



# THOREAU SOCIETY BULLETIN

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## Finding Thoreau in the North Maine Woods

by Jake McGinnis

Two days after the close of the Annual Gathering last summer, a small group of Thoreauvians set out in canoes on Lobster Stream, fifty-some miles by bumpy, unpaved, and largely ungraded road from Millinocket, Maine. For an hour, maybe two, we worked our way upstream. In the days to come, we'd be traveling a part of



Courtesy Henrik Otterberg

Henry David Thoreau's 1853 and 1857 routes down the West Branch of the Penobscot, paddling from Lobster Stream to Chesuncook Lake. From there, we'd turn south toward Caribou and Ripogenus Lakes, leaving the routes of "Chesuncook" and "Allegash and the East Branch" behind us as we headed for our takeout. On the West Branch, I would fasten a map of our route on the outside of my pack, and all day I'd glance down at it to track our path against what I remembered of Thoreau's two trips down this same stretch of river. I had come to Maine to sort out some ideas for a dissertation chapter on *The Maine Woods*, and I had high hopes for a kind of epiphany, a better sense of Thoreau's travels there. On that first day on Lobster Stream, though, seated in the bow of a wood and canvas canoe steered by Maine Guide Polly Mahoney, I wasn't thinking about my map at all, or even about Thoreau. Rather, I was looking up at the sky, my thoughts occupied by a dark gray cloud racing in from the north. Now uncomfortably far from the landing, we could hear thunder in the distance, and there was nowhere to go but further upstream.

Lobster Stream is a slow, winding river, its grassy banks lined with alders and dotted by a few weathered beaver lodges. Passing this way in 1853, Thoreau ascended the stream with George Thatcher and Joe Attean for about a mile and a half in search of moose. He wrote that when the West Branch ran high, the water backed up nearly to Lobster Lake, making for easy paddling. They might have camped on the lake if they'd found fresh tracks, but finding only a freshly killed specimen, they turned back while still in the stream.<sup>1</sup> Four years later in "Allegash and the East Branch," a sudden thunderstorm came up as Thoreau again paddled by the mouth of Lobster Stream, and he and his companions had to duck for cover and make a hasty camp amidst the trees, a bit earlier than they might have otherwise. More than 150 years after those trips, it's still an easy paddle, and you're still liable to be "considerably molested by mosquitoes."<sup>2</sup> You'll certainly have to keep an eye on the weather, too.

As we pressed on beyond the last curve of the stream and entered Lobster Lake, the wind became anxious and shifty. We turned south, hugging the shore of a shallow bay and casting glances up at the clouds. Looking back, Polly and I saw the five other canoes behind us, strung out like a line of young mergansers headed to roost. Ahead, we could see our campsite in the distance, a sandy beach on Ogden Point that promised stunning views of the coming sunset, with cozy little tent spots tucked in the cedars just

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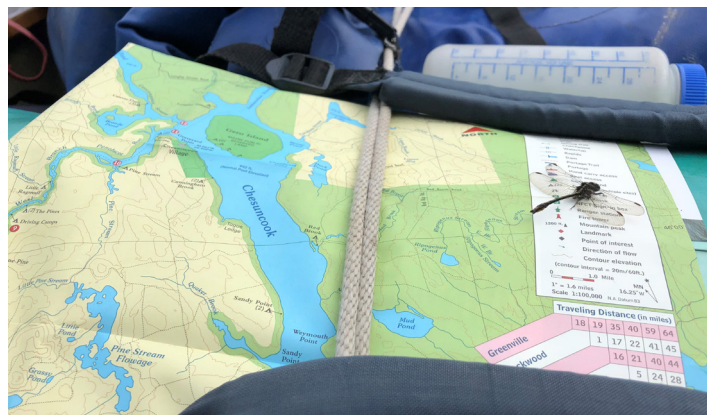


off the shore. But behind us we could now *hear* the front end of the storm as it closed the distance—a dull roar of water hitting the leaves of birches and aspens just off the lake. We had little choice but to finish our race against the storm, but we of course knew that we'd already lost. Paddling in the rain isn't really a problem, but with thunderheads building, we'd have to pull up our canoes just short of the campsite.

That's the way of it when you travel in the backcountry: You're constantly challenged to look around, take stock, and adapt to conditions on the ground. Looking back on it now, I'm not sure that I've ever been so close to Thoreau as in that moment.



