

THE BAKER FARM IN CONCORD¹



WALDEN: O Baker Farm!

“Landscape where the richest element
Is a little sunshine innocent.” * *

“No one runs to revel
On thy rail-fenced lea.” * *

“Debate with no man hast thou,
With questions art never perplexed,
As tame at the first sight as now,
In thy plain russet gabardine dressed.” * *

“Come ye who love,
And ye who hate,
Children of the Holy Dove,
And Guy Faux of the state,
And hang conspiracies
From the tough rafters of the trees!”

1. (As opposed to the other Baker brother's farm in Lincoln.)

1849

September 11, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) checked out, from [Harvard Library](#), the two volumes of Simon-Alexandre Langlois (1788-1854)'s *HARIVANSA; OU, HISTOIRE DE LA FAMILLE DE HARI, OUVRAGE FORMANT UN APPENDICE DU MAHABHARATA* (Paris, 1834).

S.-A. LANGLOIS, I

S.-A. LANGLOIS, II

He would try his hand at translating from this French translation of the original Sanskrit: "The transmigration of the seven Brahmins."



WALDEN: After a still winter night I awoke with the impression that some question had been put to me, which I had been endeavoring in vain to answer in my sleep, as what-how-when-where? But there was dawning Nature, in whom all creatures live, looking in at my broad windows with serene and satisfied face, and no question on her lips. I awoke to an answered question, to Nature and daylight. The snow lying deep on the earth dotted with young pines, and the very slope of the hill on which my house is placed, seemed to say, Forward! Nature puts no question and answers none which we mortals ask. She has long ago taken her resolution. "O Prince, our eyes contemplate with admiration and transmit to the soul the wonderful and varied spectacle of this universe. The night veils without doubt a part of this glorious creation; but day comes to reveal to us this great work, which extends from earth even into the plains of the ether."

[Thoreau](#) also checked out Professor [Joseph-Héliodore-Sagesse-Vertu Garcin de Tassy](#)'s *HISTOIRE DE LA LITTÉRATURE HINDOUI ET HINDUSTANI* (Paris: Printed under the auspices of the Oriental Translation Committee of Great Britain and Ireland, *TOME I, BIOGRAPHIE ET BIBLIOGRAPHIE*, 1839; *TOME II, EXTRAITS ET ANALYSES*, 1847).



M. GARCIN DE TASSY, I

M. GARCIN DE TASSY, II



After September 11: "They pretend that the verses of [Kabir](#) have four different senses; illusion, spirit, intellect, & the exoteric doctrine of the vedas" See Wilson as above.

The poet [Mir Camar uddin Mast](#) of Delhi who flourished in the last century says "Being seated, to run through



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

the region of the spiritual world; I have had this advantage in books. To be intoxicated by a single glass of wine; I have experienced this pleasure when I have drank the liquor of the esoteric doctrines.”

To have a brother or a sister — to have a gold mine on your farm — to find diamonds in the gravel heaps before your door — how rare these things are

–To share the day with you — to inhabit the earth. Whether to have a god or goddess for companion in your walks or to walk alone — with hinds & villains & carles. Would not a friend enhance the the beauty of the landscape as much as a deer or hare. Every thing would acknowledge & serve such a relation. the corn in the field & the cranberries in the meadows. The flowers & the birds would bloom & sing with a new impulse. There would be more fair days in the year.

What a difference whether you have a brother on earth or not.

Whether in all your walks you meet only strangers or in one house is one who knows you. & whom you know. The Hindoos by constitution possess in in a wonderful degree the faculty of contemplation — they can speculate — they have imagination & invention & fancy. The western man thinks only with ruinous interruptions & friction — his contemplative faculty is rusty & does not work. He is soon aground in the shallows of the practical– It gives him indigestion to think. His cowardly *legs* run away with him — but the Hindoo bravely cuts off his legs in the first place. To him his imagination is a distinct & honorable faculty as valuable as the understanding or the legs– The legs were made to transport it — & it does not merely direct the legs. How incredibly poor in speculation is the western world!– one would have thought that a drop of thought & a single afternoon would have set afloat more speculations—

What has Europe been *thinking* of these two thousand years. A child put to bed half an hour before its time would have invented more systems — would have had more theories set afloat would have amused itself with more thoughts. But instead of going to bed and thinking Europe has got up and gone to work, and when she goes to bed she goes to sleep. We cannot go to bed & think as children do The Yankee cannot sit but he sleeps– I have an uncle who is obliged to sprout potatoes on sundays to keep him awake. The Hindoo thinks so vividly & intensely that he can think sitting or on his back — far into a siesta He can dream awake.

Their imaginations are lava or pumice in the cold state — torpid Icelandic– It was not in such a temperature that the lava flowed into these beautiful forms. More genial circumstances would melt the rock.



BAKER FARM

After September 11: –We have a saying an East quarter bargain i.e. a secret one– The Copper mines –the old silver mine now deserted –the holt –the great meadows– The Baker Farm –Conantum –Beck-Stows swamp –the Great Fields –Poland –The Dam Meadows –The Eastabrooks place –Jenny Dugan’s –The Ministerial Lot –Fairy land –Sleepy Hollow –Laurel glen Talls Island The bog-iron mines –The old lime-kiln –the place where the cinnamon stone was found –Hayne’s Island– I usually went across lots & some times I swam the river holding my clothes up in one hand to keep them dry. & at last crawling out the other side like an otter or I forded broad deep & rapid streams on temporary Peruvian bridges which I constructed, by letting fall a rider across & using a steady pole– – The Gulf meadows Caesar’s –the Caedar Swamp –Paul Dudleys – John Le Gross’ Country –The Price place –Capt Bate’s The Fort of the rocks– ’s Folly the Old Marlboro road. The Bridle road the 2nd Division

Between Anurnsuck & strawberry hills in Mr Hapgood’s pasture I have measured a chestnut 23 feet in circumference at a foot from the ground. Well meadow– For brooks we have Cold brook –Pantry Brook – Well meadow brook –Nut meadow Brook Wrights brook –Nagog –brook –Nashoba brook –Fort Pond brook – Saw Mill brook –Mill brook –Spencer brook. &c &c.

For hills –Nagog famous for huckleberries where I have seen hundreds of bushels at once –Nashoba –of Indian memory –from which you see Uncanunuc Mt well –Strawberry hill –from which you glimpse Nagod Pond – Annurnsuck –Ponkawtasset –Balls hill Fair Haven –Round –Goodman’s –Willis’s Nobscot –where old Gen Nixon lived –by the Sudbury inn v poetry Turnpike hill –Lincoln Hill –Bare hill Mt Tabor, Pine hill, Prospect hill Nawshawtuct. Wind mill Hill. &c

For ponds Walden –Flints or Sandys White Now, since the railroad & the Irish have prophaned Walden – the most beautiful of all our lakes –a gem of crystal –(v tree story) It deserves a better name– One has suggested God’s drop –another Yellow pine lake another Hygae’s Water, and another To be sure its shores are white & I used to gather its sand in my youth to make sand paper with.

JAMES BAKER

1850

January 5, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) visited the Beech Spring on the farm of [Jacob Baker](#) in Lincoln, known as “Pleasant Meadow” or “Pleasant Acres,” near Flint’s Pond or Sandy Pond, for the first time. This spring is situated in what was a glacial channel between Pine Hill and Bare Hill, the spillway by which Glacial Lake Concord fed into Glacial Lake Sudbury. The channel runs for about half a mile on a northeast-to-southwest gradient from Sandy Pond Road to the Adams impoundment above the meadows and fields of the old [Jacob Baker Farm](#).²

WALDEN: In the deepest snows, the path which I used from the highway to my house, about half a mile long, might have been represented by a meandering dotted line, with wide intervals between the dots. For a week of even weather I took exactly the same number of steps, and of the same length, coming and going, stepping deliberately and with the precision of a pair of dividers in my own deep tracks, -to such routine the winter reduces us,- yet often they were filled with heaven’s own blue. But no weather interfered fatally with my walks, or rather my going abroad, for I frequently tramped eight or ten miles through the deepest snow to keep an appointment with a beech tree, or a yellow-birch, or an old acquaintance among the pines; when the ice and snow causing their limbs to droop, and so sharpening their tops, had changed the pines into fir-trees; wading to the tops of the highest hills when the snow was nearly two feet deep on a level, and shaking down another snow storm on my head at every step; or sometimes creeping and floundering thither on my hands and knees, when the hunters had gone into winter quarters.



January 5: Discovered a small grove of beeches [*Fagus grandifolia* or American Beech] to day – between Walden & Flints Ponds –standing by a little run which –at length makes its way through [Jacob Baker](#)’s meadow and a deep broad ditch which he has dug –& emptied in to the River– A tree which has almost disappeared from Conc woods, though once plenty
It is worth the while to go some mile only to see a single beech tree. So fine a bole it has so perfect in all its details– So fair & smooth its bark –as if painted with a brush –and fringed with lichens I could stand an hour and look at one.

BAKER FARM

2. [Jacob Baker](#) lived near Flint’s Pond or Sandy Pond, from which Thoreau as a youth had collected sand for his family’s sandpaper business (since sandpaper had not been invented until 1834, Henry would have needed to have been at least in his late teens before collecting this sand), which in 1849 he had considered accepting under the name “God’s Drop” (rather than Walden Pond!) “since the railroad & the Irish have profaned Walden,” and it was his brother [James Baker](#) who had the other more famous “[Baker Farm](#)” (Gleason K7) nearer Walden Pond which is described in [WALDEN](#).

The farms of the Baker boys were close but we do not know that they were contiguous — perhaps a plot map can show us.



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

One of the old hunters mentioned in [WALDEN](#), Sam “Old Fox” Nutting, lived on this Baker homesite in Lincoln (next screen):



WALDEN: One old hunter who has a dry tongue, who used to come to bathe in Walden once every year when the water was warmest, and at such times looked in upon me, told me, that many years ago he took his gun one afternoon and went out for a cruise in Walden Wood; and as he walked the Wayland road he heard the cry of hounds approaching, and ere long a fox leaped the wall into the road, and as quick as thought leaped the other wall out of the road, and his swift bullet had not touched him. Some way behind came an old hound and her three pups in full pursuit, hunting on their own account, and disappeared again in the woods. Late in the afternoon, as he was resting in the thick woods south of Walden, he heard the voice of the hounds far over toward Fair Haven still pursuing the fox; and on they came; their hounding cry which made all the woods ring sounding nearer and nearer, now from Well-Meadow, now from the Baker Farm. For a long time he stood still and listened to their music, so sweet to a hunter's ear, when suddenly the fox appeared, threading the solemn aisles with an easy coursing pace, whose sound was concealed by a sympathetic rustle of the leaves, swift and still, keeping the ground, leaving his pursuers far behind; and, leaping upon a rock amid the woods, he sat erect and listening, with his back to the hunter. For a moment compassion restrained the latter's arm; but that was a short-lived mood, and as quick as thought can follow though his piece was levelled, and *whang!* -the fox rolling over the rock lay dead on the ground. The hunter still kept his place and listened to the hounds. Still on they came, and now the near woods resounded through all their aisles with their demoniac cry. At length the old hound burst into view with muzzle to the ground, and snapping the air as if possessed, and ran directly to the rock; but spying the dead fox she suddenly ceased her hounding, as if struck dumb with amazement, and walked round and round him in silence; and one by one her pups arrived, and, like their mother, were sobered into silence by the mystery. Then the hunter came forward and stood in their midst, and the mystery was solved. They waited in silence while he skinned the fox, then followed the brush a while, and at length turned off into the woods again. That evening a Weston Squire came to the Concord hunter's cottage to inquire for his hounds, and told how for a week they had been hunting on their own account from Weston woods. The Concord hunter told him what he knew and offered him the skin; but the other declined it and departed. He did not find his hounds that night, but the next day learned that they had crossed the river and put up at a farm-house for the night, whence, having been well fed, they took their departure early in the morning.

The hunter who told me this could remember one Sam Nutting, who used to hunt bears on Fair Haven Ledges, and exchange their skins for rum in Concord village; who told him, even, that he had seen a moose there. Nutting had a famous fox-hound named Burgoyne, -he pronounced it Bugine,- which my informant used to borrow. In the "Wast Book" of an old trader of this town, who was also a captain, town-clerk, and representative, I find the following entry. Jan. 18th, 1742-3, "John Melven Cr. by 1 Grey Fox 0-2-3;" they are not now found here; and in his ledger, Feb. 7th, 1743, Hezekiah Stratton has credit "by $\frac{1}{2}$ a Catt skin 0-1-4 $\frac{1}{2}$;" of course, a wild-cat, for Stratton was a sergeant in the old French war, and would not have got credit for hunting less noble game. Credit is given for deer skins also, and they were daily sold. One man still preserves the horns of the last deer that was killed in this vicinity, and another has told me the particulars of the hunt in which his uncle was engaged. The hunters were formerly a numerous and merry crew here. I remember well one gaunt Nimrod who would catch up a leaf by the road-side and play a strain on it wilder and more melodious, if my memory serves me, than any hunting horn.

1851

July 11, Friday night: [Henry Thoreau](#), walking at night with [Ellery Channing](#), became concerned that Ellery seemed incapable of grasping the fact that Nature has a darker side:



July 11, Friday: At 7¹/₄ PM with W.E.C. go forth to see the moon the glimpses of the moon– We think she is not quite full– we can detect a little flatness on the eastern side.³ Shall we wear thick coats? The day has been warm enough, but how cool will the night be? It is not sultry as the last night. As a general rule, it is best to wear your thickest coat even in a July night. Which way shall we walk? North west –that we may see the moon returning– But on that side the river prevents our walking in the fields –and on other accounts that direction is not so attractive. We go toward Bear Garden Hill.⁴ The sun is setting. The meadow sweet has bloomed. These dry hills & pastures are the places to walk by moon light– The moon is silvery still –not yet inaugurated. The tree tops are seen against the amber west– Methinks I see the outlines of one spruce among them –distinguishable afar. My thoughts expand & flourish most on this barren hill where in the twilight I see the moss spreading in rings & prevailing over the short thin grass carpeting the earth –adding a few inches of green to its circle annually while it dies within.

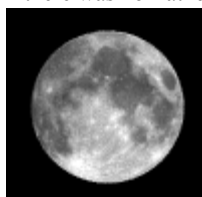
As we round the sandy promontory we try the sand & rocks with our hands –the sand is cool on the surface but warmer a few inches beneath –though the contrast is not so great as it was in May. The larger rocks are perceptibly warm. I pluck the blossom of the milk-weed in the twilight & find how sweet it smells. The white blossoms of the Jersey tea dot the hill side –with the yarrow everywhere. Some woods are black as clouds –if we knew not they were green by day, they would appear blacker still. When we sit we hear the mosquitoes hum. The woodland paths are not the same by night as by day –if they are a little grown up the eye cannot find them –but must give the reins to the feet as the traveller to his horse –so we went through the aspens at the base of the cliffs –their round leaves reflecting the lingering twilight on the one side the waxing moon light on the other –always the path was unexpectedly open.

Now we are getting into moon light. We see it reflected from particular stumps in the depths of the darkest woods, and from the stems of trees, as if it selected what to shine on.– a silvery light. It is a light of course which we have had all day but which we have not appreciated– And proves how remarkable a lesser light can be when a greater has departed. Here simply & naturally the moon presides– 'Tis true she was eclipsed by the sun –but now she acquires an almost equal respect & worship by reflecting & representing him –with some new quality perchance added to his light –showing how original the disciple may be –who still in mid-day is seen though pale & cloud-like beside his master. Such is a worthy disciple– In his masters presence he still is seen & preserves a distinct existence –& in his absence he reflects & represents him –not without adding some new quality to his light –not servile & never rival– As the master withdraws himself the disciple who was a pale cloud before begins to emit a silvery light –acquiring at last a tinge of golden as the darkness deepens, but not enough to scorch the seeds which have been planted or to dry up the fertilising dews which are falling.

BAKER FARM

Passing now near Well meadow head toward Bakers orchard– The sweet fern & Indigo weed fill the path up to ones middle wetting us with dews so high The leaves are shining & flowing– We wade through the luxuriant vegetation seeing no bottom– Looking back toward the cliffs some dead trees in the horizon high on the rocks make a wild New Hampshire prospect. There is the faintest possible mist over the pond holes, where the frogs are eructating –like the falling of huge drops –the bursting of mephitic air bubbles rising from the bottom –a sort of blubbering Such conversation as I *have* heard between men.– a belching conversation expressing a sympathy of stomachs & abdomens. The peculiar appearance of the Indigo weed, its misty massiveness is

3. Actually, this was the night of the full moon. At 7PM there was no flatness whatever on the eastern side:



4. In recent years Bear Garden Hill has been proposed for a condo complex, to accompany the office development that had been proposed for Brister's Hill (but which has since been defeated).



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

BAKER FARM

striking. In Baker's Orchard the thick grass looks like a sea of mowing in this weird moonlight—a bottomless sea of grass—our feet must be imaginative—must know the earth in imagination only as well as our heads. We sit on the fence, & where it is broken & interrupted the fallen & slanting rails are lost in the grass (really thin & wiry) as in water. We ever see our tracks a long way behind, where we have brushed off the dew. The clouds are peculiarly wispy wispy tonight some what like fine flames—not massed and dark nor downy—not thick but slight thin wisps of mist—

I hear the sound of Heywood's brook falling into Fair Haven Pond—inexpressibly refreshing to my senses—it seems to flow through my very bones.—I hear it with insatiable thirst—It allays some sandy heat in me—It affects my circulations—methinks my arteries have sympathy with it—What is it I hear but the pure water falls within me in the circulation of my blood—the streams that fall into my heart?—what mists do I ever see but such as hang over—& rise from my blood—The sound of this gurgling water—running thus by night as by day—falls on all my dashes—fills all my buckets—overflows my float boards—turns all the machinery of my nature makes me a flume—a sluice way to the springs of nature—Thus I am washed thus I drink—& quench my thirst. Where the streams fall into the lake if they are only a few inches more elevated all walkers may hear—

BAKER FARM

On the high path through Bakers wood I see or rather feel the Tephrosia—Now we come out into the open pasture. And under those woods of elm & button wood where still no light is seen—repose a family of human beings—By night there is less to distinguish this locality from the woods & meadows we have threaded.

We might go very near to Farm houses covered with ornamental trees & standing on a high road, thinking that were in the most retired woods & fields still. Having yielded to sleep man is a less obtrusive inhabitant of nature. Now having reached the dry pastures again—we are surrounded by a flood of moon light—The dim cart path over the wood curves gracefully through the Pitch-pines, ever to some more fairy-like spot. The rails in the fences shine like silver—We know not whether we are sitting on the ruins of a wall—or the materials which are to compose a new one. I see half-a mile off a phosphorescent arc on the hill side where Bartletts cliff reflects the moon light. Going by the shanty I smell the excrements of its inhabitants which I had never smelt before.

