honor of Boss Tweed, or animal crackers in honor of P.T. Barnum.

Household Name Bios:

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Walt Whitman was born in a farmhouse on Long Island, but moved to Brooklyn with his family at the age of four. As a young man, he worked as a printer, reporter, carpenter, and teacher, but he is most famous for his poetry collection, *The Leaves of Grass*, “a penetrating look into New York’s soul.” Whitman was appointed editor of the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* in 1846, but was dismissed for political reasons two years later. During the Civil War, he left Brooklyn initially to look for his brother, who was missing after the Battle of Fredericksburg. Whitman made nearly 600 hospital visits, comforting close to 100,000 wounded soldiers during this period. His wartime verses and efforts turned Brooklyn’s poet into America’s national poet.

Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887)

Beecher was a clergyman and the first pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn from 1847-1887. He was an outspoken abolitionist who also championed women’s rights and temperance. His fashionable congregation in Brooklyn Heights was a powerful influence in attracting wealthy families to move to Brooklyn. Plymouth Church single-handedly raised and equipped a volunteer regiment after the outbreak of the Civil War. Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the famous anti-slavery novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, was Henry’s sister.

Mathew Brady (1823-1896)

Mathew Brady came to New York at the age of 16 and studied photography with a number of mentors including Samuel F.B. Morse, who had recently introduced photography to America. Brady showed a natural gift and opened his own portrait studio in 1844. He was soon known as one of America’s greatest photographers. After Brady took his portrait during a trip to Brooklyn during his Presidential campaign, Abraham Lincoln credited him for helping him win the election. During the Civil War, Brady left his portrait studio to photograph the battlefields. His graphic photo-documentation of the war was the first of its kind.

Horace Greeley (1811-1872)

Born in New Hampshire, Greeley came to New York in 1831 and later became the founding editor of the *New York Tribune*, one of the first “penny daily” newspapers of the time. He also published a weekly edition, which circulated nationwide, reaching close to a million readers and exerting a huge influence on popular opinion. Greeley used the paper to promote his own political opinions on social reform. During the Civil War, his strong editorials created much controversy in both the North and the South. Originally a supporter of the Whig party, Greeley later helped found the Republican Party, and in 1872, was nominated as the Democratic candidate for President. He ran against incumbent Ulysses S. Grant, who won by a landslide. Greeley died one month later.

William Marcy Tweed aka “Boss Tweed” (1823-1878)

Born in New York City, Tweed was an ambitious, powerful figure who basically controlled New York politics until his fall in 1871. He built his power by appointing and buying the elections of his friends, who came to be known as the “Tweed Ring.” He was popular among the Irish immigrants for whom he secured jobs and aid from the city, and was one of the few local politicians to give immigrants a popular voice. Still, he misused his power by openly buying votes and encouraging judicial corruption. In 1871, *The New York Times* printed an expose which eventually led to a conviction of embezzlement. Tweed died in prison.

P.T. Barnum (1810-1891)

Barnum established his American Museum in the center of old New York. For a 25 cent admission, New Yorkers from all walks of life—both immigrants and native-born, working class and middle class, men and women, residents and visitors—came together to view his exhibits, which ranged from the curiously bizarre to the sensationally monstrous. The Museum’s most famous attractions included General Tom Thumb, who stood 25 inches high and weighed 15 pounds; Jumbo the Elephant—a seven-ton giant almost 12 feet high, purchased from the London Zoo; and the original Siamese twins, Chang and Eng, born outside of Bangkok, Siam, in 1819, who were joined at the chest for life. Also featuring educational natural history exhibits, the Museum always drew a paying crowd. After two devastating fires, Barnum closed the Museum and took his show on the road in a traveling circus, which is still well-known today.

New-York Tribune.

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NEW-YORK, THURSDAY, AUGUST 31, 1865.

PRICE FOUR CENTS.

passed. He has every confidence in future success, but thinks it useless to make attempts during the Winter months.

The Great Canal was opened on the 17th, and a vessel laden with coal passed from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea.

The convention between Austria and Prussia is concluded. Concerning the Danube, Prussia gets Saxony, paying Austria a pecuniary indemnity. The Prussian Government of the Danube continues. Prussia rules Schleswig, and Austria Holstein.

Albion's performance skaps are quoted at 21 1/2.

Mr. Lincoln's story of proceedings on the Great Eastern was published by all the London papers on the morning of the 19th.

Commercial Intelligence.

LONDON MONEY MARKET.—Consols are firmer and advanced. The discount market is unchanged.

STATE OF TRADE.—The Manchester market was heavy, with a decline of 1/4 on iron and yarn.

LIVERPOOL.—**RETIACHTER MARKET.**—The market is generally dull, with a depressed tendency. The weather is improving. Messrs. Bismarck, Taylor & Co. and Whitehall, Clark & Co. report Flour flat; Wheat dull, and three days' advance is barely maintained, owing to lower weather. Corn quiet; Mixed, 31/2@32.

LIVERPOOL PROVISION MARKET.—The PROVISION market is generally more business. Messrs. England, Alder & Co. and Gledhill, Price & Co. report Beef firm, with an advance of 1/2 on the week; Pork heavy, and advanced 1/2; Bacon quiet, with a decline of 1/2 on the week.

FROM WASHINGTON.

Special Dispatch to The N. Y. Tribune.

WASHINGTON, Wednesday, Aug. 30, 1865.

SOUTHERN COTTON.

There is a large amount of cotton in the South—particularly in Alabama and Georgia—which was sold to the Confederacy under Mr. J. D. T. De Bree's arrangements, for which certificates only have been given, the bonds not having been made about the time when the celebrated Southern Confederacy was compelled to suspend business. A very large amount of this cotton has been captured already. Mr. W. C. Cobb of Montgomery, Ala., who was one of the first Alabamians to appear here with his hat in his hand, and who was successful in his application for a pardon, is now engaged, as we are informed, in driving about that country, assuring the victims that the Government of the United States is liable for all cotton so situated that it may capture, and offers his services as counsel in such cases for a contingent fee graduated according to the amount of the claim at from one-half to three-fourths the net proceeds of the

sales of South Carolina. These applications have not been acted on by the President.

Base Ball.

Special Dispatch to The N. Y. Tribune.

WASHINGTON, Wednesday, Aug. 30, 1865.

THE NATIONALS VS. ATLANTICS.

A Delegation of the National Base Ball Club to-day counted the champions of Atlanta to the Executive Mansion, and had an interesting interview with the President. The Hon. A. P. German, Postmaster of the United States Senate, introduced the visitors in a brief speech, in which the President replied, thanking the visitors for the honor they had conferred by calling upon him, after which he shook hands with them, and they proceeded on a tour of inspection of the different Departments.

THE LATE GOV. BROUGH.

Meeting of Ohio Citizens in Washington—Resolutions of Respect and Condolence—Eulogium of Chief-Justice Chase, should be sent to The N. Y. Tribune.

ANDERSONVILLE.

THE WIRZ TRIAL YESTERDAY.

HANDCUFFING THE ACCUSED.

WHY IT WAS DONE.

A Rebel Surgeon Complains of the Prison.