In 2014, a larger group of scholars, guides, Maine tourism leaders, and members of the Penobscot Nation had paddled this same route. They were celebrating the 150th anniversary of Thoreau's *The Maine Woods*, and would travel 325 miles, crossing Moosehead Lake and the North East Carry and then following the West Branch to Chesuncook Lake and Umbazooksus Stream. From there, they made the famous Mud Pond Carry, running up to Chamberlain and Eagle Lakes before taking Webster Stream to



Courtesy Jake McGinnis

the East Branch of the Penobscot. Our trip was a kind of five-year follow-up, but much shorter, without the portages and with significantly less fanfare.<sup>3</sup> And the Lobster Lake thunderstorm notwithstanding, we enjoyed significantly milder weather.

Millinocket, where we began our journey, is just 300 miles from Concord, but it feels like a world apart. When I first read *Walden* and the *Journal* within earshot of the Fitchburg Railroad, I felt all the more engaged with Thoreau's process and commitments



Courtesy Henrik Otterberg

Departure on the Thoreau Society Penobscot River Tour, Orono, Maine, July 17, 2019. L-R, standing: Ron Hoag, James Francis, John Kucich, Jake McGinnis, Michael Berger, Chris Sockalexis, Jason Pardilla, Albin Otterberg, Huey. Front row: Chris "Charlie Brown" Francis, Polly Mahoney (with guide dog Dougette), Henrik Otterberg, Judy Wentzell.





Courtesy Henrik Otterberg.

as a writer. Reading *The Maine Woods* in a tent just off the West Branch of the Penobscot, though, I came to appreciate just how different these essays are from his other works, how often we find in them a Thoreau who is uncertain of what he sees, trying to keep up with a rush of new experiences and perspectives and names, often while literally lost in the woods. Here, he's challenged to adapt his customs of sauntering and observing and reading, walking in the woods and fields, to a very thickly forested, "well watered" country, where watersheds diverge and come together in a virtual highway system of rivers and lakes and portages.<sup>4</sup> Maine challenged Thoreau to be a different kind of traveller and a different kind of writer, and it got under his skin. When I travelled by canoe through those forests and down those rivers, the extent of that challenge became clearer, more central to my reading.

In "Allegash and the East Branch," as Thoreau passes between Telos Lake and Webster Pond, he describes a canoeist's reverie: "I remember once dreaming of pushing a canoe up the rivers of Maine, and that, when I had got so high that the channels were dry, I kept on through the ravines and gorges, nearly as well as before, by pushing a little harder, and now it seemed to me that my dream was partially realized."<sup>5</sup> When you travel by canoe in Maine, in other words, the waterways back home, even the hills between them,

never look quite the same again, and this way of seeing the world gets into your very dreams. Travel along the West Branch today, more than 150 years later, and you still might come back with a different take on things. Maine still challenges us to travel differently, and the extent of that challenge continues to provoke and inspire.

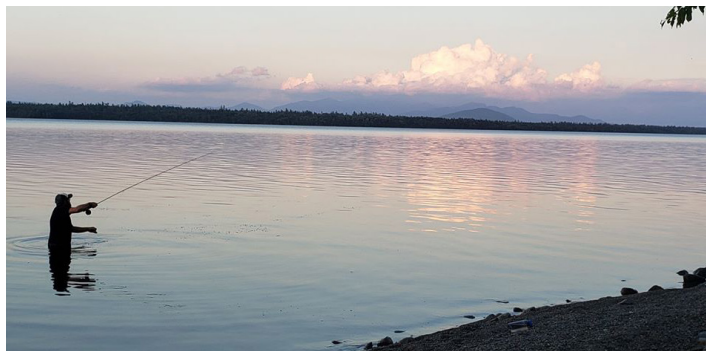


Two days after our soaking on Lobster Lake, we'd slept in tents, pointed our canoes down a series of bouncy West Branch riffles, and eaten some of the finest camping fare anywhere. A few of us had sampled the angling and gone for a swim amidst the fishes, and we'd all seen a handful of moose, including one standing in the river up to its knobby knees and dipping its head to graze on underwater grasses as we passed close by. We'd passed Thoreau Island, where he and his party had camped in 1853, and drifted by the mouth of Pine Stream, where Thatcher got his moose. And shortly before lunch on the third day, fighting a growing headwind, we came around a corner in the river and looked out at Chesuncook Lake. Passing this spot in "Chesuncook," Thoreau describes catching a glimpse of the mountains to the southeast, "like a cluster of blue fungi of rank growth, apparently twenty-five or thirty miles



Courtesy Henrik Otterberg





Courtesy Chris Sockalexis

Jake McGinnis fishing on Chesuncook Lake, with Mt. Katahdin in the background

distant.”<sup>6</sup> When he looked toward them that day, the summits were concealed by clouds. Returning in 1857, he found the nearer mountains visible, but the summit of Katahdin remained obscured by the clouds.