And now at half past 10 o'clock I hear the cockrils crow in Hubbard's barns.—and morning is already anticipated. It is the feathered wakeful thought in us that anticipates the following day. This sound is wonderfully exhilarating at all times. These birds are worth far more to me for their crowing & cackling—than for their drumsticks & eggs. How singular the connexion of the hen with man, that she leaves her eggs in his barns always—she is a domestic fowl though still a little shyish of him—I cannot looking at the whole as an experiment still and wondering that in each case it succeeds. There is no doubt at last but hens may be kept—they will put there eggs in your barn—by a tacit agreement—They will not wander far from your yard.

JAMES BAKER

July 16, Wednesday: On this day, also, special negotiators Governor Alexander H. Ramsey and Richard W. Thompson carried out their mission as they had been instructed on August 9, 1849 by Secretary of the Interior Thomas Ewing in Washington DC. They gave “presents” to “Sioux” negotiators but did not exceed the limit of



\$6,000.⁰⁰ that the Secretary had placed upon them. They made no binding written commitments that the USA would disburse any cash but arranged that all distributions to the Dakota people would be in the form of annuities of useful goods, agricultural implements, and cattle. They entered into **no** binding, enforceable agreements as to **how** the US would handle its annual distribution to the Dakotas, and they agreed to pay not



more than 2 1/2 cents per acre for what was to become the state of Minnesota. The crippled politician *Taoyateduta* “Our Red Nation,” the Little Crow V of the Dakota band at Kaposia, became a power broker for all the various bands of the Eastern or Woodland Dakota people: the Mdewakantons, the Wahpetons, the

Wahpekutes, the Sissetons, the Yanktons, the Yanktonais, and the Tetons, amounting all told to about 2,000



people who traditionally camped during the summers along the river valleys of the upper Mississippi and lower Minnesota region. His policy was the well-tested one of gradually negotiating away the choice land along the rivers to the overwhelming intrusives in treaties that were not ever honored by the intrusives, in order to buy time and forestall immediate military assaults, while retreating west onto the plains of the Lakota peoples. He was to follow this policy until the warriors of the starving bands would no longer heed him and rose in rebellion in 1862 in an attempt to defeat the volunteer military detachment at The Soldiers' House, "Fort Ridgeley," and massacre the immigrants who had been arriving by boat from Germany at Place Where There is a Cottonwood Grove on the River, "New Ulm." When the Dakota negotiators were presented with the papers at the negotiation ground at the old French cemetery near the ford of Traverse des Sioux in July of the Year of Our Lord 1851, two of the documents were read aloud in English and Dakota but the third document



was not mentioned by the intrusives. When the series of documents was laid out on the barrel heads, it seems that the third document was passed off by those able to read English as a mere "extra copy" — although some of the Dakota negotiators, rightly suspicious, refused to put their sign upon this "extra copy." Their intuition was correct, of course, for the third document was in fact not a copy, but was, as those able to read English well knew, the infamous untranslated "Trader's Paper" which would authorize the US government to pay the proceeds of the treaty to the white traders rather than to the Dakotas, on the basis of the unsubstantiated and unverifiable "accounts" submitted by white men to white men. What the right white man giveth, the left white man taketh away, blessed *et cetera*. *Taoyateduta* "Our Red Nation," Headman Little Crow V, and his sub-Headman relative *Marpiyawicasta* "Man of the Clouds," among other headmen, signed this "Traverse des

Sioux” treaty of 1851.

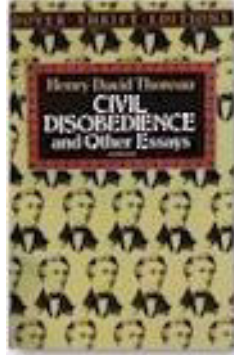
The negotiating team had “purchased” 24,000,000 acres of land for a mere \$1,360,000.⁰⁰ (although most of this \$1,360,000.⁰⁰ was, in the course of events, never paid). The 15% of the total claimed by Alexander H. Ramsey and his secretary Hugh Tyler as their reward for negotiating this deed with the Dakota nation was of course disbursed to them posthaste. Evidently this official Ramsey of the Minnesota territory was cheating Dakota natives not for personal gain but out of simple delight, for he later hotly declared:

The insinuation that I have been interested in speculation in the Indian department I suppose, is stupidly mean, false and malicious.

Bear in mind that ten years later, approaching the final frenzy of this genocide, [Henry Thoreau](#) of Concord, Massachusetts rode on a steamboat with Governor and Mrs. Ramsey and the new Indian Agent in charge, as the steamboat ventured up the Minnesota River past the scene of this crime.



It does not appear that the author of WALDEN and of the essay “Civil Disobedience,” and the governor of the



frontier state, had anything much to say to each other. Other than having to ride on a riverboat together, would either of these gentlemen have been willing to be in the same room with the other? As near as I can guesstimate, the Ramsey family’s official published take amounted to \$75,250.⁰⁰. However, we know that Ramsey’s sidekick Hugh Tyler, **in addition to** the cut he took of the main money, **also** drew down \$55,000.⁰⁰ out of the moneys appropriated for securing the Senate’s approval of the treaty, so we may speculate that Tyler’s total take exceeded \$75,250.⁰⁰ and we may wonder whether in this case the main man in a scam drew down a lesser reward than his helper –which is unprofessional– or whether there was yet **more** graft, as yet unaccounted for, that went into the Ramsey coffer and helped him build his sizeable mansion and his substantial estate, in the saintly city in the county of Ramsey.



Among the others who fed at this trough was Henry Hastings Sibley, who took \$145,000.⁰⁰ (roughly equivalent, in today's money, to \$15,000,000.⁰⁰ or \$16,000,000.⁰⁰).

Colonel Henry Hastings Sibley, a few years later, would lead the troops that put down Minnesota's race war,



and would march the surviving women and children of the Dakota nation, primarily from the farmlands of the Hazelwood Republic of Christian Indians at the reservation on the south bank of the Minnesota River –who had sheltered white neighbors and had welcomed the arrival of Sibley's army of white men because this meant that their friends were safe– off to the Pike Island Aggregation Facility so they could be held, under the maiming grapeshot-loaded cannon of Fort Snelling, as hostages against the good behavior of any hostiles not yet in captivity.

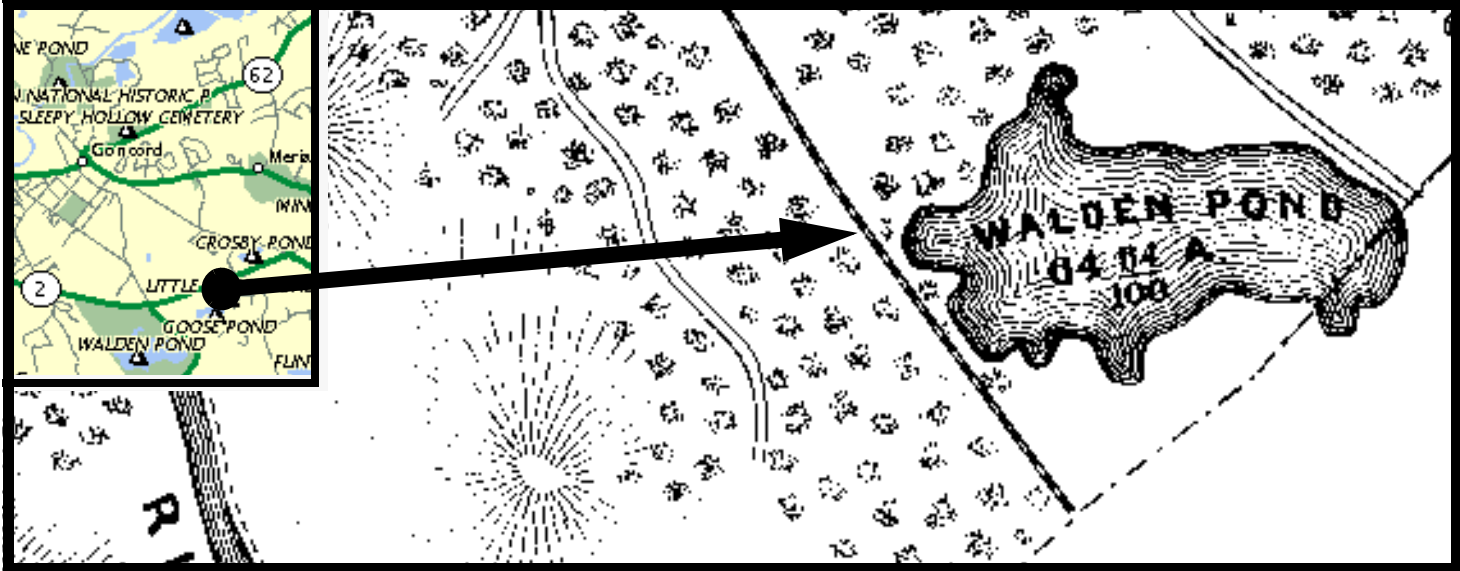


July 16, Wednesday, 1851:... Set out at 3 Pm for Nine Acre Corner bridge via Hubbards bridge & Conantum –returning via dashing brook –rear of [Bakers](#) & railroad at 6¹/₂ Pm.... Came thro the pine plains behind [James Bakers](#) –where late was open pasture now open pitch pine woods –only here and there the grass has given place to a carpet of pine needles– These are among our pleasantest woods –open –level –with blackberry vines interspersed & flowers, as ladies slippers earlier –& pinks On the outskirts each tree has room enough & now I hear the wood thrush [[Catharus](#) [mustelina](#)] from the shade who loves these pine woods as

TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

well as I.–I pass by walden’s scolloped shore.



The epilobium reflects a pink gleam up the vales & down the hills– The chewink [Rufous-Sided Towhee ■ *Pipilo Erythrophthalmus*] jingles on a bushes top–...



The maker of me was improving me.

When I detected this interference I was profoundly moved.

For years I marched to a music

in comparison with which

the military music of the streets

is noise and discord.

I was daily intoxicated,

and yet no man could call me intemperate.

With all your science can you tell

how it is,

and whence it is,

that light comes into the soul?

To explore Thoreau's "Distant Drummer" metaphor in the greatest detail, click here:



July 16, Wednesday: ... The maker of me was improving me. When I detected this interference I was profoundly moved. For years I marched as to a music in comparison with which the military music of the streets is noise & discord. I was daily intoxicated and yet no man could call me intemperate. With all your science can you tell how it is –& whence it is, that light comes into the soul? ...



July 16, Wednesday: Methinks my present experience is nothing my past experience is all in all. I think that no experience which I have today comes up to or is comparable with the experiences of my boyhood–








And not only this is true –but as far back as I can remember I have unconsciously referred to the experience of a previous state of existence. “Our life is a forgetting” &c⁵
 Formerly methought nature developed as I developed and grew up with me. My life was extacy. In youth before I lost any of my senses –I can remember that I was all alive –and inhabited my body with inexpressible satisfaction, both its weariness & its refreshment were sweet to me. This earth was the most glorious musical instrument, and I was audience to its strains. To have such sweet impressions made on us –such extacies begotten of the breezes. I can remember how I was astonished. I said to myself –I said to others– There comes into my mind or soul an indescribable infinite all absorbing divine heavenly pleasure, a sense of elevation & expansion –and have had nought to do with it. I perceive that I am dealt with by superior powers. This is a pleasure, a joy, an existence which I have not procured myself– I speak as a witness on the stand and tell what I have perceived. The morning and the evening were sweet to me, and I lead a life aloof from society of men. I wondered if a mortal had ever known what I knew. I looked in books for some recognition of a kindred experience –but strange to say, I found none. Indeed I was slow to discover that other men had had this experience –for it had been possible to read books & to associate with men on other grounds. The maker of me was improving me. When I detected this interference I was profoundly moved. For years I marched as to a music in comparison with which the military music of the streets is noise & discord. I was daily intoxicated and yet no man could call me intemperate. With all your science can you tell how it is –& whence it is, that light comes into the soul?

DIFFERENT DRUMMER



Set out at 3 Pm for Nine Acre Corner bridge via Hubbards bridge & Conantum –returning via dashing brook – rear of [Bakers](#) & railroad at 6¹/₂ Pm. The song sparrow [[Melospiza](#) [melodia](#)] –the most familiar & New England bird –is heard in fields and pastures –setting this midsummer day to music –as if it were the music of a mossy rail or fence post, a little stream of song cooling –ripling through the noon –the usually unseen songster –usually unheard like the cricket it is so common– Like the poet’s song unheard by most men whose ears are stopped with business. Though perchance it sang on the fence before the farmer’s house this morning for an hour. There are little strains of poetry in our annuals. Berries are just beginning to ripen –and children are planning expeditions after them– They are important as introducing children to the fields & woods –and as wild fruits of which much account is made. During the berry season the Schools have a vacation and many little fingers are busy picking these small fruits– It is ever a pastime not a drudgery. I remember how glad I was when I was kept from school a half a day to pick huckleberries on a neighboring hill all by myself to make a pudding

5. [William Wordsworth](#)’s “Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood,” 1.58: “Our birth is but a sleeping and a forgetting.”








for the family dinner. Ah, they got nothing but the pudding –but I got invaluable experience beside– A half a day of liberty like that –was like the promise of life eternal. It was emancipation in New England. Oh what a day was there my country-man. I see the yellow butterflies now gathered in fleets in the road –& on the flowers of the milkweed *Asclepias pulchra* by the roadside, a really handsome flower. Also the smaller butterfly with reddish wings –& a larger black or steel blue with wings spotted red on edge and one of equal size reddish copper-colored –now you may see a boy stealing after one hat in hand. The earliest corn begins to tassel out, and my neighbor has put his hand in the hill some days ago and abstracted some new potatoes as big as nuts – then covered up again –now they will need or will get no more weeding. The lark [**Eastern Meadowlark** ] *Sturnella magna* sings in the meadow –the very essence of the afternoon is in his strain. This is a New England sound –but the cricket is heard under all sounds. Still the cars come & go with the regularity of nature –of the sun & moon (If a hen puts her eggs elsewhere than in the barns –in woods or among rocks –she is said to steal her nest!) The twittering of swallows  is in the air reminding me of water– The meadow sweet is now in bloom & the yarrow prevails by all road-sides– I see the hard-hack too, homely but dear plant –just opening its red clustered flowers The small aster too now abounds Aster miser –and the tall butter cup still. After wading through a swamp the other day with my shoes in my hand I wiped my feet with Sassafras leaves which reminded me of some Arabian practices The bruised leaves perfuming the air –and by their softness being adapted to this purpose. The tree primrose or Scabish still is seen over the fence. The red wings [**Red-winged Blackbird** ] *Agelaius phoeniceus* & crow blackbirds [**Common Grackle** ] *Quiscalus quiscula* are heard chattering on the trees –& the cowtroopials [**Brown-headed Cowbird** ] *Molothrus ater* are accompanying the cows in the pastures for the sake of the insects they scare up. Oftentimes the thoughtless sportsman has lodged his charge of shot in the cow's legs or body in his eagerness to obtain the birds. St Johns wort one of the first of yellow flowers begins to shine along the road side –the mullein for some time past. I see a farmer cradling his rye John Potter– Fields are partly mown some English grass on the higher parts of the meadow next to the road. The farmers work comes not all at once. In haying time –there is a cessation from other labors to a considerable extent– Planting is done & hoeing mainly –only some turnip-seed is to be scattered amid the corn. I hear the kingbird [**Eastern Kingbird** ] *Tyrannus tyrannus* twittering or chattering like a stout-chested swallow. The prunella sends back a blue ray from under my feet as I walk –the pale lobelia too. The plaintive spring-restoring peep of a blue-bird [**Eastern Bluebird** ] *Sialia sialis* is occasionally heard. I met loads of hay on the road –which the oxen draw indifferently –swaggering in their gate as if it were not fodder for them. Methinks they should testify sometimes that they are working for themselves. The white-weed is turning black. Grapes are half grown and lead the mind forward to autumn. It is an air this afternoon that makes you indifferent to all things –perfect summer –but with a comfortable breeziness –you know not heat nor cold–

What season of the year is this? The balls of the button bush are half formed with its fine glossy red stemmed leaf atoning for its nakedness in the spring.

My eye ranges over green fields of oats –for which there is a demand then somewhere. The wild-rose peeps from amid the alders & other shrubs by the roadside– The elder blow fills the air with its scent. The angelica with its large umbels is gone to seed. On it I find one of those slow-moving green worms with rings spotted black & yellow –like an East Indian production. What if these grew as large as elephants

– The honest & truly fair is more modestly colored

– Notwithstanding the drifting clouds you fear no rain today As you walk you smell some sweet herbage but detect not what it is– Hay is sticking to the willows & the alders on the causeway, & the bridge is sprinkled with it– The hemlock *Cicuta Am.* displays its white umbels now– The yellow lilies reign in the river– The painted tortoises drop off the willow stumps as you go over the bridge– The river is now so low that you can see its bottom shined on by the sun –& travellers stop to look at fishes as they go over –leaning on the rails. The pickerel weed –sends up its heavenly blue. The color of the cows on Fair Haven Hill –how fair a contrast to the hill-side –how striking & wholesome their clean brick red– when were they painted? How carelessly the eye rests on them or passes them by as things of course.

