

was especially well known for the work that appeared for decades in the *New Yorker* magazine. A vulnerable man who at one time or another was plagued by anxiety, depression, heavy drinking, impotence, and (in his last years) blindness, Thurber's profound understanding of the intimate association that can exist between comedy and tragedy gave his work a sophisticated dimension more common in French humor than in its U.S. counterpart. Thurber had appreciative audiences on both sides of the Atlantic, and was himself particularly attracted to France, first visiting there as a young man shortly before the end of World War I.

Raised in Columbus, Ohio, Thurber was both repulsed and powerfully attracted by Paris when the U.S. Army stationed him there in 1918. Thurber was still a virgin at nearly twenty-five, a state highly symbolic of Thurber's American innocence at the time; he lost that virginity in Paris with a dancer from the Folies Bergères. Not surprisingly, one of Thurber's favorite novelists was Henry James, another U.S. writer who was fascinated by the appeal and danger the Old World might represent to an American.

Not experiencing much success as a writer back home in Ohio after he left the army, Thurber returned to France in 1925 to work for the Paris edition of the *Chicago Tribune*; while editing the paper's Riviera edition, he discovered the appeal of the south of France. It was on Thurber's return to live in the United States after this French stay that he began his association with the *New Yorker*. By the time he went back to France yet again in 1937, he had become a writer of international renown and socialized while there with the likes of Ernest Hemingway, Lillian Hellman, and Janet Flanner.

In hiring Thurber in 1927, the *New Yorker* editor brought together an extraordinary array of writing talent. Thurber would work with E. B. White, Wolcott Gibbs, Dorothy Parker, and Robert Benchley. Of Thurber's abundant work, most famous would be his 1939 short story, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," a psychologically astute description of a timid man's fantasies of power and his mental escapes from the smothering influence of a wife who seeks to control his every move. Like some of Thurber's other work, and much of his own life, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" is simultaneously horrible and hilarious.

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See also: Flanner, Janet; Hemingway, Ernest; James, Henry; Ohio; World War I.

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TIMBER

Timber was a minor item of export from the United States to France from the eighteenth century. As a natural resource managed by French reforestation practice, it was later studied by North American lumber and conservation interests.

North American timber's main value to Europe before the twentieth century was its use in shipbuilding. The depletion and poor quality of Western European forests during the eighteenth century as sources of masts, and that of oak forests in Britain and France in particular, forced

the world's two principal maritime powers to import naval timber and to search far afield for naval masts. Both imported from neighboring states and the Baltic market, but sought masts overseas because masting trees in Europe were often too brittle for use. France, moreover, frequently suffered from British patrols that could intercept Baltic lines of mast supply in time of war. Until the late eighteenth century, Britain enjoyed an advantage over France in its access to the forests of its New England colonies, which produced excellent masts of extraordinary size, superior even to masts supplied by the forests of Canada.

The American Revolution opened the door to French-American relations concerning timber because the colonies rejected the British monopoly on American masts; by 1776, the two sides were negotiating secret sales of surplus French arms from the French and Indian War to the Americans in exchange for tobacco, cotton, whale oil, and lumber. At the same time, Britain's resulting lack of reliable timber disadvantaged its war effort; the most famous consequence was the navy's failure to relieve Cornwallis at Yorktown, which owed partly to the fleet's poor condition after storm gales had played on inferior masts, planking, and pitch.

In 1785, Louis XVI sent André Michaux and his son, François André Michaux, to the United States to discover which trees could be shipped back to France to grow profitably in its forest-depleted areas. Their findings yielded no commercial benefit, although their 1810 publication *North American Sylva* remained for decades the most comprehensive account of the seeds, plants, and trees east of the Mississippi.

Although some illicit trade occurred between New England and the French West Indies, France could not quickly exploit its new timber opportunities, even after the French-American treaty of amity and commerce in 1778. British patrolling interfered with would-be French transatlantic trade. After the war, desiring only oak timber for naval usage, French officials underestimated the pine, spruce, and fir forests of New England. Nor did they develop contacts with potential live oak suppliers in South Carolina and Georgia, preferring instead to maintain procurement of timber from the Baltics and Russia. These factors, coupled with the British blockade of Europe during the Napoleonic wars, generally limited timber shipments from the United States to France until well into the nineteenth century.

The Napoleonic wars, meanwhile, caused Britain to rethink its reliance on Baltic timber. Like all of continental Europe, Denmark and the straits were at the mercy of Napoléon's army, and many of the rest of the timber ports within the Baltic were threatened by Napoléon's continental system. The British government imposed a severe tariff (275 percent in 1807) on Baltic timber imports, the effect of which was to make Canadian timber more cost-effective despite its transatlantic transportation costs. Canadian timber exports, especially from Quebec and Ontario, first to Britain and soon the rest of Europe and the United States, increased steadily in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, Canada became the world's second-largest exporter of lumber, behind Europe, due in large part to the harvesting of timber in British Columbia, which displaced the eastern provinces as the leading exporting province.

The Americans and French did not thoroughly investigate the extent of forests in the United States until the latter part of the nineteenth century. The comment by Count Constantin François de Volney in his 1804 publication *View of the Climate and Soil of the United States of America* that the United States was an “almost universal forest” suggested the vague sense of abundance, shared on both sides of the Atlantic, of American forests. This sense also underlay the practice of exhaustive harvesting and resultant deforestation practiced by the U.S. lumber industry until the twentieth century.

Trade, technology exchange, and shared conservation practice slowly increased between the two countries. The openings of the Hudson-Champlain Canal in 1822 and the Erie Canal in 1825 allowed for logs, sawn lumber, and timber to be rafted from the Great Lakes to Albany for loading on ships bound for New York and overseas, allowing regular lumber exports to France. Meanwhile, a French inventor developed the band saw in the early years of the nineteenth century. It was on display in Baltimore in 1819, but did not become popular until after its exhibition at the Philadelphia Centennial Convention in 1876. Gifford Pinchot, famous for working with President Theodore Roosevelt to bring millions of acres into the National Forest system, and the first director of the U.S. Forest Service, first developed his interests at the Ecole Nationale Forestière in Nancy in 1890, as the profession of forestry did not even exist in the United States at the time. In 1906, C. W. Goodyear founded the Great Southern Lumber Company in Bogalusa, Louisiana. Initially profitable, the company began to founder as a result of overlogging and forest devastation. Good-

year visited the sandy Landes district near Bordeaux and saw the area planted with pines to stabilize the dunes. He returned to Louisiana convinced of the practicability of large-scale reforestation.

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See also: American Revolution; French and Indian War; Louisiana; Mississippi River; Roosevelt, Theodore D.; Tobacco; Whaling.

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TOBACCO

The material history of tobacco and the history of its representations are both significant vectors in the relations across the French Atlantic; however, the relation between the two histories is not a simple one.

There was no knowledge of the cultivation of tobacco outside the Americas before the end of the fifteenth century. It is difficult to give a reliable account of pre-Columbian Amerindian tobacco use because such an account must in large part be reconstructed from European historical, ar-