Turning south into Chesuncook Lake at the exact spot where Thoreau found Ansel Smith’s logging camp, a little village in the wilderness, we were offered a long, delicious view of the mountains, and that night we camped on a gravelly beach while the sky above Katahdin’s summit turned first rosy pink, then deep blue. We’d officially left Thoreau’s route behind, and there was the mountain, glowing in the last light of day without a cloud to be seen. After dinner and an hour of memorable fishing, I returned to my tent. A mosquito buzzed in my ear, and sleep evaded me. Several days later, a few of us would attempt to climb Katahdin, and we’d again be blessed with fine weather, making it up to the summit to take in the sweeping views that eluded Thoreau. My high point, though, my moment of contact, if you will, came in the tent that night on the edge of Chesuncook, *The Maine Woods* and the map spread open before me. I’d just left Thoreau’s route behind, but for the first time, I could see why he returned to Maine again and again, each time reassessing his previous experiences and coming a little closer to a true sense of the Maine Woods.

Musing on the way that time passes while traveling, Thoreau writes that there’s rarely a moment to spare on a canoe trip, “hardly enough to examine a plant, before the night or drowsiness is upon you.”<sup>7</sup> True enough, most times—but that night, I reread those essays with an attention that I’d not had before, and it’s stuck with me. Flashlight in hand and maps in front of me, I realized that in Thoreau’s Maine and still today, inspiration, like that first long look at the mountains across Chesuncook, follows challenge and

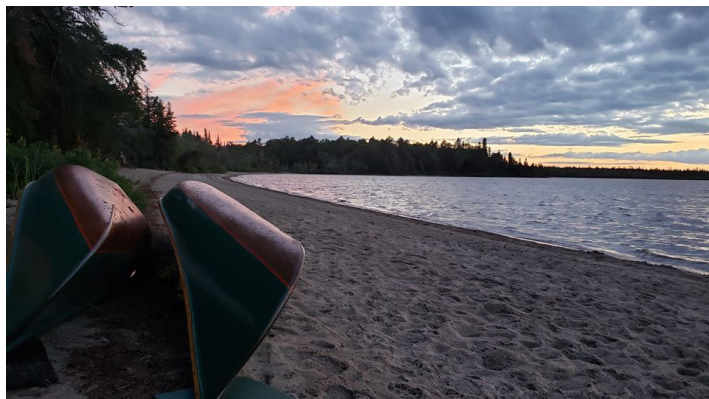
adjustment. I never did have my epiphany, but maybe that wasn’t the point. Rather, I went to Maine, just as Thoreau did, to find a different way of seeing things at home.

**Acknowledgements:** Many thanks to all of my companions for sharing this trip with me. In particular, I am grateful to Polly Mahoney, Jason Pardilla, and Chris Sockalexis, who welcomed us to the Maine North Woods in grand fashion. Thanks are also due to John Kucich for doing so much of the legwork to organize this memorable excursion.

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#### Notes

1. Henry D. Thoreau, *The Maine Woods*, ed. Joseph J. Moldenhauer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 97.
2. Thoreau, *The Maine Woods*, 193.
3. See the CBS special, “Retracing Thoreau’s journey through the wilds of Maine,” 20 July 2014, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/retracing-thoreaus-journey-through-the-wilds-of-maine/>, and the Maine Woods Discovery itinerary of the trip, <http://www.mainewoodsdiscovers.com/thoreau-itinerary/>. See also the account of the 150-year anniversary in Mel Allen, “Thoreau’s Maine: A Photo Story of an Epic Adventure,” *Yankee* 79, no. 2 (2015), 60-73.
4. Thoreau, *The Maine Woods*, 245.
5. Thoreau, *The Maine Woods*, 246.
6. Thoreau, *The Maine Woods*, 123.
7. Thoreau, *The Maine Woods*, 191.



Courtesy Chris Sockalexis

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## Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land: A Review

By Henrik Otterberg

Kucich, John J. (ed.) *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019) 228 pp, Softcover (ISBN: 978-162534-417-5) \$26.00.

Canoeing the West Branch of the Penobscot River and its lakes in Maine this past summer, our party was struck by the vibrancy and energy of the rugged landscape. Strong currents on the river tugged even the idling paddler along, underwater weeds swaying to reveal the submerged tow. Later, a generous wind allowed us to "sail" the length of Chesuncook Lake, with our craft paired together manually along the gunwales. In the daytime sky, marching clouds beckoned ever onward, to complete the impression of a flowing landscape: always in motion and change, even as it appeared timeless and constant.