The tansy is budded– The Devils needles seem to rest in air over the water. There is nothing New English about them. Now at 4 Pm I hear the Pewee in the woods [**Wood Pewee** ] *Contopus virens* & the Cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo** ] *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* reminds me of some silence among the birds I have not noticed– The vireo (red-eyed?) [**Vireo** ] *olivaceus* sings like a robin [**Northern Oriole** ] *Icterus galbula* at even incessantly. for I have now turned into Conants woods. The oven bird [**Seiurus** ] *Aurocapillus* helps fill some pauses. The poison sumack shows its green berries now unconscious of guilt. The heart leaved looserife–*Lysimachia Ciliata* is seen in low open woods– The breeze displays the white under sides of the oak leaves & gives a fresh & flowing look to the woods. The river is a dark blue winding stripe amid the green of the meadow What is the color of the world.– Green mixed with yellowish & reddish for hills & ripe grass –& darker green for trees & forests –blue spotted with dark & white for sky & clouds –& dark blue for water. Beyond the old house I hear the squirrel chirp in the wall like a sparrow  so Nature merges her creations into one. I am refreshed by the view of Nobscot and the South-western vales from Conantum seething with the blue element– Here comes a small bird with a ricochet flight & a faint twittering note like a messenger from Elysium. The rush-sparrow [**Field Sparrow** ] *Spizella pusilla* jingles her small change –pure silver, on the

counter of the pasture. From far I see the rye stacked up. A few dead trees impart the effect of wildness to the landscape –though it is a feature rare in an old settled country. Methinks this is the first of dog-days. The air in the distance has a peculiar blue mistiness or furnace-like look –though, as I have said it is not sultry yet– It is not the season for distant views– Mountains are not **clearly** blue now– The air is the opposite to what it is in october & november. You are not inclined to travel. It is a world of orchards & small fruits now –& you can stay at home if the well has cool water in it. The black thimble berry is an honest homely berry now drying up as usual– I used to have a pleasant time stringing them on herds grass stems tracing the wall sides for them. It is pleasant to walk through these elevated fields –terraced upon the side of the hill so that the eye of the walker looks off into the blue cauldron of the air at his own level. Here the haymakers have just gone to tea –(at 5 o’clock the farmers hour –before the afternoon is end –while he still thinks much work may still be done before night.– He does not wait till he is strongly reminded of the night– In the distance some burdened fields are black with haycocks. Some thoughtless & cruel sports man has killed 22 young partridges [**Ruffed Grouse** **Bonasa umbellus** (Partridge)] not much bigger than robins [**American Robin** **Turdus migratorius**], against the laws of Massachusetts & humanity. At the Corner bridge the white lilies are budded. Green apples are now so large as to remind me of codling & the autumn again. The season of fruits is arrived. The dog’s bane has a pretty delicate bell-like flower.– The jersey tea abounds. I see the marks of the scythes in the fields showing the breadth of each swath the mowers cut. Cool springs are now a desideratum. The geranium still hangs on. Even the creeping vines love the brooks & I see where one slender one has struggled down & dangles into the current which rocks it to & fro.⁶ Filberts are formed & you may get the berry stains out of your hands with their husks, if you have any– Night shade is in blossom. Came thro the pine plains behind **James Bakers** –where late was open pasture now open pitch pine woods –only here and there the grass has given place to a carpet of pine needles– These are among our pleasantest woods –open –level –with blackberry vines interspersed & flowers, as ladies slippers earlier –& pinks On the outskirts each tree has room enough & now I hear the wood thrush [**Catharus** **mustelina**] from the shade who loves these pine woods as well as I.– I pass by walden’s scolloped shore. The epilobium reflects a pink gleam up the vales & down the hills– The chewink [**Rufous-Sided Towhee** **Pipilo erythrophthalmus**] jingles on a bushes top– Why will the Irishman drink of a puddle by the railroad instead of digging a well –how shiftless –what death in life. He cannot be said to live who does not get pure water. The milkweeds or silkweeds are rich flowers now in blossom– The Asclepias syriaca or Common Milk weed –its buds fly open at a touch –but handsomer much is Asclepias Pulchra or water silkweed –the thin green bark of this last & indeed of the other is so strong that a man cannot break a small strip of it by fair means. It contains a mass of fine silken fibers arranged side by side like the strings of a fiddle bow & may be bent short without weakening it.



6. William M. White’s version is:

*Green apples are now so large
As to remind me of coddling and the autumn again.
The season of fruits is arrived.*

*The dog’s-bane has a pretty, delicate bell-like flower.
The Jersey tea abounds.*

*I see the marks of the scythes in the fields,
Showing the breadth of each swath the mowers cut.*

*Cool springs are now a desideratum.
The geranium still hangs on.*

*Even the creeping vines love the brooks,
And I see where one slender one has struggled down
And dangles into the current,
Which rocks it to and fro.*

What more glorious condition of being can we imagine than from impure to be becoming pure. It is almost desirable to be impure that we may be the subjects of this improvement. That I am innocent to myself. That I love & reverence my life! That I am better fitted for a lofty society today than I was yesterday to make my life a sacrament— What is nature without this lofty tumbling May I treat myself with more & more respect & tenderness— May I not forget that I am impure & vicious May I not cease to love purity. May I go to my slumbers as expecting to arise to a new & more perfect day.

May I so live and refine my life as fitting myself for a society ever higher than I actually enjoy. May I treat myself tenderly as I would treat the most innocent child whom I love —may I treat children & my friends as my newly discovered self— Let me forever go in search of myself— Never for a moment think that I have found myself. Be as a stranger to myself never a familiar —seeking acquaintance still. May I be to myself as one is to me whom I love —a dear & cherished object— What temple what fane what sacred place can there be but the innermost part of my own being? The possibility of my own improvement, that is to be cherished. As I regard myself so I am. O my dear friends I have not forgotten you I will know you tomorrow. I associate you with my ideal self. I had ceased to have faith in myself. I thought I was grown up & become what I was intended to be. But it is earliest spring with me. In relation to virtue & innocence the oldest man is in the beginning spring & vernal season of life. It is the love of virtue makes us young ever— That is the fountain of youth— The very aspiration after the perfect. I love & worship myself with a love which absorbs my love for the world. The lecturer suggested to me that I might become better than I am —was it not a good lecture then? May I dream not that I shunned vice— May I dream that I loved & practiced virtue.⁷

August 20, Wednesday: Prisoners Samuel Whittaker and Robert McKenzie, Australians who were to be hanged by the San Francisco, California Vigilance Committee for what its record refers to as “various heinous crimes,” escaped and sought refuge in the jail of the local police.



August 20, Wednesday: 2 PM. To Lees bridge via Hubbards wood Potters field —Conantum —returning by Abel Minot’s House —Clematis brook —Baker’s Pine plain & rail road.

BAKER FARM
JAMES BAKER

I hear a cricket in the depot field —walk a rod or two and find the note proceeds from near a rock— Partly under a rock between it & the roots of the grass he lies concealed —for I pull away the withered grass with my hands —uttering his night-like creak with a vibratory motion of his wings & flattering himself that it is night because he has shut out the day— He was a black fellow nearly an inch long with two long slender feelers They plainly avoid the light & hide their heads in the grass —at any rate they regard this as the evening of the year— They are remarkable secret & unobserved considering how much noise they make— Every milkman has heard them all his life —it is the sound that fills his ears as he drives along —but what one has ever got off his cart to go in search of one? I see smaller ones moving stealthily about whose note I do not know Who ever distinguished their various notes? which fill the crevices in each others song— It would be a curious ear indeed that distinguished the species of the crickets which it heard —& traced even the earth song home each part to its particular performer I am afraid to be so knowing. They are shy as birds, these little bodies, Those nearest me continually cease their song as I walk so that the singers are always a rod distant —& I cannot easily detect one— It is difficult moreover to judge correctly whence the sound proceeds. Perhaps this wariness is necessary to save them from insectivorous birds —which would other wise speedily find out so loud a singer— They are somewhat protected by the universalness of the sound each ones song being merged and lost in the general concert —as if it were the creaking of earth’s axle. They are very numerous in oats & other grain which conceals them & yet affords a clear passage— I never knew any drought or sickness so to prevail as to quench the song of the crickets —it fails not in its season night or day.

The lobelia inflata Ind. Tobacco meets me at every turn— At first I suspect some new bluish flower in the grass,

7. [Thoreau](#) would later adapt this into his early lecture “WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT” as:

[Paragraph 97] I would fain hunger and thirst after life forever and rise from the present enjoyment unsatisfied. I feel the necessity of treating myself with more respect than I have done—of washing myself more religiously in the ponds and streams if only for a symbol of an inward cleansing and refreshment—of eating and drinking more abstemiously and with more discrimination of savors—recruiting myself for new and worthier labor.



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

but stooping see the inflated pods –tasting one such herb convinces me that there are such things as drugs – which may either kill or cure

The rhexia Virginica is a showy flower at present.

How copious & precise the botanical language to describe the leaves, as well as the other parts of a plant. Botany is worth studying if only for the precision of its terms –to learn the value of words & of system. It is wonderful how much pains has been taken to describe a flowers leaf–, compared for instance with the care that is taken in describing a psychological fact. Suppose as much ingenuity (perhaps it would be needless) in in making a language to express the sentiments, We are armed with language adequate to describe each leaf in the field.–

or at least to distinguish it from each other –but not to describe a human character –with equally wonderful indistinctness & confusion we describe men– The precision and copiousness of botanical language applied to the description of moral qualities!

The neottia or ladies tresses behind Garfields house. The Golden robin [Northern Oriole ■ *Icterus galbula*] is now a rare bird to see. Here are the small lively tasting blackberries. so small they are not commonly eaten. The grass hoppers seem no drier than the grass. In Lee's field are two kinds of plantain– Is the common one found there?

The willow reach by Lees bridge has been stripped for powder –none escapes. This morning hearing a cart I looked out & saw Geo. Dugan going by with a horse load of his willow –toward Acton powder mills – which I had seen in piles by the turnpike. Every traveller has just as particular an errand which I might likewise chance to be privy to. Now that I am at the extremity of my walk I see a threatening cloud blowing up from the south –which however methinks will not compel me to make haste.

Apios tuberosa or Glycine apios Ground nut

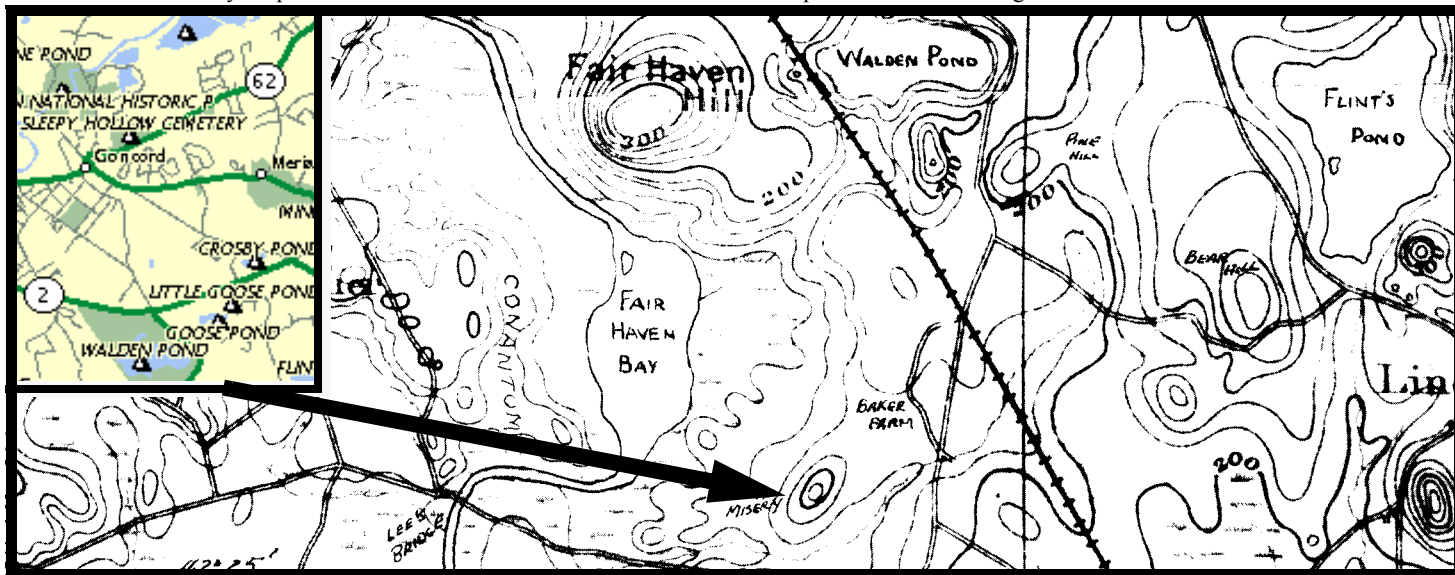
The Prenanthes now takes the place of the Lactucas which are gone to seed– In the dry ditch near Abel Minots house that was I see cardinal flowers –with their red artillery, reminding me of soldiers –red men war – & blood shed. Some are 4¹/₂ feet high.

Thy sins shall be as scarlet –is it my sins that I see? It shows how far a little color can go –for the flower is not large yet it makes itself seen from a far –& so answers the purpose for which it was colored completely. It is remarkable for its intensely brilliant scarlet color– You are slow to concede to it a high rank among flowers –but ever and anon as you turn your eyes away –it dazzles you & you pluck it. scutellaria lateriflora side flowering skull cap here This brook deserves to be called Clematis Brook (though that name is too often applied) for the clematis is very abundant running over the alders & other bushes on its brink.

Where the brook issues from the pond the night shade grows profusely spreading 5 or 6 feet each way with its red berries now ripe– It grows too at the upper end of the pond.– But if it is the button bush that grows in the now low water –it should rather be called the button bush pond. Now the tall rush is in its prime on the shore here –& the clematis abounds by this pond also.

I came out by the leafy columned elm –under Mt Misery –where the trees stood up one above another higher & higher immeasurably far to my imagination –as on the side of a New Hampshire Mountain. On the pitch pine plain at first the pines are far apart –with –a wiry grass between & golden rod & hard hack & St Johns-wort & black-berry vines –each tree nearly keeping down the grass for a space about itself –meditating to make a forest floor. & here & there younger pines are springing up.– Further in you come to moss covered patches

dry deep white moss –or almost bare mould –half covered with pine needles– Thus begins the future forest floor.



The sites of the shanties that once stood by the railroad in Lincoln when the Irish built it, the still remaining hollow square mounds of earth which formed their embankments reminding me are to me instead of barrows & druidical monuments & other ruins. It is a sufficient antiquity to me since they were built their material being earth.

–Now the canada thistle & the mullein crown their tops– I see the stones which made their simple chimnies still left one upon another at one end–which were surmounted with barrels to eek them out –& clean boiled beef bones & old shoes are strewn about. Otherwise it is a clean ruin & nothing is left but a mound –as in the grave yard.

Sium lineare a kind of water parsnip whose blossom resembles the Cicuta maculata The flowers of the blue vervain have now nearly reached the summit of their spikes.

A traveller who looks at things with an impartial eye may see what the oldest inhabitant has not observed.

September 17, Wednesday: The boundaries committee perambulated the dividing line between Lincoln and [Concord](#).



September 17, Wednesday: Perambulated the Lincoln line–

Was it the small rough sunflower which I saw this morning at the brook near Lees' bridge?

Saw at [James Baker](#) a Buttonwood tree with a swarm of bees now 3 years in it–but honey & all inaccessible.

John W Farrar tells of sugar Maples behind Miles' in the Corner–

Did I see privet in the swamp at the Bedford stone near Giles' house? Swamp all dry now, could not wash my hands.

From this day through Saturday, in [Boston](#) and in Montréal there would be a three-day celebration going on, a celebration of the fact that the cities had been linked by the Grand Junction Railroad.



1852

January 14, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) heard Massachusetts Governor [George Sewall Boutwell](#) lecture at the [Concord](#) lyceum (this was one of the politicians he had criticized, although not by name, in regard to the handling of the Simms case).



January 14, Wednesday: When I see the dead stems of the tansey—golden rod Johnswort—asters—hard hack—&c &c rising above the snow by the roadside, sometimes in dense masses, which carry me back in imagination to their green summer life, I put faintly a question which I do not yet hear answered—why stand they there? Why should the dead corn stalks occupy the field longer than the green and living did? Many of them are granaries for the birds. It suggests that man is not an annual. He sees the annual plants wither. Nor does his sap cease to flow in the winter as does that of the tree—though perhaps even he may be slightly dormant at that season. It is to most a season to some extent of inactivity— He lays up his stores—& is perhaps a little chilled. On the approach of spring there is a quickened flow of spirits—of blood—in his veins— Here is a dense mass of dry tansey stems, attached still to the same roots which sustained them in summer— but what an interval between these & those. Here are no yellow disks—here are no green leaves—here is no strong odor to remind some of funerals— Here is a change as great as can well be imagined. Bare brown scentless stalks with the dry heads still adhering—color—scent—& flavor—gone.

We are related to all nature, animate & inanimate, and accordingly we share to some extent the nature of the dormant creatures. We all feel somewhat confined by the winter—the nights are longer & we sleep more. We also wear more clothes. Yet the thought is not less active—perhaps it is more so.

What an effect the sight of green grass in the winter has on us—as at the spring by the Corner Road.

Clouds are our mts—& the child who had lived on a plain always & had never seen a mt, would find that he was prepared for the sight of them by his familiarity with clouds.

This dark dull veil which shuts out the sky—makes a favorable light and a frame under which to view those sailing island clouds in the clearer west.

I love to see now a cock of deep reddish meadow hay full of ferns & other meadow plants—of the coarsest kind. My imagination supplies the green—& the hum of bees. What a memento of summer—such a hay-cock! To stand beside a hay-cock covered with snow in winter—through which the dry meadow plants peep out! And yet our hopes survive.

The snow blowing over the walls & across the road looks like a mist before me. In some places the wind passing through the chinks of the walls appears to have burst or cut through old snow heaps & so carved out these fantastic forms

Standing on the hill on the [Baker Farm](#) today—the level shrub oak plain under Fair Haven—appeared as if Walden & other smaller ponds & perhaps Fair Haven had anciently sunk down in it—& the Cliffs been pushed up—for the level is continued in many cases even over extensive hollows.

The shrub-oaks here have lost their leaves i.e. the small scrubby kind on this hill. I can see at a distance above the level of the snow a few bushes & grasses which mark the edge of the river—they seem to write the word *rivus* there. That is all or most to indicate that there is a river there. It is betrayed by that thin sedgy & willow line or border marking the snow yonder.

As usual there was no blueness in the ruts & crevices in the snow today. What kind of atmosphere does this require? When I observed it the other day it was a rather moist air—some snow falling—the sky completely overcast—& the weather not very cold. It is one of the most interesting phenomena of the winter.

I noticed tonight—about sundown that the clouds in the eastern horizon were the deepest indigo blue of any I ever saw—commencing with a pale blue or slate in the west—the color deepened toward the east.

The governor *Boutwell*? lectured before the Lyceum tonight— quite democratic. He wore no badge of his office—I believe that not even his brass buttons were official—but perchance worn with some respect to his station. If he could have divested himself a little more completely in his tone & manner of a sense of the dignity which belonged to his office it would have been better still.



February 24, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was written to by [Horace Greeley](#) in New-York.

NEW YORK, February 24, 1852.

MY FRIEND THOREAU,—Thank you for

*your remembrance, though the motto you suggest is impracticable. The People's Course is full for the season; and even if it were not, your name would probably not pass; because it is not merely necessary that each lecturer should continue well the course, but that he shall be known as the very man beforehand. Whatever draws less than fifteen hundred hearers damages the finances of the movement, so low is the admission, and so large the expense. But, Thoreau, you are a better speaker than many, but a far better writer still. Do you wish to swap any of your "wood-notes wild" for dollars? If yea, and you will sell me some articles, shorter, if you please, than the former, I will try to coin them for you. Is it a bargain? Yours,
HORACE GREELEY.*



February 24, Tuesday: PM R R causeway. I am reminded of spring by the quality of the air—the cock-crowing—& even the telegraph harp prophesies it— though the ground is for the most part covered with snow— It is a natural resurrection an experience of immortality— Observe the poplar's swollen buds & the brightness of the willow's bark.

