

Lyceum 107, August 21, 2025 – – a forum to Think, Discuss, Share, and Learn from one another. Your input is welcomed - Iron sharpens iron.

Neighborhood “The 1826, in Connecticut, a farmer named Josiah Holbrook started a school for ‘the general diffusion of knowledge and raising the moral and intellectual taste’ of Americans. In those days, the opportunities for higher education were limited to those venerable old universities that had long served the upper crust. Holbrook’s vision was to make learning – practical, liberal, and humane – available to working people of all kinds. He named his school the Lyceum, after the garden where Aristotle once taught his students philosophy.... We need to go deeper than the superficial fights that characterize public life. We need to return to the first principles and meet each other there as human beings.” – Nathan Beacom, Plough Magazine, Autumn 2023, p. 9.

15 Historical Figures From the 1800s That Could Have Been the Greatest to Ever Live, nevertheless they were remarkable. They worked tirelessly in view of others and quietly behind the scenes. Love recognizes that every gift and talent come from God. It recognizes that these individuals were given and developed their gifts and talents, but not to become proud, arrogant, and patronizing. Humility is powerful, for it is based on the sense of being dependent on the grace of God.

-Roger J. Vanden Busch

1. Ada Lovelace

Often considered the world's first computer programmer, Ada Lovelace envisioned the potential of computing a century before it became reality. Working with Charles Babbage on his analytical engine, she foresaw machines processing not just numbers but ideas. Her brilliance was dismissed in her lifetime due to her gender.

2. Toussaint Louverture

A former enslaved man who led the Haitian Revolution, Louverture was a military and political genius. He challenged the colonial world order and dreamed of a free and independent Haiti. His capture and death in a French prison ended a legacy that could have transformed more than one nation.

3. Mary Anning

As a self-taught fossil collector in England, Mary Anning made some of the most significant geological discoveries of the 19th century. Her work laid the foundation for paleontology, but being a working-class woman, she was rarely credited during her life.

4. Nikola Tesla

Though he has gained fame in modern times, Tesla spent much of his life broke and overlooked. His visionary ideas in electricity and wireless transmission were decades ahead of his time. If better supported, Tesla might have shaped the 20th century even more profoundly.

5. Harriet Tubman

Known for leading enslaved people to freedom via the Underground Railroad, Tubman was also a Civil War spy, nurse, and advocate for women's rights. Despite her incredible contributions, she spent much of her life in poverty and obscurity.

6. Alexander Pushkin

Pushkin revolutionized Russian literature and laid the groundwork for Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. A master of verse, his political ideas and dueling death at just thirty-seven cut short a life that could have changed Russia's cultural and political path.

7. Ignaz Semmelweis

This Hungarian physician discovered that handwashing could drastically reduce infections in maternity wards. Ridiculed by the medical establishment, he died in an asylum. Only years later did germ theory prove him right.

8. Emily Dickinson

Now hailed as one of America's greatest poets, Dickinson lived a reclusive life and published few poems in her lifetime. Her deeply introspective and experimental work was too radical for her era, but it is now celebrated for its brilliance.

9. John Snow

A pioneer in epidemiology, Snow traced a cholera outbreak to a contaminated water pump before germ theory was accepted. His data-driven approach could have revolutionized public health much earlier if his work had been embraced sooner.

10. Simon Bolívar

Called "The Liberator," Bolívar freed much of South America from Spanish rule. His dream of a united Latin America was never realized, and political division diminished his vision. Yet his ideas shaped the continent's future.

11. Charles Babbage

While his machines were never completed in his lifetime, Babbage invented the concept of a programmable computer. His work with Ada Lovelace should have propelled him into the pantheon of scientific legends long before the digital age.

12. Sarah Breedlove (Madam C.J. Walker)

America's first female self-made millionaire, Walker built a beauty empire and used her wealth to support social causes. As a Black woman in the 1800s, her success was a revolutionary act. Her impact on business and activism continues to inspire.

13. Joseph Lister

While Lister's promotion of antiseptic surgery revolutionized medicine, many peers initially dismissed him. His insistence on sterile practices eventually saved countless lives, but acceptance came slowly, costing many more.

14. Emily Brontë

Author of "Wuthering Heights," Emily's only novel, shocked Victorian England with its emotional intensity. She died young, and critics long ignored her work, but modern readers now see her as one of the 19th century's boldest literary voices.

15. Richard Trevithick

Often overshadowed by names like Stephenson, Trevithick built the first full-scale working railway steam locomotive. Had he found better funding and recognition, his influence on transportation history could have been monumental. -Internet.