The telegraph harp reminds me of Anacreon. That is the glory of Greece—that we are reminded of her only when in our best estate, our elysian days, when our senses are young and healthy again. I could find a name for every strain or intonation of the harp from one or other of the Grecian bards—. I often hear Mimmermus—often Menander—

ANACREON

HISTORY OF TELEGRAPHY

I am too late by a day or two for the sand foliage on the E side of the deep cut. It is glorious to see the soil again— here where a shovel perchance will enter it and find no frost— The frost is partly come out of this bank and it is become dry again in the sun.

The very sound of men's work reminds advertises me of the coming of spring— — As I now hear at a distance the sound of the laborer's sledge on the rails.

The empressment of a little dog when he starts any wild thing in the woods! The woods ring with his barking as if the tragedy of Actaeon were being acted over again.

Talked with two men and a boy fishing on Fair Haven—just before sunset— (Heard the dog bark in Baker's wood as I came down the brook) They had caught a fine parcel of pickerel and perch— The perch especially were full of spawn. The boy had caught a large bream which had risen to the surface in his hands— They had none of them ever seen one before in the winter—though they sometimes catch chivins. They had also kicked to death

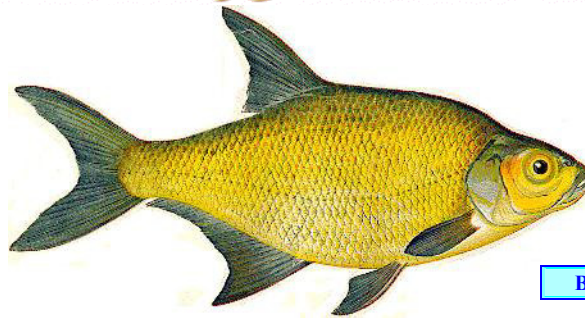
BAKER FARM

DOG

a muskrat that was crossing the S W end of the Pond on the snow.



PICKEREL



BREAM

They told me of 2 otters being killed in Sudbury this winter—beside some coons near here. As we grow older—is it not ominous that we have more to write about evening—less about morning. We must associate more with the early hours.

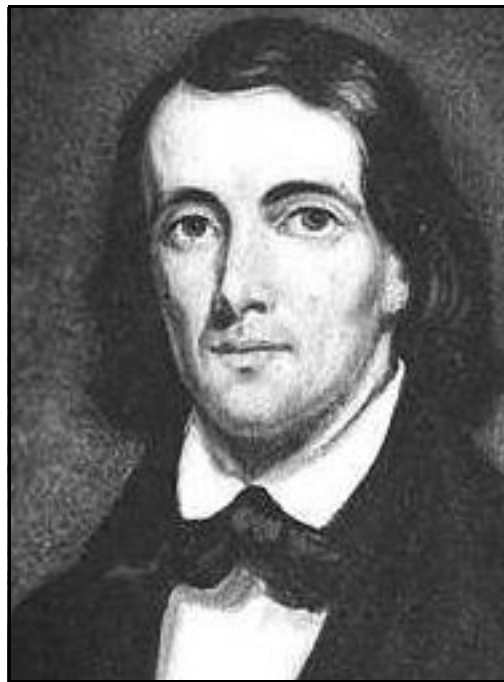
JAMES BAKER

June 12, Saturday, 1852: [Waldo Emerson](#) to his journal after a walk in which [Ellery Channing](#) was displaying a superficial Thoreauvianism:

BAKER FARM

Yesterday a walk with Ellery C. to the Lincoln Mill-Brook, to Nine Acre Corner, & Conantum. It was the first right day of summer. Air, cloud, river, meadow, upland, mountain, all were in their best. We took a swim at the outlet of the little brook at Baker-Farm. Ellery is grown an accomplished Professor of the Art of Walking, & leads like an Indian. He likes the comic surprise of his botanic information which is so suddenly enlarged. Since he knew Thoreau, he carries a little pocket-book, in which he affects to write down the name of each new plant or the first day on which he finds the flower. He admires viburnum & cornel, & despises dooryards with foreign shrubs.

JAMES BAKER



The period in [Henry Thoreau](#)'s life which he would describe in WALDEN in the following section clearly postdates the sojourn on Walden Pond, appearing for the 1st time as of Draft E in the late 1852-1853 timeframe and describing a period during which Channing was residing on Main Street opposite the Thoreaus. I am therefore taking the risk of including the material here, as probably pertaining to the activities of this particular summer season:

[following screen]



WALDEN: SOMETIMES I had a companion in my fishing, who came through the village to my house from the other side of the town, and the catching of the dinner was as much a social exercise as the eating of it.

Hermit. I wonder what the world is doing now. I have not heard so much as a locust over the sweet-fern these three hours. the pigeons are all asleep upon their roosts, -no flutter from them. Was that a farmer's noon horn which sounded from beyond the woods just now? The hands are coming in to boiled salt beef and cider and Indian bread. Why will men worry themselves so? He that does not eat need not work. I wonder how much they have reaped. Who would live there where a body can never think for the barking of Bose? And O, the housekeeping! to keep bright the devil's door-knobs, and scour his tubs this bright day! Better not keep a house. Say, some hollow tree; and then for morning calls and dinner-parties! Only a woodpecker tapping. O, they swarm; the sun is too warm there; they are born too far into life for me. I have water from the spring, and a loaf of brown bread on the shelf. -Hark! I hear a rustling of the leaves. Is it some ill-fed village hound yielding to the instinct of the chase? or the lost pig which is said to be in these woods, whose tracks I saw after the rain? It comes on apace; my sumachs and sweet-briars tremble. -Eh, Mr. Poet, is it you? How do you like the world to-day?

Poet. See those clouds; how they hang! That's the greatest thing I have seen to-day. There's nothing like it in old paintings, nothing like it in foreign lands, -unless when we were off the coast of Spain. That's a true Mediterranean sky. I thought, as I have my living to get, and have not eaten to-day, that I might go a-fishing. That's the true industry for poets. It is the only trade I have learned. Come, let's along.

Hermit. I cannot resist. My brown bread will soon be gone. I will go with you gladly soon, but I am just concluding a serious meditation. I think that I am near the end of it. Leave me alone, then, for a while. But that we may not be delayed, you shall be digging the bait meanwhile. Angle-worms are rarely to be met with in these parts, where the soil was never fattened with manure; the race is nearly extinct. The sport of digging the bait is nearly equal to that of catching the fish, when one's appetite is not too keen; and this you may have all to yourself today. I would advise you to set in the spade down yonder among the ground-nuts, where you see the johnswort waving. I think that I may warrant you one worm to every three sods you turn up, if you look well in among the roots of the grass, as if you were weeding. Or, if you choose to go farther, it will not be unwise, for I have found the increase of fair bait to be very nearly as the squares of the distances.

Hermit alone. Let me see; where was I? Methinks I was nearly in this frame of mind; the world lay about at this angle. Shall I go to heaven or a-fishing? If I should soon bring this meditation to an end, would another so sweet occasion be likely to offer? I was as near being resolved into the essence of things as ever I was in my life. I fear my thoughts will not come back to me. If it would do any good, I would whistle for them. When they make us an offer, is it wise to say, We will think of it? My thoughts have left no track, and I cannot find the path again. What was it that I was thinking of? It was a very hazy day. I will just try these three sentences of Con-fut-see; they may fetch that state about again. I know not whether it was the dumps or a budding ecstasy. Mem. There never is but one opportunity of a kind.

Poet. How now, Hermit, is it too soon? I have got just thirteen whole ones, beside several which are imperfect undersized; but they will do for the smaller fry; they do not cover up the hook so much. Those village worms are quite too large; a shiner may make a meal off one without finding the skewer.

Hermit. Well, then, let's be off. Shall we to the Concord? There's good sport there if the water be not too high.



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA



Boys are bathing at Hubbard's Bend playing with a boat. (I at the willows) The color of their bodies in the sun at a distance is pleasing, the not often seen flesh color—I hear the sound of their sport borne over the water. As yet we have not man in nature. What a singular fact for an angel visitant to this earth to carry back in his note book, that men were forbidden to expose their bodies under the severest penalties.— A pale pink which the sun would soon tan. White men! There are no white men to contrast with the red & the black—they are of such colors as the weaver gives them. I wonder that the dog knows his master when he goes in to bathe & does not stay by his clothes.

DOG

1854

September 7, Thursday: [Augustus Sabin Chase](#) got married with Martha Starkweather in Waterville, Ohio. The union would produce three sons and three daughters.

Senator Charles Sumner spoke on the slavery question at the Massachusetts state political convention in Worcester.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to J.B. Moore’s swamp (Gleason E8) and Walden Pond. Just after sunset,



by the light of an almost-full moon that had been full on the previous night, he and Ellery Channing paddled to [Baker Farm](#) (Gleason K7) and walked up to the old Baker house.



GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

67

*There are no larger fields than these, no worthier
games that may here be played.
Walden, "Baker Farm"*

Viking Penguin

Penguin Books USA Inc.

Sarah Peel and her friends were homeless no longer. Seven trailers were quickly set up on the Hugh Cargill land, the

ISBN 0-670-84260-5 — PS3562.A515G58

JAMES BAKER

WALDEN: O Baker Farm!

"Landscape where the richest element
Is a little sunshine innocent." * *

"No one runs to revel
On thy rail-fenced lea." * *

"Debate with no man hast thou,
With questions art never perplexed,
As tame at the first sight as now,
In thy plain russet gabardine dressed." * *

"Come ye who love,
And ye who hate,
Children of the Holy Dove,
And Guy Faux of the state,
And hang conspiracies
From the tough rafters of the trees!"



Sept. 7. Thursday. The rain of last night has brought down more leaves of elms and buttonwoods. P. M. - To Moore's Swamp and Walden. See some hips of the moss rose, very large and handsome, bright-scarlet, very much flattened globular. On the Walden road heard a somewhat robin-like clicking note. Looked round

DOG



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

and saw one of those small slatecolored, black-tipped, white-rumped hawks skimming over the meadows with head down, at first, thirty feet high, then low till he appeared to drop into the grass. It was quite a loud clicketing sound.

Paddled to [Baker Farm](#) just after sundown, by full moon.

I suppose this is the Harvest Moon, since the sun must be in Virgo, enters Libra the 23d inst.

The wind has gone down, and it is a still, warm night, and no mist.

It is just after sundown. The moon not yet risen, one star, Jupiter (?), visible, and many bats over and about our heads, and small skaters creating a myriad dimples on the evening waters. We see a muskrat crossing, and pass a white cat on the shore. There are many clouds about and a beautiful sunset sky, a yellowish (dunnish?) golden sky, between them in the horizon, looking up the river. All this is reflected in the water. The beauty of the sunset is doubled by the reflection.

Being on the water we have double the amount of lit and dun-colored sky above and beneath. An elm in the yellow twilight loops very rich, as if moss- or ivy-clad, and a dark-blue cloud extends into the dun-golden sky, on which there is a little fantastic cloud like a chicken walking up the point of it, with its neck outstretched. The reflected sky is more dun and richer than the real one. Take a glorious sunset sky and double it, so that it shall extend downward beneath the horizon as much as above it, blotting out the earth, and [let] the lowest half be of the deepest tint, and every beauty more than before insisted on, and you seem withal to be floating directly into it. This seems the first autumnal sunset. The small skaters seem more active than by day, or their slight dimpling is more obvious in the lit twilight. A stray white cat sits on the shore looking over the water. This is her hour.

A nighthawk dashes past, low over the water. This is what we had.

It was in harmony with this fair evening that we were not walking or riding with dust and noise through it, but moved by a paddle without a jar over the liquid and almost invisible surface, floating directly toward those islands of the blessed which we call clouds in the sunset sky. I thought of the Indian, who so many similar evenings had paddled up this stream, with what advantage he beheld the twilight sky. So we advanced without dust or sound, by gentle influences, as the twilight gradually faded away. The height of the railroad bridge, already high (more than twenty feet to the top of the rail), was doubled by the reflection, equalling that of a Roman aqueduct, for we could not possibly see where the reflection began, and the piers appeared to rise from the lowest part of the reflection to the rail above, about fifty feet.

We floated directly under it, between the piers, as if in mid-air, not being able to distinguish the surface of the water, and looked down more than twenty feet to the reflected flooring through whose intervals we saw the starlit sky.

The ghostly piers stretched downward on all sides, and only the angle made by their meeting the real ones betrayed where was the water surface.

The twilight had now paled (lost its red and dun) and faintly illumined the high bank. I observed no firefly this evening, nor the 4th. The moon had not yet risen and there was a half-hour of dusk, in which, however, we saw the reflections of the trees. Any peculiarity in the form of a tree or other object—if it leans one side or has a pointed top, for instance—is revealed in the reflection by being doubled and so insisted on. We detected thus distant maples, pines, and oaks, and they were seen to be related to the river as mountains in the horizon are by day.

Night is the time to hear; our senses took in every sound from the meadows and the village. At first we were disturbed by the screeching of the locomotive and rumbling of the cars, but soon were left to the fainter natural sounds,— the creaking of the crickets, and the little Rana palustris mole cricket (I am not sure that I heard it the latter part of the evening), and the shrilling of other crickets (?), the occasional faint lowing of a cow and the distant barking of dogs, as in a whisper. Our ears drank in every sound. I heard once or twice a dumping frog. This was while we lay off Nut Meadow Brook waiting for the moon to rise. She burned her way slowly through the small but thick clouds, and, as fast as she triumphed over them and rose over them, they appeared pale and shrunken, like the ghosts of their former selves. Meanwhile we measured the breadth of the clear cope over our heads, which she would ere long traverse, and, while she was concealed, looked up to the few faint stars in the zenith which is ever lighted. C. thought that these few faint lights in the ever-lit sky, whose inconceivable distance was enhanced by a few downy wisps of cloud, surpassed any scene that earth could show. When the moon was behind those small black clouds in the horizon, they had a splendid silver edging. At length she rose above them and shone aslant, like a ball of fire over the woods. It was remarkably clear to-night, and the water was not so remarkably broad therefore, and Fair Haven was not clothed with that blue veil like a mountain, which it wore on the 4th, but it was not till we had passed the bridge that the first sheen was reflected from the pads. The reflected shadow of the Hill was black as night, and we seemed to be paddling directly into it a rod or two before us, but we never reached it at all. The trees and hills were distinctly black between us and the moon, and the water black or gleaming accordingly. It was quite dry and warm. Above the Cliffs we heard only one or two owls at a distance, a hooting owl and a screech owl, and several whip-poor-wills. The delicious fragrance of ripe grapes was wafted to us by the night air, as we paddled by, from every fertile vine on the shore, and thus its locality was revealed more surely than by daylight. You might have thought you had reached the confines of Elysium. A slight zephyr wafted us almost imperceptibly into the middle of

CAT

Fair Haven Pond, while we lay watching and listening. The sheen of the moon extended quite across the pond to us in a long and narrow triangle, or rather with concave sides like a very narrow Eddystone Lighthouse, with its base in the southwest shore, and we heard the distant sound of the wind through the pines on the hilltop. Or, if we listened closely, we heard still the faint and distant barking of dogs. They rule the night. Near the south shore disturbed some ducks in the water, which slowly flew away to seek a new resting-place, uttering a distinct and alarmed quack something like a goose.

We walked up to the old Baker house. in the bright moonlight the character of the ground under our feet was not easy to detect, and we did not know at first but we were walking on sod and not on a field laid down and harrowed. From the upland the pond in the moonlight looked blue, — as much so as the sky. We sat on the window-sill of the old house, thought of its former inhabitants, saw our bandit shadows down the cellar-way (C. had on a red flannel shirt over his thin coat, —since he expected it would be cold and damp,— and looked like one), listened to each sound, and observed each ray of moonlight through the cracks. Heard an apple fall in the little orchard close lay, while a whip-poor-will was heard in the pines.

Returning to the boat, saw a glow-worm in the damp path in the low ground. Returning later, we experienced better the weird-like character of the night, especially perceived the fragrance of the grapes and admired the fair smooth fields in the bright moonlight. There being no mist, the reflections were wonderfully distinct; the whole of Bittern Cliff with its grove was seen beneath the waves.

1856

June 20, Friday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [Concord](#):

BAKER FARM



6 P.M. Just returned from a sail on the river with Thoreau, having been all day. Bathed twice, visited the Baker farm and the Conantum farmhouse. Just going out to tea with the Thoreaus to Mrs. Brooks's, an abolitionist. Took tea at Mrs. Brooks's. I was pleased with her downright principles on the subject of slavery. Her husband appeared pleasant and agreeable, but not particularly engaged in the anti-slavery enterprise. Home at ten; retire about eleven. Mr. Thoreau, Senr., although ordinarily a quiet man, is very intelligent, and a fine specimen of the gentleman of the old school. I am strongly impressed with his sterling merits — a character of honesty illumines his countenance. Few men have impressed me so favorably.

MARY MERRICK BROOKS
NATHAN BROOKS
JOHN THOREAU, SR.



June 20, Friday: To [Baker Farm](#). Walking under an apple tree in the little Baker Farm peach orchard, heard an incessant shrill musical twitter or peeping, as from young birds, over my head, and, looking up, saw a hole in an upright dead bough, some fifteen feet from the ground. Climbed up and, finding that the shrill twitter came from it, guessed it to be the nest of a downy woodpecker [**Downy Woodpecker** [Picoides pubescens](#)], which proved to be the case, —for it reminded me of the hissing squeak or squeaking hiss of young pigeon woodpeckers, but this was more musical or bird-like. The bough was about four and a half inches in diameter, and the hole perfectly circular, about an inch and a quarter in diameter. Apparently nests had been in holes above, now broken out, higher up. When I put my fingers in it, the young breathed their shrill twitter louder than ever. Anon the old appeared, and came quite near, while I stood in the tree, keeping up an incessant loud and shrill scolding note, and also after I descended; not to be relieved.

JAMES BAKER

TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

December 24, Wednesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to his journal, in [Concord](#):

WALDO EMERSON

ELLEN EMERSON

EDITH EMERSON

EDWARD EMERSON

ELLERY CHANNING

BAKER FARM



Breakfasted with Mr. Emerson and his daughters Ellen and Edith, and his son Edward, fine young people. Left Mr. E.'s and walked with Thoreau in the P.M. to Walden Pond, and through the woods to "Baker Farm," immortalized by Thoreau and Channing in prose and verse. The walking hard on account of snow about eight inches deep; got back at ten. Spent evening in house. T. read Channing's poem on Baker Farm and some other of C.'s pieces which he thinks better than almost any other poet. Thoreau saw a fox before us and there were numerous traces across the road in the woods. Enjoyed the walk though quite tired out.

JAMES BAKER

[WALDEN](#): O Baker Farm!

"Landscape where the richest element
Is a little sunshine innocent." * *

"No one runs to revel
On thy rail-fenced lea." * *

"Debate with no man hast thou,
With questions art never perplexed,
As tame at the first sight as now,
In thy plain russet gabardine dressed." * *

"Come ye who love,
And ye who hate,
Children of the Holy Dove,
And Guy Faux of the state,
And hang conspiracies
From the tough rafters of the trees!"

(I don't know where exactly this material ought to be situated, but while [Eddie Emerson](#) was at age 12, he dug a tunnel in the snow about six feet long, got people to come out and watch, and crawled inside with a lamp so that they could see the glow through the snow. He shouted out at the people watching so they could hear how his voice was muffled. The people who assembled for this demonstration included [Henry Thoreau](#).)



JAMES BAKER

DANIEL RICKETSON

December 24: P.M. More snow in the night and to-day, making nine or ten inches. To Walden and [Baker Farm](#) with Ricketson, it still snowing a little. Turned off from the railroad and went through Wheeler or Owl Wood. The snow is very light, so that sleighs cut through it and there is but little sleighing. It is very handsome now on the trees by the main path in Wheeler Wood, where on the weeds and twigs that rise above the snow, it rests just like down, light towers of down with the bare extremity of the twig peeping out above. We push through the light dust, throwing it before our legs as a husbandman grain which he is sowing. It is only in still paths in the woods that it rests on the trees much.

Am surprised to find Walden still open in the middle. When I push aside the snow with my feet the ice appears quite black by contrast. There is considerable snow on the edge of the pine woods where I used to live. It rests on the successive tiers of boughs, perhaps weighing them down so that the trees are opened into great flakes from top to bottom. The snow collects and is piled up in little columns like down about every twig and stem,

and this is only seen in perfection, complete to the last flake, while it is snowing, as now. Returned across the pond and went to [Baker Farm](#). Noticed at E. end of westernmost Andromeda Pond the slender spikes of *Lycopus* with half a dozen distinct little spherical dark brown whorls of pungently fragrant or spicy seeds, somewhat nutmeg-like or even like flagroot when bruised. I am not sure that the seeds of any other mint are thus fragrant now. It scents your handkerchief or pocketbook finely when the crumbled whorls are sprinkled over them. It was very pleasant walking there before the storm was over, in the soft subdued light. We are also more domesticated in nature when our vision is confined to near and familiar objects. Did not see a track of any animal till returning near the Wells meadow field, where many foxes (?) two of whom I had a glimpse of, had been coursing back and forth in the path and near it for 3/4 of a mile; they had made quite a path. I do not take snuff. In my winter walks I stop and bruise between my thumb and fingers the dry whorls of the *Lycopus* or water-horehound, just rising above the snow, stripping them off, and smell that. that is as near as I come to the Spice Islands. That is my smelling-bottle, my ointment.

FRIEND DANIEL RICKETSON

1857



September 1, Tuesday: Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR, wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#) from [Rome](#).



September 1, Tuesday: P.M. –To Fair Haven Pond by boat.

BAKER FARM

Landing at Bittern Cliff, I see that fine purple grass; how long? At Baker's shore, I at length distinguished fairly the *Sagittaria simplex*, which I have known so long, the small one with simple leaves. But this year there are very few of them, being nearly drowned out by the high water.

JAMES BAKER

On the west side of Fair Haven Pond, an abundance of the *Utricularia purpurea* and of the whorled, etc., whose finely dissected leaves are a rich sight in the water. Again I observe that the heart-leaf, as it decays, preserves fresh and green for some time within, or in its centre, a finely dissected green leaf, suggesting that it has passed through this stage in its development. Immersed leaves often present this form, but [it] seems that even emerged ones remember it. High blackberries are still in their prime on Lee's Cliff, but huckleberries soft and wormy, many of them.

I have finally settled for myself the question of the two varieties of *Polygonum amphibium*. I think there are not even two varieties. As formerly, I observe again to-day a *Polygonum amphibium* extending from the shore six feet into the water. In the water, of course, the stem is prostrate, rank, and has something serpent-like in its aspect. From the shore end rise erect flowering branches whose leaves are more or less roughish and prickly on the midrib beneath. On the water end the leaves are long-petioled, heart-shaped, and perfectly smooth. Vide a specimen pressed. I have seen this same plant growing erect in the driest soil, by the roadside, and it ranges from this quite into the water.



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

September 23, Wednesday: Charles Wesley Slack; Greenfield MA. To Evelina E. Vannevar Slack; Boston MA
Account of business trip.

Bronson Alcott wrote from Concord to Abba Alcott in Boston:

The Orchard is surveyed and Thoreau promises to give us the plot fair and finished to the acres and rods, all lined and bounded, tomorrow.

View [Henry Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/137.htm



September 23, Wednesday: P.M. –To chestnut oaks.

Varieties of nabalus grow along the Walden road in the woods; also, still more abundant, by the Flint's Pond road in the woods. I observe in these places only the N. alba and Fraseri; but these are not well distinguished; they seem to be often alike in the color of the pappus. Some are very tall and slender, and the largest I saw was an N. Fraseri! One N. alba had a panicle three feet long!

The Ripley beeches have been cut. I can't find them. There is one large one, apparently on Baker's land, about two feet in diameter near the ground, but fruit hollow. I see yellow pine-sap, in the woods just east of where the beeches used to stand, just done, but the red variety is very common and quite fresh generally there.⁸

BAKER FARM

JAMES BAKER

December 3, Thursday-December 8, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed some Fair Haven woodlots belonging to John Richardson, west of the railroad near the land of Rufus Morse, Abel Moore, John Hosmer, and [James Baker](#):

View [Henry Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/137.htm

8.October 14, 1858.

1858

July 28, Wednesday: In Nuddea, India, William James Herschel, a British colonial magistrate, began to use the fingerprints of the right index and middle fingers as a means of keeping track of who was who among the locals (in Afghanistan now we accomplish this by snapping photos of the irises of their eyes).



July 28: P.M. –To Conantum. From wall corner saw a pinkish patch on side-hill west of [Baker Farm](#), which turned out to be epilobium, a rod across. Through the glass it was as fine as a moss, but with the naked eye it might have been mistaken for a dead pine bough. This pink flower was distinguished perhaps three quarters of a mile.⁹

Heard a kingfisher, which had been hovering over the river, plunge forty rods off.

The under sides of maples are very bright and conspicuous nowadays as you walk, also of the curled [?] panicked andromeda leaves. Some grape leaves, also, are blown up.

JAMES BAKER

August 19, Thursday: On this night the Great Comet of 1838, which had been being observed through telescopes since June 2nd, began to be visible to the naked eye. The comet would reach its point of greatest visibility on October 13th.





Forebodings of a coming storm were in the air, in everyone's hearts and minds and mouths. Every natural phenomenon was clothed with peculiar significance. The great comet that flamed across the heavens was taken as a sign of approaching war. Strange celestial lights, which nightly illuminated the heavens for weeks with a lurid brazen glow, the like of which had never been seen before by the people; filled their minds with morbid dread. Every one seemed on an intense strain. The slightest incident shattered the nerves.

ASTRONOMY



August 19: P.M.–Sail to [Baker Farm](#) shore.

It is cool with a considerable northwesterly wind, so that we can sail to Fair Haven. The dog-day weather is suddenly gone and here is a cool, clear, and elastic air. You may say it is the first day of autumn. You notice the louder and clearer ring of crickets, and the large, handsome red spikes of the *Polygonum amphibium* are now generally conspicuous along the shore. The *P. hydropiperoides* fairly begins to show. The front-rank polygonum is now in prime.

We scare up a stake-driver [**American Bittern**  *Botaurus lentiginosus*] several times. The blue heron has within a week reappeared in our meadows, and the stake-driver begins to be seen oftener, and as early as the 5th I noticed young summer ducks about; the same of hawks, owls, etc. This occurs as soon as the young birds can take care of themselves, and some appear to be very early on the return southward, with the very earliest prospect of fall. Such birds are not only more abundant but, methinks, more at leisure now, having reared their family, and perhaps they are less shy. Yes, bitterns are more frequently seen now to lift themselves from amid the pontederia or flags, and take their sluggish flight to a new resting-place, – bitterns which either have got through the labors of breeding or are now first able to shift for themselves. And likewise blue herons [**Great Blue Heron**  *Ardea herodias*] which have bred or been bred not far from us (plainly), are now at leisure, or

9. Vide August 21.



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

are impelled to revisit our slow stream. I have not seen the last since spring.
 When I see the first heron, like a dusky blue wave undulating over our meadows again, I think, since I saw them going northward the other day, how many of these forms have been added to the landscape, complete from bill to toe while, perhaps, I have idled! I see two herons. A small bird is pursuing the heron as it does a hawk. Perhaps it is a blackbird and the herons gobble up their young!
 I see thistle-down, grayish-white, floating low quite across Fair Haven Pond. There is wont to be just water [*sic*] enough above the surface to drive it along. The heads of the wool-grass are now brown and, in many meadows, lodged. The button-bush is about done. Can hardly see a blossom. The mikania not yet quite in prime. Pontederia has already begun to wane; i. e., the fields of them are not so dense, many seed-vessels having turned down; and some leaves are already withered and black, but the remaining spikes are as fair as ever. It chanced that I see no yellow lilies. They must be scarce now. The water is high for the season. Water cool to bather. We have our first green corn to-day, but it is late. The saw-grass (*Paspalum?*) of mown fields, not long. I noticed the localities of black willows as far up as the mouth of the river in Fair Haven Pond, but not so carefully as elsewhere, and from the last observations I infer that the willow grows especially and almost exclusively in places where the drift is most likely to lodge, as on capes and points and concave sides of the river, though I noticed a few exceptions to my rule.
 It is so cool, some apprehend a frost to-night.

JAMES BAKER



August 21, Saturday: The [negrero Echo](#), taken with a cargo of 306 [slaves](#), was brought to the port of Charleston, South Carolina (HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 35th Congress, 2d session II, part 4, Number 2, part 4, pages 5, 14).

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

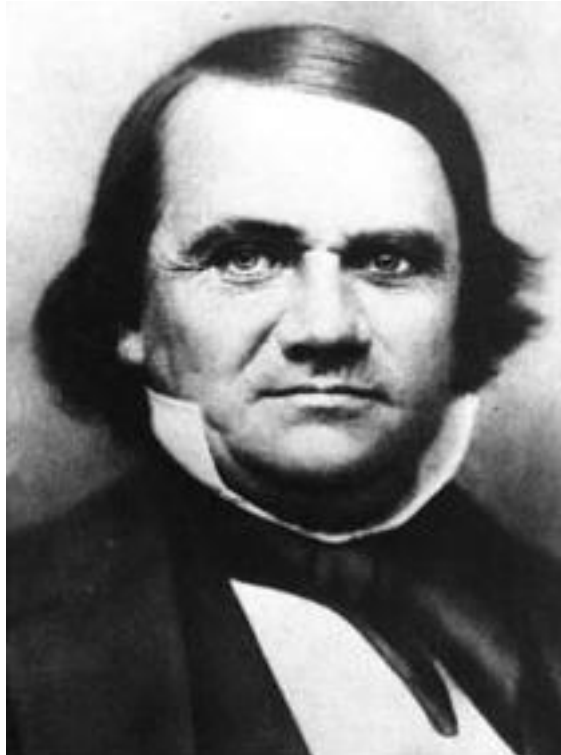
Life must have seemed quite a bit different on this day, for Abraham Lincoln and for [Henry Thoreau](#):



August 21: P.M.—A-berrying to Conantum. I notice hardhacks clothing their stems now with their erected leaves, showing the whitish under sides. A pleasing evidence of the advancing season. How yellow that kind of hedgehog (?) sedge, [1] in the toad pool by Cyrus Hubbard's corner. I still see the patch of epilobium on Bee Tree Hill as plainly as ever, though only the pink seed-vessels and stems are left.

JAMES BAKER

Per the COLLECTED WORKS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN, here is the 1st debate with Stephen A. Douglas, that was taking place on this day at Ottawa, [Illinois](#):



August 21, 1858
Mr. Douglas' Speech.

Ladies and gentlemen: I appear before you to-day for the purpose of discussing the leading political topics which now agitate the public mind. By an arrangement between Mr. Lincoln and myself, we are present here to-day for the purpose of having a joint discussion as the representatives of the two great political parties of the State and Union, upon the principles in issue between these parties and this vast concourse of people, shows the deep feeling which pervades the public mind in regard to the questions dividing us.

Prior to 1854 this country was divided into two great political parties, known as the Whig and Democratic parties. Both were national and patriotic, advocating principles that were universal in their application. An old line Whig could proclaim his principles in Louisiana and Massachusetts alike. Whig principles had no boundary sectional line, they were not limited by the Ohio river, nor by the Potomac, nor by the line of the free and slave States, but applied and were proclaimed wherever the Constitution ruled or the American flag waved over the American soil. (Hear him, and three cheers.) So it was, and so it is with the great Democratic party, which, from the days of Jefferson until this period, has proven itself to be the historic party of this nation. While the Whig and Democratic parties differed in regard to a bank, the tariff, distribution,



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

the specie circular and the sub-treasury, they agreed on the great slavery question which now agitates the Union. I say that the Whig party and the Democratic party agreed on this slavery question while they differed on those matters of expediency to which I have referred. The Whig party and the Democratic party jointly adopted the Compromise measures of 1850 as the basis of a proper and just solution of this slavery question in all its forms. Clay was the great leader, with Webster on his right and Cass on his left, and sustained by the patriots in the Whig and Democratic ranks, who had devised and enacted the Compromise measures of 1850.

In 1851, the Whig party and the Democratic party united in Illinois in adopting resolutions endorsing and approving the principles of the compromise measures of 1850, as the proper adjustment of that question. In 1852, when the Whig party assembled in Convention at Baltimore for the purpose of nominating a candidate for the Presidency, the first thing it did was to declare the compromise measures of 1850, in substance and in principle, a suitable adjustment of that question. (Here the speaker was interrupted by loud and long continued applause.) My friends, silence will be more acceptable to me in the discussion of these questions than applause. I desire to address myself to your judgment, your understanding, and your consciences, and not to your passions or your enthusiasm. When the Democratic convention assembled in Baltimore in the same year, for the purpose of nominating a Democratic candidate for the Presidency, it also adopted the compromise measures of 1850 as the basis of Democratic action. Thus you see that up to 1853-'54, the Whig party and the Democratic party both stood on the same platform with regard to the slavery question. That platform was the right of the people of each State and each Territory to decide their local and domestic institutions for themselves, subject only to the federal constitution.

During the session of Congress of 1853-'54, I introduced into the Senate of the United States a bill to organize the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska on that principle which had been adopted in the compromise measures of 1850, approved by the Whig party and the Democratic party in Illinois in 1851, and endorsed by the Whig party and the Democratic party in national convention in 1852. In order that there might be no misunderstanding in relation to the principle involved in the Kansas and Nebraska bill, I put forth the true intent and meaning of the act in these words: "It is the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any State or Territory, or to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the federal constitution." Thus, you see, that up to 1854, when the Kansas and Nebraska bill was brought into Congress for the purpose of carrying out the principles which both parties had up to that time endorsed and approved, there had been no division in this country in regard to that principle except the opposition of the abolitionists. In the House of Representatives of the Illinois Legislature, upon a resolution asserting that principle, every Whig and every Democrat in the House voted in the affirmative,



and only four men voted against it, and those four were old line Abolitionists. (Cheers.)

In 1854, Mr. Abraham Lincoln and Mr. Trumbull entered into an arrangement, one with the other, and each with his respective friends, to dissolve the old Whig party on the one hand, and to dissolve the old Democratic party on the other, and to connect the members of both into an Abolition party under the name and disguise of a Republican party. (Laughter and cheers, hurrah for Douglas.) The terms of that arrangement between Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Trumbull have been published to the world by Mr. Lincoln's special friend, James H. Matheny, Esq., and they were that Lincoln should have Shields' place in the U.S. Senate, which was then about to become vacant, and that Trumbull should have my seat when my term expired. (Great laughter.) Lincoln went to work to abolitionize the Old Whig party all over the State, pretending that he was then as good a Whig as ever; (laughter) and Trumbull went to work in his part of the State preaching Abolitionism in its milder and lighter form, and trying to abolitionize the Democratic party, and bring old Democrats handcuffed and bound hand and foot into the Abolition camp. ("Good," "hurrah for Douglas," and cheers.) In pursuance of the arrangement, the parties met at Springfield in October, 1854, and proclaimed their new platform. Lincoln was to bring into the Abolition camp the old line Whigs, and transfer them over to Joshua Reed Giddings, Chase, Ford, Frederick Douglass and Parson Lovejoy,¹⁰ who were ready to receive them and christen them in their new faith. (Laughter and cheers.) They laid down on that occasion a platform for their new Republican party, which was to be thus constructed. I have the resolutions of their State convention then held, which was the first mass State Convention ever held in Illinois by the Black Republican party, and I now hold them in my hands and will read a part of them, and cause the others to be printed. Here is the most important and material resolution of this Abolition platform.

1. Resolved, That we believe this truth to be self-evident, that when parties become subversive of the ends for which they are established, or incapable of restoring the government to the true principles of the constitution, it is the right and duty of the people to dissolve the political bands by which they may have been connected therewith, and to organize new parties upon such principles and with such views as the circumstances and exigencies of the nation may demand.

2. Resolved, That the times imperatively demand the reorganization of parties, and repudiating all previous party attachments, names and predilections, we unite ourselves together in defence of the liberty and constitution of the country, and will hereafter co-operate as the Republican party, pledged to the accomplishment of the following purposes: to bring the administration of the government back to the control of first principles; to restore Nebraska and Kansas to the position of free territories; that, as the constitution of the United States, vests in the States, and not in Congress, the power to legislate for the extradition of fugitives from labor, to repeal and entirely abrogate the fugitive slave law; to

10. Joshua Reed Giddings, U.S. representative from Ohio, and Thomas H. Ford, Ohio Know-Nothing and abolitionist.



restrict slavery to those States in which it exists; to prohibit the admission of any more slave States into the Union; to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; to exclude slavery from all the territories over which the general government has exclusive jurisdiction; and to resist the acquirements of any more territories unless the practice of slavery therein forever shall have been prohibited.

3. Resolved, That in furtherance of these principles we will use such constitutional and lawful means as shall seem best adapted to their accomplishment, and that we will support no man for office, under the general or State government, who is not positively and fully committed to the support of these principles, and whose personal character and conduct is not a guaranty that he is reliable, and who shall not have abjured old party allegiance and ties.

(The resolutions, as they were read, were cheered throughout.)

Now, gentlemen, your Black Republicans have cheered every one of those propositions, ("good and cheers,") and yet I venture to say that you cannot get Mr. Lincoln to come out and say that he is now in favor of each one of them. (Laughter and applause. "Hit him again.") That these propositions, one and all, constitute the platform of the Black Republican party of this day, I have no doubt, ("good") and when you were not aware for what purpose I was reading them, your Black Republicans cheered them as good Black Republican doctrines. ("That's it," etc.) My object in reading these resolutions, was to put the question to Abraham Lincoln this day, whether he now stands and will stand by each article in that creed and carry it out. ("Good." "Hit him again.") I desire to know whether Mr. Lincoln to-day stands as he did in 1854, in favor of the unconditional repeal of the fugitive slave law. I desire him to answer whether he stands pledged to-day, as he did in 1854, against the admission of any more slave States into the Union, even if the people want them. I want to know whether he stands pledged against the admission of a new State into the Union with such a constitution as the people of that State may see fit to make. ("That's it;" "put it at him.") I want to know whether he stands to-day pledged to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. I desire him to answer whether he stands pledged to the prohibition of the slave trade between the different States. ("He does.") I desire to know whether he stands pledged to prohibit slavery in all the territories of the United States, North as well as South of the Missouri Compromise line, ("Kansas too.") I desire him to answer whether he is opposed to the acquisition of any more territory unless slavery is first prohibited therein. I want his answer to these questions. Your affirmative cheers in favor of this Abolition platform is not satisfactory. I ask Abraham Lincoln to answer these questions, in order that when I trot him down to lower Egypt I may put the same questions to him. (Enthusiastic applause.) My principles are the same everywhere. (Cheers, and "hark.") I can proclaim them alike in the North, the South, the East, and the West. My principles will apply wherever the Constitution prevails and the American flag waves. ("Good," and applause.) I desire to know whether Mr. Lincoln's principles



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

will bear transplanting from Ottawa to Jonesboro? I put these questions to him to-day distinctly, and ask an answer. I have a right to an answer ("that's so," "he can't dodge you," etc.), for I quote from the platform of the Republican party, made by himself and others at the time that party was formed, and the bargain made by Lincoln to dissolve and kill the old Whig party, and transfer its members, bound hand and foot, to the Abolition party, under the direction of Joshua Reed Giddings and Frederick Douglass. (Cheers.) In the remarks I have made on this platform, and the position of Mr. Lincoln upon it, I mean nothing personally disrespectful or unkind to that gentleman. I have known him for nearly twenty-five years. There were many points of sympathy between us when we first got acquainted. We were both comparatively boys, and both struggling with poverty in a strange land. I was a school-teacher in the town of Winchester, and he a flourishing grocery-keeper in the town of Salem. (Applause and laughter.) He was more successful in his occupation than I was in mine, and hence more fortunate in this world's goods. Abraham Lincoln is one of those peculiar men who perform with admirable skill everything which they undertake. I made as good a school-teacher as I could and when a cabinet maker I made a good bedstead and tables, although my old boss said I succeeded better with bureaus and secretaries than anything else; (cheers,) but I believe that Lincoln was always more successful in business than I, for his business enabled him to get into the Legislature. I met him there, however, and had a sympathy with him, because of the up hill struggle we both had in life. He was then just as good at telling an anecdote as now. ("No doubt.") He could beat any of the boys wrestling, or running a foot race, in pitching quoits or tossing a copper, could ruin more liquor than all the boys of the town together, (uproarious laughter,) and the dignity and impartiality with which he presided at a horse race or fist fight, excited the admiration and won the praise of everybody that was present and participated. (Renewed laughter.) I sympathised with him, because he was struggling with difficulties and so was I. Mr. Lincoln served with me in the Legislature in 1836, when we both retired, and he subsided, or became submerged, and he was lost sight of as a public man for some years. In 1846, when Wilmot introduced his celebrated proviso, and the Abolition tornado swept over the country, Lincoln again turned up as a member of Congress from the Sangamon district. I was then in the Senate of the United States, and was glad to welcome my old friend and companion. Whilst in Congress, he distinguished himself by his opposition to the Mexican war, taking the side of the common enemy against his own country; ("that's true,") and when he returned home he found that the indignation of the people followed him everywhere, and he was again submerged or obliged to retire into private life, forgotten by his former friends. ("And will be again.") He came up again in 1854, just in time to make this Abolition or Black Republican platform, in company with Joshua Reed Giddings, Lovejoy, Chase, and Frederick Douglass for the Republican party to stand upon. (Laughter, "Hit him again," &c.) Trumbull, too, was one of our own contemporaries. He was born and raised in old Connecticut, was



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

bred a federalist, but removing to Georgia, turned nullifier when nullification was popular, and as soon as he disposed of his clocks and wound up his business, migrated to Illinois, (laughter,) turned politician and lawyer here, and made his appearance in 1841, as a member of the Legislature. He became noted as the author of the scheme to repudiate a large portion of the State debt of Illinois, which, if successful, would have brought infamy and disgrace upon the fair escutcheon of our glorious State. The odium attached to that measure consigned him to oblivion for a time. I helped to do it. I walked into a public meeting in the hall of the House of Representatives and replied to his repudiating speeches, and resolutions were carried over his head denouncing repudiation, and asserting the moral and legal obligation of Illinois to pay every dollar of the debt she owed and every bond that bore her seal. ("Good," and cheers.) Trumbull's malignity has followed me since I thus defeated his infamous scheme.

These two men having formed this combination to abolitionize the old Whig party and the old Democratic party, and put themselves into the Senate of the United States, in pursuance of their bargain, are now carrying out that arrangement. Matheny states that Trumbull broke faith; that the bargain was that Abraham Lincoln should be the Senator in Shields' place, and Trumbull was to wait for mine; (laughter and cheers,) and the story goes, that Trumbull cheated Lincoln, having control of four or five abolitionized Democrats who were holding over in the Senate; he would not let them vote for Lincoln, and which obliged the rest of the Abolitionists to support him in order to secure an Abolition Senator. There are a number of authorities for the truth of this besides Matheny, and I suppose that even Mr. Lincoln will not deny it. (Applause and laughter.)

Mr. Lincoln demands that he shall have the place intended for Trumbull, as Trumbull cheated him and got his, and Trumbull is stumping the State traducing me for the purpose of securing that position for Lincoln, in order to quiet him. ("Lincoln can never get it, &c.") It was in consequence of this arrangement that the Republican Convention was empanelled to instruct for Lincoln and nobody else, and it was on this account that they passed resolutions that he was their first, their last, and their only choice. Archy Williams was nowhere, Browning was nobody, Wentworth was not to be considered, they had no man in the Republican party for the place except Lincoln, for the reason that he demanded that they should carry out the arrangement. ("Hit him again.")

Having formed this new party for the benefit of deserters from Whiggery, and deserters from Democracy, and having laid down the Abolition platform which I have read, Lincoln now takes his stand and proclaims his Abolition doctrines. Let me read a part of them. In his speech at Springfield to the convention which nominated him for the Senate, he said:

In my opinion it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this Government cannot endure permanently half Slave and half Free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved--I do not expect the house to fall---but I do expect it will



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of Slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States ---old as well as new, North as well as South.

("Good," "good." and cheers.)

I am delighted to hear you Black Republicans say "good." (Laughter and cheers.) I have no doubt that doctrine expresses your sentiments ("hit them again," "that's it,") and I will prove to you now, if you will listen to me, that it is revolutionary and destructive of the existence of this Government. ("Hurrah for Douglas," "good," and cheers.) Mr. Lincoln, in the extract from which I have read, says that this Government cannot endure permanently in the same condition in which it was made by its framers - divided into free and slave States. He says that it has existed for about seventy years thus divided, and yet he tells you that it cannot endure permanently on the same principles and in the same relative condition in which our fathers made it. ("Neither can it.") Why can it not exist divided into free and slave States? Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison, Hamilton, Jay, and the great men of that day, made this Government divided into free States and slave States, and left each State perfectly free to do as it pleased on the subject of slavery. ("Right, right.") Why can it not exist on the same principles on which our fathers made it? ("It can.") They knew when they framed the Constitution that in a country as wide and broad as this, with such a variety of climate, production and interest, the people necessarily required different laws and institutions in different localities. They knew that the laws and regulations which would suit the granite hills of New Hampshire would be unsuited to the rice plantations of South Carolina, ("right, right,") and they, therefore, provided that each State should retain its own Legislature, and its own sovereignty with the full and complete power to do as it pleased within its own limits, in all that was local and not national. (Applause.) One of the reserved rights of the States, was the right to regulate the relations between Master and Servant, on the slavery question. At the time the Constitution was formed, there were thirteen States in the Union, twelve of which were slaveholding States and one a free State. Suppose this doctrine of uniformity preached by Mr. Lincoln, that the States should all be free or all be slave had prevailed and what would have been the result? Of course, the twelve slaveholding States would have overruled the one free State, and slavery would have been fastened by a Constitutional provision on every inch of the American Republic, instead of being left as our fathers wisely left it, to each State to decide for itself. ("Good, good," and three cheers for Douglas.) Here I assert that uniformity in the local laws and institutions of the different States is neither possible or desirable. If uniformity had been adopted when the government was established, it must inevitably have been the uniformity of slavery everywhere, or else the



uniformity of negro citizenship and negro equality everywhere. We are told by Abraham Lincoln that he is utterly opposed to the Dred Scott decision, and will not submit to it, for the reason that he says it deprives the negro of the rights and privileges of citizenship. (Laughter and applause.) That is the first and main reason which he assigns for his warfare on the Supreme Court of the United States and its decision. I ask you, are you in favor of conferring upon the negro the rights and privileges of citizenship? ("No, no.") Do you desire to strike out of our State Constitution that clause which keeps slaves and free negroes out of the State, and allow the free negroes to flow in, ("never,") and cover your prairies with black settlements? Do you desire to turn this beautiful State into a free negro colony, ("no, no,") in order that when Missouri abolishes slavery she can send one hundred thousand emancipated slaves into Illinois, to become citizens and voters, on an equality with yourselves? ("Never," "no.") If you desire negro citizenship, if you desire to allow them to come into the State and settle with the white man, if you desire them to vote on an equality with yourselves, and to make them eligible to office, to serve on juries, and to adjudge your rights, then support Mr. Lincoln and the Black Republican party, who are in favor of the citizenship of the negro. ("Never, never.") For one, I am opposed to negro citizenship in any and every form. (Cheers.) I believe this government was made on the white basis. ("Good.") I believe it was made by white men, for the benefit of white men and their posterity for ever, and I am in favour of confining citizenship to white men, men of European birth and descent, instead of conferring it upon negroes, Indians and other inferior races.

("Good for you." "Douglas forever.")

Mr. Lincoln, following the example and lead of all the little Abolition orators, who go around and lecture in the basements of schools and churches, reads from the [Declaration of Independence](#), that all men were created equal, and then asks how can you deprive a negro of that equality which God and the [Declaration of Independence](#) awards to him. He and they maintain that negro equality is guaranteed by the laws of God, and that it is asserted in the [Declaration of Independence](#). If they think so, of course they have a right to say so, and so vote. I do not question Mr. Lincoln's conscientious belief that the negro was made his equal, and hence is his brother, (laughter,) but for my own part, I do not regard the negro as my equal, and positively deny that he is my brother or any kin to me whatever. ("Never." "Hit him again," and cheers.) Abraham Lincoln has evidently learned by heart Parson Lovejoy's catechism. (Laughter and applause.) He can repeat it as well as Farnsworth,¹¹ and he is worthy of a medal from father Joshua Reed Giddings and Frederick Douglass for his Abolitionism. (Laughter.) He holds that the negro was born his equal and yours, and that he was endowed with equality by the Almighty, and that no human law can deprive him of these rights which were guaranteed to him by the Supreme ruler of the Universe. Now, I do not believe that the Almighty ever intended the negro to be the equal of the white

11. US Representative John F. Farnsworth of Chicago.



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

man. ("Never, never.") If he did, he has been a long time demonstrating the fact. (Cheers.) For thousands of years the negro has been a race upon the earth, and during all that time, in all latitudes and climates, wherever he has wandered or been taken, he has been inferior to the race which he has there met. He belongs to an inferior race, and must always occupy an inferior position. ("Good," "that's so," &c.) I do not hold that because the negro is our inferior that therefore he ought to be a slave. By no means can such a conclusion be drawn from what I have said. On the contrary, I hold that humanity and christianity both require that the negro shall have and enjoy every right, every privilege, and every immunity consistent with the safety of the society in which he lives. (That's so.) On that point, I presume, there can be no diversity of opinion. You and I are bound to extend to our inferior and dependent being every right, every privilege, every facility and immunity consistent with the public good. The question then arises what rights and privileges are consistent with the public good. This is a question which each State and each Territory must decide for itself---Illinois has decided it for herself. We have provided that the negro shall not be a slave, and we have also provided that he shall not be a citizen, but protect him in his civil rights, in his life, his person and his property, only depriving him of all political rights whatsoever, and refusing to put him on an equality with the white man. ("Good.") That policy of Illinois is satisfactory to the Democratic party and to me, and if it were to the Republicans, there would then be no question upon the subject; but the Republicans say that he ought to be made a citizen, and when he becomes a citizen he becomes your equal, with all your rights and privileges. ("He never shall.") They assert the Dred Scott decision to be monstrous because it denies that the negro is or can be a citizen under the Constitution. Now, I hold that Illinois had a right to abolish and prohibit slavery as she did, and I hold that Kentucky has the same right to continue and protect slavery that Illinois had to abolish it. I hold that New York had as much right to abolish slavery as Virginia has to continue it, and that each and every State of this Union is a sovereign power, with the right to do as it pleases upon this question of slavery, and upon all its domestic institutions. Slavery is not the only question which comes up in this controversy. There is a far more important one to you, and that is, what shall be done with the free negro? We have settled the slavery question as far as we are concerned; we have prohibited it in Illinois forever, and in doing so, I think we have done wisely, and there is no man in the State who would be more strenuous in his opposition to the introduction of slavery than I would; (cheers) but when we settled it for ourselves, we exhausted all our power over that subject. We have done our whole duty, and can do no more. We must leave each and every other State to decide for itself the same question. In relation to the policy to be pursued towards the free negroes, we have said that they shall not vote; whilst Maine, on the other hand, has said that they shall vote. Maine is a sovereign State, and has the power to regulate the qualifications of voters within her limits. I would never



consent to confer the right of voting and of citizenship upon a negro, but still I am not going to quarrel with Maine for differing from me in opinion. Let Maine take care of her own negroes and fix the qualifications of her own voters to suit herself, without interfering with Illinois, and Illinois will not interfere with Maine. So with the State of New York. She allows the negro to vote provided he owns two hundred and fifty dollars' worth of property, but not otherwise. While I would not make any distinction whatever between a negro who held property and one who did not; yet if the sovereign State of New York chooses to make that distinction it is her business and not mine, and I will not quarrel with her for it. She can do as she pleases on this question if she minds her own business, and we will do the same thing. Now, my friends, if we will only act conscientiously and rigidly upon this great principle of popular sovereignty which guarantees to each State and Territory the right to do as it pleases on all things local and domestic instead of Congress interfering, we will continue at peace one with another. Why should Illinois be at war with Missouri, or Kentucky with Ohio, or Virginia with New York, merely because their institutions differ? Our fathers intended that our institutions should differ. They knew that the North and the South having different climates, productions and interests, required different institutions. This doctrine of Mr. Lincoln's of uniformity among the institutions of the different States is a new doctrine, never dreamed of by Washington, Madison, or the framers of this Government. Mr. Abraham Lincoln and the Republican party set themselves up as wiser than these men who made this government, which has flourished for seventy years under the principle of popular sovereignty, recognizing the right of each State to do as it pleased. 18

Under that principle we have grown from a nation of three or four millions to a nation of about thirty millions of people; we have crossed the Alleghany Mountains and filled up the whole Northwest, turning the prairies into a garden, and building up churches and schools, thus spreading civilization and Christianity where before there was nothing but savage barbarism. Under that principle we have become, from a feeble nation, the most powerful on the face of the earth, and if we only adhere to that principle, we can go forward increasing in territory, in power, in strength, and in glory until the Republic of America shall be the north star that shall guide the friends of freedom throughout the civilized world. And why can we not adhere to the great principle of self-government upon which our institutions were originally based? I believe that this new doctrine preached by Mr. Lincoln and his party will dissolve the Union if it succeeds.

* This extract from Mr. Lincoln's Peoria Speech of 1854, was read by him in the Ottawa debate, but was not reported fully or accurately, in either the Times or Press & Tribune. It is inserted now as necessary to a complete report of the debate. [Footnote written by Lincoln in the margin of the debates scrapbook.]

[5] "Materially" corrected by Lincoln to "materials."

[6] "Whas" corrected by Lincoln to "What."

[7] U.S. Senator Charles E. Stuart ("my friend from Michigan").

[8] This episode is not reported in the Press and Tribune, and was deleted by Lincoln in the debates scrapbook.

[9] The five preceding paragraphs composing this digression were deleted by Lincoln in the debates scrapbook. The bias of the

TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

Times reporter is obvious, but it may be well to note that the episode appears in the Press and Tribune as follows:

“MR. LINCOLN---Let the Judge add that Lincoln went along with them.

“JUDGE DOUGLAS.---Mr. Lincoln says let him add that he went along with them to the Senate Chamber. I will not add that for I do not know it.

“MR. LINCOLN.---I do know it.

“JUDGE DOUGLAS.---But whether he knows or not my point is this, and I will yet bring him to his milk on this point.”


[10] This paragraph is not in the Press and Tribune.

August 22, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) mentioned for the 18th time (Dr. Bradley P. Dean has noticed) the cloud form “cumulus” of [Luke Howard](#): “[A large bird] screamed ... and finally soared higher and higher till it was almost lost amid the clouds or could scarcely be distinguished except when it was seen against some white and glowing cumulus.”




August 22: P.M.--I have spliced my old sail to a new one, and now go out to try it in a sail to [Baker Farm](#). It is a “square sail,” some five feet by six. I like it much. It pulls like an ox, and makes me think there’s more wind abroad than there is. The yard goes about with a pleasant force, almost enough, I would fain imagine, to knock me overboard. How sturdily it pulls, shooting us along, catching more wind than I knew to be wandering in this river valley! It suggests a new power in the sail, like a Grecian god. I can even worship it, after a heathen fashion. And then, how it becomes my boat and the river, a simple homely square sail, all for use not show, so low and broad! Ajacean. The boat is like a plow drawn by a winged bull. If I had had this a dozen years ago, my voyages would have been performed more quickly and easily. But then probably I should have lived less in them. I land on a remote shore at an unexpectedly early hour, and have time for a long walk there. Before, my sail was so small that I was wont to raise the mast with the sail on it ready set, but now I have had to rig some tackling with which to haul up the sail.

As for the beauty of the river’s brim: now that the mikania begins to prevail the button-bush has done, the pontederia is waning, and the willows are already somewhat crisped and imbrowned (though the last may be none the worse for it); lilies, too, are as good as gone. So perhaps I should say that the brim of the river was in its prime about the 1st of August this year, when the pontederia and button-bush and white lilies were in their glory. The cyperus (phymatodes, etc.) now yellows edges of pools and half-bare low grounds.

See one or two blue herons [[Great Blue Heron](#)  *Ardea herodias*] every day now, driving them far up or down the river before me. I see a mass of bur-reed, etc., which the wind and waves are sweeping down-stream. The higher water and wind thus clear the river for us.

JAMES BAKER



August 22: At [Baker Farm](#) a large bird rose up near us, which at first I took for a hen-hawk, but it appeared larger. It screamed the same, and finally soared higher and higher till it was almost lost amid the clouds or could scarcely be distinguished except when it was seen against some white and glowing cumulus. I think it was at least half a mile high, or three quarters, and yet I distinctly heard it scream up there each time it came round, and with my glass saw its head steadily turned toward the ground, looking for its prey. Its head, seen in proper light, was distinctly whitish, and I suspect it may have been a white-headed eagle [[Bald Eagle](#)  *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*]. It did not once flap its wings up there, as it circled and sailed though I watched it for nearly a mile. How fit that these soaring birds should be haughty and fierce, not like doves to our race!

JAMES BAKER

October 2, Saturday: Donati’s comet was at this point brighter than the star Arcturus, which it was approaching, and its tail was 25 degrees in length.

ASTRONOMY



October 2: A dark and windy night the last. It is a new value when darkness amounts to something positive. Each morning now, after rain and wind, is fresher and cooler, and leaves still green reflect a brighter sheen.

Minott told me yesterday that he had never seen the seashore but once, and that was Noddle’s Island in the War of 1812.

The garden is alive with migrating sparrows these mornings. The cat comes in from an early walk amid the weeds. She is full of sparrows and wants no more breakfast this morning, unless it be a saucer of milk, the dear creature. I saw her studying ornithology between the corn-rows.

CAT



Dakota women studying ornithology in their cornfields, per Captain Seth Eastman of Fort Snelling

As I approached Perch Pool the other day, half a dozen frogs leaped into it and buried themselves in the mass of callitriche at the bottom. I stood looking for perch a minute or two, when one after another up came the frogs from out the callitriche, just as a piece of cork would rise by mere buoyancy to the surface; and then, by a distinct effort, they let go all, drop anchor, elevate or let float up their heels, and lie spread out on the surface. They were probably *Rana fontinalis*.

Sailed to [Baker Farm](#) with a strong northwest wind. Got a peck of the small long-bunched grapes now turned purple under Lee’s Cliff. One or two vines bear very plentifully. The bunches are about six inches long by one and a half, and quite dense and cylindrical commonly. They are now apparently just in their prime, to judge from color. Considerably later than the *Vitis Labrusca* [fox grape; “mother a nice jelly of them afterward”], but are not good. A large chocolate-colored puffball “smokes.”

JAMES BAKER

October 29, Friday: A store was established in Colorado to service the miners working the placer gold deposits along the Rocky Mountain Front Range (in a month, in an attempt to curry favor with Kansas Territorial Governor James W. Denver, this little frontier community being sponsored by real estate promoter William H. Larimer, Jr. would assign itself the name “Denver”).



October 29: 6.30 A.M.– Very hard frost these mornings; the grasses, to their finest branches, clothed with it.

The cat comes stealthily creeping towards some prey amid the withered flowers in the garden, which being disturbed by my approach, she runs low toward it with an unusual glare or superficial light in her eye, ignoring her oldest acquaintance, as wild as her remotest ancestor; and presently I see the first tree sparrow hopping there. I hear them also amid the alders by the river, singing sweetly, – but a few notes.

CAT

Notwithstanding the few handsome scarlet oaks that may yet be found, and the larches and pitch pines and the few thin-leaved *Populus grandidentata*, the brightness of the foliage, generally speaking, is past.

P.M.– To [Baker Farm](#), on foot.

The *Salix Torreyana* [wand willow] on the right has but few leaves near the extremities (like the *S. sericea* [silky willow] of the river), and is later to fall than the *S. rostrata* [Bebb willow] near by. Its leaves turn merely a brownish yellow, and not scarlet like the *cordata* [wand willow], so that it is not allied to that in this respect. (In *S. tristis* [dwarf gray willow] path about Well Meadow Field the *S. tristis* is mostly fallen or withered on the twigs, and the curled leaves lie thickly like ashes about the bases of the shrubs.)

Notice the fuzzy black and reddish caterpillars on ground.

I look north from the causeway at Heywood’s meadow. How rich some scarlet oaks imbosomed in pines, their branches (still bright) intimately intermingled with the pine! They have their full effect there. The pine boughs are the green calyx to its [*sic*] petals. Without these pines for contrast the autumnal tints would lose a considerable part of their effect.

The white birches being now generally bare, they stand along the east side of Heywood’s meadow slender, parallel white stems, revealed in a pretty reddish maze produced by their fine branches. It is a lesser and denser

smoke (?) than the maple one. The branches must be thick, like those of maples and birches, to give the effect of smoke, and most trees have fewer and coarser branches, or do not grow in such dense masses.

Nature now, like an athlete, begins to strip herself in earnest for her contest with her great antagonist Winter. In the bare trees and twigs what a display of muscle!

Looking toward Spanish Brook, I see the white pines, a clear green, rising amid and above the pitch pines, which are parti-colored, glowing internally with the warm yellow of the old leaves. Of our Concord evergreens, only the white and pitch pines are interesting in their change, for only their leaves are bright and conspicuous enough. I notice a barberry bush in the woods [And elsewhere the same.] still thickly clothed, but merely yellowish-green, not showy. Is not this commonly the case with the introduced European plants? Have they not European habits? And are they not also late to fall, killed before they are ripe? – e.g. the quince, apple, pear(?), barberry, silvery abele, privet, plum(?), white willow, weeping willow, lilac, hawthorn (the horse-chestnut and European mountain-ash are distincter yellow, and the Scotch larch is at least as bright as ours at same time; the Lombardy poplar is a handsome yellow (some branches early), and the cultivated cherry is quite handsome orange, often yellowish), which, with exceptions in parenthesis, are inglorious in their decay.

BARBERRY

As the perfect winged and usually bright-colored insect is but short-lived, so the leaves ripen but to fall.

I go along the wooded hillside southwest of Spanish Brook. With the fall of the white pine, etc., the *Pyrola umbellata* and the *Iycopodiums*, and even evergreen ferns, suddenly emerge as from obscurity. If these plants are to be evergreen, how much they require this brown and withered carpet to be spread under them for effect. Now, too, the light is let in to show them. Cold(?)-blooded wood frogs hop [Or earlier?] about amid the cool ferns and *Iycopodiums*.

Am surprised to see, by the path to Baker Farm, a very tall and slender large *Populus tremuliformis* [quaking aspen] still thickly clothed with leaves which are merely yellowish-green, later than any *P. grandidentata* [bigtooth aspen] I know. It must be owing to its height above frosts, for the leaves of sprouts are fallen and withered some time, and of young trees commonly. Afterwards, when on the Cliff, I perceive that, birches being bare (or as good as bare), one or two poplars – I am not sure which species – take [*Tremuloides*, bright at distance. *Vide* November 2.] their places on the Shrub Oak Plain, and are brighter than they were, for they hold out to burn longer than the birch. The birch has now generally dropped its golden spangles, and those oak sprout-lands where they glowed are now an almost uniform brown red. Or, strictly speaking, they are pale-brown, mottled with dull red where the small scarlet oak stands. [Shrub oaks withered. *Vide* November 2.]

I find the white pine cones, which have long since opened, hard to come off.

The thickly fallen leaves make it slippery in the woods, especially climbing hills, as the Cliffs. The late wood tortoise and squirrel betrayed.

Apple trees, though many are thick-leaved, are in the midst of their fall. Our English cherry has fallen. The silvery abele is still densely leaved, and green, or at most a yellowish green. The lilac still thickly leaved; a yellowish green or greenish yellow as the case may be. Privet thickly leaved, yellowish-green.

If these plants acquire brighter tints in Europe, then one would say that they did not fully ripen their leaves here before they were killed. The orchard trees are not for beauty, but use. English plants have English habits here: they are not yet acclimated; they are early or late as if ours were an English spring or autumn; and no doubt in course of time a change will be produced in their constitutions similar to that which is observed in the English man here.

JAMES BAKER

November 2, Tuesday: Although the Republican Party candidate, Abraham Lincoln, obtained a majority in the popular vote by opposing the extension of slavery to the new western states (125,000 over 121,000),¹² the voters were merely selecting candidates for the Illinois statehouse who would then select the politician who would represent Illinois in the federal Senate — and in the Illinois statehouse the Democratic incumbent Stephen A. Douglas would by a margin of 8 votes be able to retain his seat in the US Senate.



November 2: P.M.– To Cliff.

A cool gray November afternoon; sky overcast.

Looking back from the causeway, the large willow by Mrs. Bigelow's and a silvery abele are the only leafy trees to be seen in and over the village, the first a yellowish mass, also some Lombardy poplars on the outskirts. It is remarkable that these (and the weeping willow, yet green) and a few of our *Populus tremuloides* (lately the *grandidentata* also [Still one.]), all closely allied, are the only trees now (except the larch and perhaps a very few small white birches) which are conspicuously yellow, almost the only deciduous ones whose leaves are not withered, i.e. except scarlet oaks, red oaks, and some of the others, etc.

I see here and there yet some middle-sized coniferous willows, between *humilis* and *discolor*, whose upper

12. Neither candidate was pro-black. Both made repeated use of the word “nigger” in their stump speeches.

leaves, left on, are quite bright lemon-yellow in dry places. These single leaves brighter than their predecessors which have fallen. The pitch pine is apparently a little past the midst of its fall. In sprout-lands some young birches are still rather leafy and bright-colored. Going over the newly cleared pasture on the northeast of Fair Haven Hill, I see that the scarlet oaks are more generally bright than on the 22d *ult.* Even the little sprouts in the russet pasture and the high tree-tops in the yew wood burn now, when the middle-sized bushes in the sprout-lands have mostly gone out. The large scarlet oak trees and tree-tops in woods, perhaps especially on hills, apparently are late because raised above the influence of the early frosts. Methinks they are as bright, even this dark day, as I ever saw them. The blossoming of the I Still one scarlet oak! the forest flower, surpassing all in splendor (at least since the maple)! I do not know but they interest me more than the maples, they are so widely and equally dispersed throughout the forest; they are so hardy, a nobler tree on the whole, lasting into November; our chief November flower, abiding the approach of winter with us, imparting warmth to November prospects. It is remarkable that the latest bright color that is general should be this deep, dark scarlet and red, the intensest of colors, the ripest fruit of the year, like the cheek of a glossy red ripe apple from the cold Isle of Orleans, which will not be mellow for eating till next spring! When I rise to a hilltop, a thousand of these great oak roses, distributed on every side as far as the horizon! This my unfailing prospect for a fortnight past as surely as I rose to a hilltop! This late forest flower surpasses all that spring or summer could do. Their colors were but rare and dainty specks, which made no impression on a distant eye. Now it is an extended forest or a mountain-side that bursts into bloom, through or along which we may journey from day to day. I admire these roses three or four miles off in the horizon. Comparatively, our gardening is on a petty scale, the gardener still nursing a few asters amid dead weeds, ignorant of the gigantic asters and roses which, as it were, overshadow him and ask for none of his care. Comparatively, it is like a little red paint ground on a teacup and held up against the sunset sky. Why not take more elevated and broader views, walk in the greater garden, not skulk in a little “debauched” nook of it? Consider the beauty of the earth, and not merely of a few impounded herbs? However, you will not see these splendors, whether you stand on the hilltop or in the hollow, unless you are prepared to see them. The gardener can see only the gardener’s garden, wherever he goes. The beauty of the earth answers exactly to your demand and appreciation.

Apples in the village and lower ground are now generally killed brown and crisp, without having turned yellow, especially the upper parts, while those on hills and [in] warm places turned yellowish or russet, and so ripened to their fall. Of quince bushes the same, only they are a little later and are greener yet.

The sap is now frequently flowing fast in the scarlet oaks (as I have not observed it in the others), and has a pleasant acorn-like taste. Their bright tints, now that most other oaks are withered, are connected with this phenomenon. They are full of sap and life. They flow like a sugar maple in the spring. It has a pleasantly astringent taste, this strong oak wine.

That small poplar seen from Cliffs on the 29th is a *P. tremuloides* [quaking aspen]. It makes the impression of a bright and clear yellow at a distance, though it is rather dingy and spotted.

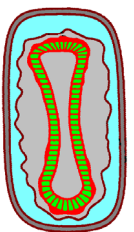
It is later, then (this and the [Baker Farm](#) one), than any *P. grandidentata* [bigtooth aspen] that I know.

Looking down on the oak wood southeast of Yew Wood, I see some large black oak tops a brown yellow still; so generally it shows life a little longer than the white and swamp white apparently. One just beyond the smallpox burying-ground is generally greenish inclining to scarlet, looking very much like a scarlet oak not yet completely changed, for the leaf would not be distinguished. However, the nuts, with yellow meat, and the strong bitter yellow bark betrayed it. Yet it did not amount to scarlet.

I see a few shrub oak leaves still fresh where sheltered. The little chinquapin has fallen.

I go past the Well Meadow Field. There is a sympathy between this cold, gray, overcast November afternoon and the grayish-brown oak leaves and russet fields.

The Scotch larch is changed at least as bright as ours.



VARIOLA
JAMES BAKER

November 10, Wednesday: A convention for arbitration of Macedonian claims between the United States of America and Chile.

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)

[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).



November 10: A pleasant day, especially the forenoon. Thermometer 46° at noon. Some would call it Indian summer, but it does not deserve to be called summer; grows cool in afternoon when I go—



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

JAMES BAKER

To [Baker Farm](#) aspen *via* Cliffs.

Some very handsome *Solidago nemoralis* in bloom on Fair Haven Hill. (Look for these late flowers –November flowers– on hills, above frost.)

I think I may say that about the 5th the white, swamp white, and black, and perhaps red, oaks (the last *may* be later) were in their November condition, i. e. for the most part fallen. The few *large* black oak tops, still covered with leaves above the forest (*i.e.* just withered), are brownish-yellow.

The brilliancy of the scarlet oak being generally dulled, the season of brilliant leaves may be considered over, – say about the 10th; and now a new season begins, the pure November season of the russet earth and withered leaf and bare twigs and hoary withered goldenrods, etc.

From Fair Haven Hill, using my glass, I think that I can see some of the snow of the 7th still left on the brow of Uncannunuc. It is a light line, lying close along under the edge of a wood which covers the summit, which has protected it. I can understand how much nearer they must feel to winter who live in plain sight of that than we do. I think that I could not have detected the edge of the forest if it had not been for the snow.

In the path below the Cliff, I see some blue-stemmed goldenrod turned yellow as well as purple. The Jersey tea is fallen, all but the terminal leaves. These, however, are the greenest and apparently least changed of any indigenous plant, unless it be the sweet-fern. Withered leaves generally, though they remain on the trees, are drooping. As I go through the hazel bushes toward the sun, I notice the silvery light reflected from the fine down on their tender twigs, this year's growth. This apparently protects them against the winter. The very armor that Nature puts on reminds you of the foe she would resist. This a November phenomenon, – the silvery light reflected from a myriad of downy surfaces.

A true November seat is amid the pretty white-plumed *Andropogon scoparius*, the withered culms of the purple wood grass which covers so many dry knolls. There is a large patch at the entrance to Pleasant Meadow. It springs from pink-brown clumps of radical leaves, which make good seats. Looking toward the sun, as I sit in the midst of it rising as high as my head, its countless silvery plumes are a very cheerful sight. At a distance they look like frost on the plant.

I look out westward across Fair Haven Pond. The warmer colors are now rare. A cool and silvery light is the prevailing one; dark-blue or slate-colored clouds in the west, and the sun going down in them. All the light of November may be called an afterglow.

Hornbeam bare; how long? Perhaps with the ostrya and just after elms? There are still a few leaves on the large *Populus tremuliformis*, but they will be all gone in a day or two. They have turned quite yellow.

Hearing in the oak and near by a sound as if some one had broken a twig, I looked up and saw a jay pecking at an acorn. There were several jays busily gathering acorns on a scarlet oak. I could hear them break them off. They then flew to a suitable limb and, placing the acorn under one foot, hammered away at it busily, looking round from time to time to see if any foe was approaching, and soon reached the meat and nibbled at it, holding up their heads to swallow, while they held it very firmly with their claws. (Their hammering made a sound like the woodpecker's.) Nevertheless it sometimes dropped to the ground before they had done with it.

Aphides on alder.

Sap still flows in scarlet oak.

Returned by Spanish Brook Path. Notice the glaucous white bloom on the thimble-berry of late, as there are fewer things to notice. So many objects are white or light, preparing us for winter.

By the 10th of November we conclude with the scarlet oak dulled (and the colors of October generally faded), with a few golden spangles on the white birches and on a lingering *Populus tremuliformis* and a few sallows, a few green leaves on the Jersey tea, and a few lingering scarlet or yellow or crimson ones on the flowering dogwood in a sheltered place, the gooseberry, the high blueberry, *Cornus sericea*, the late rose and the common smooth one, and the sweet-briar, [English?] meadow-sweet, sweet-fern, and *Viburnum nudum*. [And green-briar, according to November 7th and 11th, 1855; and perhaps a *few* other shrubs.] But they are very rare or uninteresting. To these may be added the introduced plants of November 9th, which are more leafy. Of them the silvery abele, English cherry, and broom have been of the most interesting colors.



1860

March 27, 28, 31, and April: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed the Lincoln farm of [Edward Sherman Hoar](#).

View [Henry Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/53.htm

This farm was very near Mount Misery, [James Baker](#)'s houselot, Garfield, and Frederic Hayden. On the back of this survey is written "Snelling Far, So. Lincoln" meaning "Snelling farm in South Lincoln."



[Lewis Hayden happens to have been a black leader in downtown Boston, an escapee from Kentucky. Does that mean that this "Frederic Hayden," mentioned here and nowhere else in this database, was likewise black?]



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

1874

August 27, day: Calvin H. Greene visited Walden Pond and made a record that mentions the foundation of Thoreau's shanty, "they can't move away this foundation" — so evidently the foundation, or at least the hole in the ground or perhaps the base of the fireplace, was at this time still apparent. He commented that the farmhouse that had stood on [Baker Farm](#) had disappeared since his visit 11 years earlier but that from the Cliffs the "vale, lake & river running through it, & Hallowell Place," looked much the same. He mentioned that in the interval between the 1863 visit and this 1874 visit, the Thoreau family graves had been relocated onto Authors' Ridge in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery and that the family's headstones had been replaced with "neat, plain, brown" ones (the cemetery association now keeps spare gravestones for Henry's grave in a shed somewhere, as these memorabilia do seem from time to time to wander away).



DIGGING UP THE DEAD

1936

November: Any number of readers have been thrown off stride by the manner in which [Henry Thoreau](#) critiqued a hapless family of Irish ecological refugees in the "Baker Farm" chapter of WALDEN, and have drawn an adverse conclusion as to Thoreau's general sociability. But consider, this book had begun with a pointed discussion of household economy, of aims and manners of living. The record is more complex than what is contained in just this one chapter, in regard to Thoreau's attitudes toward and dealings with people, common or otherwise, and such a mere excerpt should not be tendentiously taken out of its evocative context to make a point that could only be sustained by carefully disregarding other evidence. What comes to light in the aggregate, not only on the basis of Thoreau's own reports but also on the basis of the testimonies of the many who knew him, is that he was a gentle and considerate man whose dealings with common people were predominantly marked by neighborly interest and fellow feeling. Although WALDEN happens to have become the primary repository of his cultural legacy, in fact Thoreau didn't spend his whole life as a youth at Walden Pond, or crowing about that early experiment in living, or condemning others for failing to live as skillfully as he himself lived. He had found that he had several more lives to live, and had been in the process of living



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

them, when snuffed by TB in 1862 — however much the popular imagination seems intent upon containing this changing person at Walden Pond and in the years 1845-1846. There was so much more, and part of this is the nature and extent of Thoreau's relations with his neighbors and passing strangers (including runaway slaves and poor Irishmen) during the years that he was no longer elaborating his early manuscript *A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS* while in residence at Walden Pond.

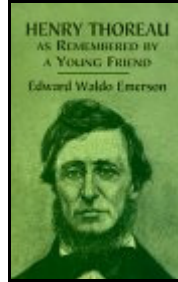
MEN OF CONCORD AS PORTRAYED IN THE JOURNAL OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, ed. [Francis Henry Allen](#) with illustrations by [Newell Convers Wyeth](#), issued in this year, is simply a 240-page compilation of excerpts from the *JOURNAL* in which Thoreau is allowed to describe and discuss, and report his walks and talks with, various of his neighbors, as a corrective for this general misperception of Thoreau's neighborliness:

Many readers, thinking of [Henry Thoreau](#) as the staunch individualist, the apostle of wild nature, the rebel against man-made institutions, the "hermit of Walden," forget that he had any but the most formal relations with human beings outside of his own family. And yet his *JOURNAL* records many and many a conversation with fellow-townsmen, and its readers encounter much shrewd and understanding comment on the ways and manners of this and that individual or group. He talked familiarly with farmers, hunters, and fishermen — as familiarly as he did with his friend [Ellery Channing](#), with [Edward Sherman Hoar](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#), and H.G.O. Blake. [Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson](#), in his

HENRY DAVID THOREAU AS REMEMBERED BY A YOUNG FRIEND

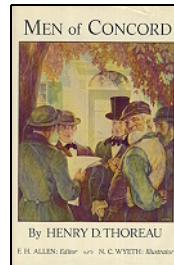
has testified to the regard in which Thoreau's humbler neighbors held him... [A]fter speaking of Thoreau's propensity for taking the other side in conversation "for the joy of the intellectual fencing," Dr. Emerson goes on to say: "Thoreau held this trait in check with women and children, and with humble people who were no match for him. With them he was simple, gentle, friendly, and amusing." "His simple, direct speech and look and bearing were such that no plain, common man would put him down in his books as a fool, or visionary, or helpless, as the scholar, writer, or reformer would often be regarded by him... He loved to talk with all kinds and conditions of men if they had no hypocrisy or pretense about them, and though high in his standard of virtue, and most severe with himself, could be charitable to the failings of humble fellow-men." A man who lived on a farm and had worked in the Thoreaus' [plumbago](#)-mill told Dr. Emerson that Thoreau was the best friend he ever had. "He was always straight in his ways: and was very particular to be agreeable... When I saw him crossing my field I always wanted to go and have a talk with him... He liked to talk as long as

you did, and what he said was new.”



Although the matter was not publicized, MEN OF CONCORD’s pen-and-ink drawings had been done by his son Andrew Wyeth, rather than by the painter himself. Wyeth hoped to induce the [Concord Free Public Library](#) to pay him \$5,000 for the entire set of a dozen original painted panels that had been used to create this book, but that was something that would not come about. The paintings would be sold individually on the general market, and eventually the library would come into possession of five of them, “The Carpenters Repairing Hubbard’s Bridge,” “Thoreau and Miss Mary Emerson,” “Johnny and His Woodchuck-Skin Cap,” “Fishing Through the Ice,” and “The Muskrat Hunters....” Other of the paintings would go to:

- pen-and-ink drawings — privately held
- jacket illustration — Brandywine River Museum



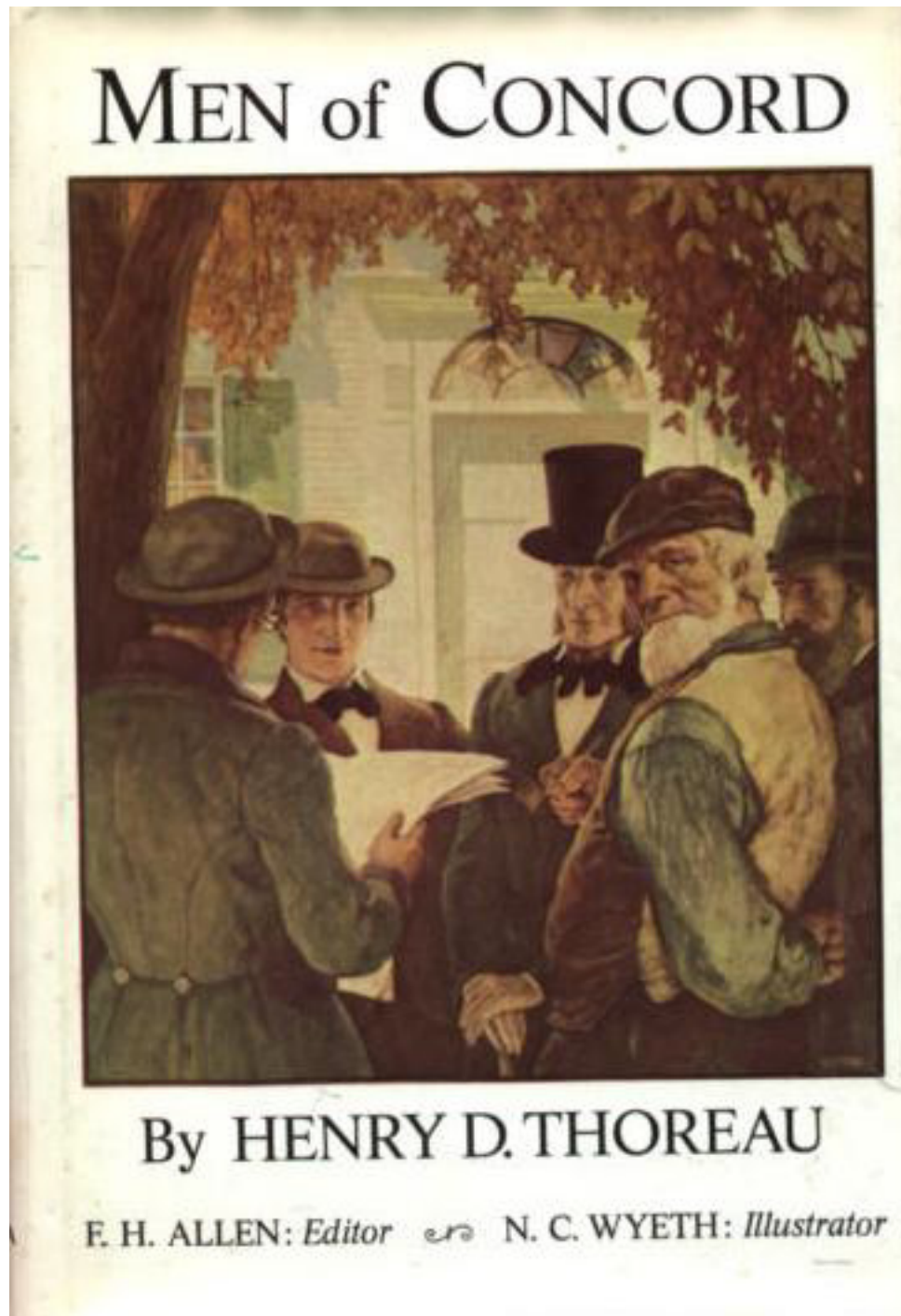
- endpaper illustration — Canajoharie Library and Art Museum
- “Mr. Alcott in the Granary Burying Ground” — Boston Athenaeum
- “A Man of a Certain Probity...” — privately held
- “Barefooted Brooks Clark Building Wall” — privately held
- “Thoreau and the Three Reformers” — privately held
- “Barefooted Brooks Clark Building Wall” — privately held
- “Thoreau Fishing” — location unknown

According to the Preface, “Wyeth was a lifelong admirer of Thoreau, whose spirit has become a part of him. His work for this book, therefore, is a tribute from an intellectual disciple to an author who has had an important formative influence on his character and work.” One of the pieces of material selected is from the journal of February 13, 1841:

A Lean Farm



February 13, 1841: My neighbor says that his hill-farm is poor stuff and “only fit to hold the world together.” He deserves that God should give him better for so brave a treatment of his gifts, instead of humbly putting up therewith. It is a sort of stay, or gore or gusset, and he will not be blinded by modesty or gratitude, but sees it for what it is; knowing his neighbor’s fertile land, he calls his by its right name. But perhaps my farmer forgets that his lean soil has sharpened his wits. This is a crop it was good for, and beside, you see the heavens at a lesser angle from the hill than from the vale.





1995

Robert Milder, in his REIMAGINING THOREAU,¹³ imagined that the parable of the hound, the bay horse, and the turtle-dove had not been solved when it had indeed been solved (by yours truly). Putting himself into [Henry Thoreau](#)'s head, he fantasized in addition that the author had deliberately constructed something not to be understood:

Archly elusive (and **allusive**) even as it cultivates an air of frankness, Thoreau's language permits him to shed a demoralizing identity and assume the beginnings of a heroic one. His cryptic parable of the lost hound, bay horse, and turtle-dove, unsolved today, was probably never meant to be solved but to pique curiosity and invite readers to attach their own associations to its myth of fallenness and wished-for redemption, so that the quester's search becomes theirs. The social marginality of the narrator thus becomes a source of privilege and representativeness: while his neighbors have been busily attending to their callings, he, the reputed idler, has been faithfully pursuing his, which is what theirs would be if they stopped to consider the matter and review their priorities.

13.  Robert Milder. REIMAGINING THOREAU. NY: Cambridge UP, 1995

WALDEN: In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line. You will pardon some obscurities, for there are more secrets in my trade than in most men's, and yet not voluntarily kept, but inseparable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all that I know about it, and never paint "No Admittance" on my gate.

I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves.

To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn merely, but, if possible, Nature herself! How many mornings, summer and winter, before yet any neighbor was stirring about his business, have I been about mine! No doubt many of my townsmen have met me returning from this enterprise, farmers starting for Boston in the twilight, or woodchoppers going to their work. It is true, I never assisted the sun materially in his rising, but, doubt not, it was of the last importance only to be present at it.



The WALDEN parable The other analyses

Milder took up the thorny question of an author's personal spiritual status as revealed in his oeuvre:

"Baker Farm", as revised, is [Thoreau's] self-canonization as a worldly saint, "Higher Laws" his would-be leavetaking of the world.



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

Viking Penguin

Penguin Books USA Inc.

67

*There are no larger fields than these, no worthier games that may here be played.
Walden, "Baker Farm"*

Sarah Peel and her friends were homeless no longer. Seven trailers were quickly set up on the Hugh Cargill land, the

ISBN 0-670-84260-5 — PS3562.A515G58

GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

Languidly she opened the book and turned to the chapter called “Higher Laws.”

. . . the spirit can for the time pervade and control every member and function of the body, and transmute what in form is the grossest sensuality into purity and devotion.

Purity and devotion! Hope was filled with bitter cynicism. How much transmuting of sensuality into purity and devotion was Ananda practicing, that eager disciple of Henry Thoreau?

ISBN 0-670-84260-5 — PS3562.A515G58

Viking Penguin

Penguin Books USA Inc.



Milder offers that we are to consider this paragraph “unsolved” because “probably never meant to be solved but to pique curiosity.” He announces himself to be graciously willing to abandon the meaning of this particular paragraph to the tender mercies of whatever the lay readership of [WALDEN](#) desires to make of it, on the basis of their own associations of “fallenness and wished-for redemption,” associations from their own personal stores of experiences of life’s little disappointments. –How wonderfully **democratic** that sort of approach to literature is! It doesn’t matter if someone desires to preempt all other interpretations, and find a solution to the puzzle in some sort of anagram or cryptogram or astrological reference!¹⁴ All is to be permitted and any offenses against Thoreau’s style of indeterminate writing, no matter how egregious, will be ignored, on the grounds that we need to be inclusive!

Now, Milder offers, he has a good reason for being thus democratic, and his good reason is, as he eloquently and persuasively argues below, that it is manifest that [Thoreau](#)’s intention in this text is to engage his readership in a sort of dialog in which they aid in the activity of meaning-production (pages 79-80):

No reading seems too “extra-vagant” with a writer whose diction and rhythms, like Emily Dickinson’s dashes, fill his sentences with invisible italics. Thoreau’s language has the effect, like

14. Were one to suitably rearrange the letters of the famous snippet from Hamlet’s soliloquy, “To be or not to be: that is the question, whether tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,” one might produce among other snippets the intriguing assertion “In one of the Bard’s best-thought-of tragedies, our insistent hero, Hamlet, queries on two fronts about how life turns rotten” — but this does not indicate that what Shakespeare was doing was creating anagrams for us to decipher. Thoreau was very self-reflective, of course, and very determined to write well, and did a great deal of analyzing of his own writing style as it developed itself. In particular he paid attention to the various writing theories and theories of meaning and theories of the origin and evolution of speech and meaning and writing, of his day. I am not aware, however, that he ever concerned himself with acrostics or anagrams or **anything** of that nature. Of course we are all at the mercy of the primary editors, who decide how to render the various holographic leaves of Thoreau’s jottings onto the typed page, and I grant that it is **possible** that somewhere Thoreau may have fooled around with some anagram in the corner of one of his MS sheets and the editors simply have suppressed this doodling. If you should ever come across **any** evidence of Thoreau involving himself in any of this, which would lend weight to the perennial hypothesis that the hound-horse-turtledove thing had a computational resolution, I hope you will let me know of it.



Keats's urn, of teasing us out of thought; and just as Keats's ode concedes its inferiority of expression to the silent urn, so we are made to feel that our construction of a simple Thoreauvian sentence falls endlessly short of its intrinsic possibilities. We sense that more is to be seen, that one day we may see it, that sharper readers than ourselves may already see it, but that no reader will approach the omniscience of the author. Even when nothing unusual may be meant, the positioning of an eyebrow-raising word can hint at mysteries defying solution. Such a rhetoric enlarges readers as a matter of course, and to the degree that they join in the activity of meaning-production they ratify Thoreau's elevation of literary over commercial values and enact the conversion his book was meant to produce. Yet in nearly all of WALDEN's memorable passages there is a residue of unpenetrated suggestion that directs readers to a sensibility beyond their own, to a master of the game at which they themselves are only novices. An admirer of Thoreau's linguistic effects, the reader of WALDEN is also a competitor – not an antagonist to be defeated (as its inscribed audience is), but a rival for interpretive honors whose function is to run a fine race yet place a distant second to the author. If WALDEN is "in part at least, an auto-biographical saint's life," as John Hildebidle called it, it is Thoreau's literary readers who must perform the canonization.

I do concur fully with the above! –And yet I am in full discord with his willingness to be gracious about the "cryptic parable" of the three lost animals, a parable for which, he says, readers are to be free to provide their own associations of "fallenness and wished-for redemption" no matter how each of these particularist interpretations preclude and cancel all others as false interpretations. The reason I am in full discord is, that although Milder advertises his agenda as a willingness to allow anything no matter how preemptive, the only analyses which in fact he includes within his category must be interpretations which honor this feeling of "fallenness and wished-for redemption" — cannot be any interpretation such as mine according to which Thoreau was mocking this very sentimentality, the sentiment of clutching at "life's losses." While pretending to be allowing any and every particularist reading no matter how destructive of other particularist readings, what Milder is actually doing is, specifically disallowing my own nonparticularist, non-preemptive reading!

Richard F. Teichgraber III, in *SUBLIME THOUGHTS/PENNY WISDOM: SITUATING EMERSON AND THOREAU IN THE AMERICAN MARKET* (Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 1995), in speaking of [Thoreau](#) as a "connected" rather than "disconnected" critic, means to emphasize that the pervasiveness and persuasiveness of economic categories in "Economy" in [WALDEN](#) was not intended to alienate or estrange Thoreau's readership, was not intended to derogate them, but was the author's reaching out to them, his revealing that in feeling alienated by such values he remained "still one of them."



COPYRIGHT NOTICE: In addition to the property of others, such as extensive quotations and reproductions of images, this "read-only" computer file contains a great deal of special work product of Austin Meredith, copyright ©2013. Access to these interim materials will eventually be offered for a fee in order to recoup some of the costs of preparation. My hypercontext button invention which, instead of creating a hypertext leap through hyperspace –resulting in navigation problems– allows for an utter alteration of the context within which one is experiencing a specific content already being viewed, is claimed as proprietary to Austin Meredith – and therefore freely available for use by all. Limited permission to copy such files, or any material from such files, must be obtained in advance in writing from the "Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project, 833 Berkeley St., Durham NC 27705. Please contact the project at <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.

"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: July 13, 2013

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, upon someone's request we have pulled it out of the hat of a pirate that has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (depicted above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of data modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture. This is data mining. To respond to such a request for information, we merely push a button.



TRAVELING MUCH

IN CONCORD MA

Commonly, the first output of the program has obvious deficiencies and so we need to go back into the data modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and do a recompile of the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process which you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place your requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.
Arrgh.