Ecstatic at sightings of ospreys and eagles in their true element, we were also reminded, by the busy palimpsest of contrails above them, of mankind's inescapable presence. Heavy-duty truck roads appeared in forest clearings; a distant white speck on the water solidified into a lake warden and his motorboat; a mysterious red flower by the banks revealed itself to be a crumpled soda can.<sup>1</sup>

Depending on mood and inclination, the Maine traveller will elide civilization, struggle over it, or seek to understand it as part of the larger matrix of the land. Thoreau himself, in whose wake we were paddling, grappled with its reach and consequences in his travelogue *The Maine Woods*. The book's lashed-fast-together essays, recounting excursions in 1846, 1853, and 1857, evince Thoreau's evolution from a somewhat self-absorbed Romantic poet, full of preconceived notions, to an increasingly astute observer of the myriad socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental factors affecting the region's lands and waters.

With *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, editor and scholar John J. Kucich has assembled a collection of essays worthy the complexity of Thoreau's sum of

experiences and the composite richness of northern Maine. The anthology stems from a 16-day, 325-mile long paddling excursion in 2014, named the Thoreau-Wabanaki Anniversary Tour, which commemorated the sesquicentennial of *The Maine Woods*' first (posthumous) publication in 1864.<sup>2</sup> It also forms a welcome rare addition to Thoreau-related collections springing from works other than *Walden* or "Civil Disobedience."<sup>3</sup>

In his thoughtful introduction, Kucich emphasizes the necessary dynamism of the anthology, as the region in question remains "caught in the tug and pull of the many forces that continue to shape it" (1). Insofar as it collectively imagines a future for the state of Maine, Kucich adds, this future "is not one of new resources and markets, nor one of fenced-off preserves—both paths that assume an essential difference between humans and their environment. Instead, a careful look at the region's past points toward a future of reciprocity between the Maine Woods and the people who are part of its world" (3).

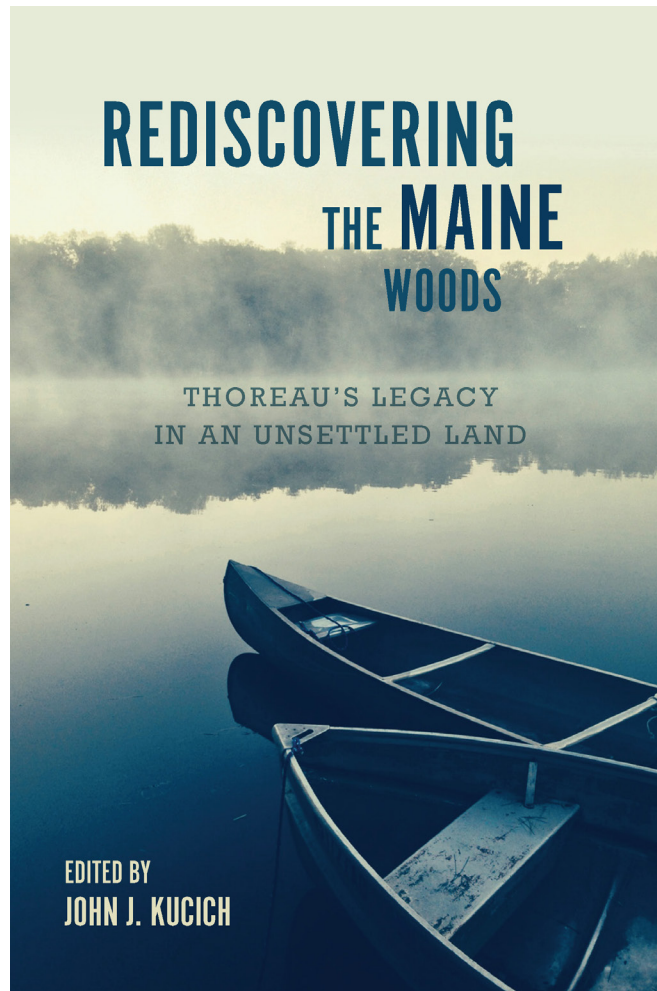
The first section of the book, entitled "Tracing a Landscape,"

sets the scene with journal notes from the 2014 expedition by Penobscot cultural historian, archaeologist, and musician Chris Sockalexis. After a tense canoe crossing of Moosehead Lake in inclement weather, with the company gratefully back on firm ground and setting camp, Sockalexis imparts interesting information on the rhyolite of Mount Kineo and how this useful mineral has influenced local flint-knapping traditions for thousands of years. He also describes how the group came upon a salamander adrift far out on the lake the next day. They warmed the tiny explorer gently on a tarp and returned it safely to shore upon their next landing.

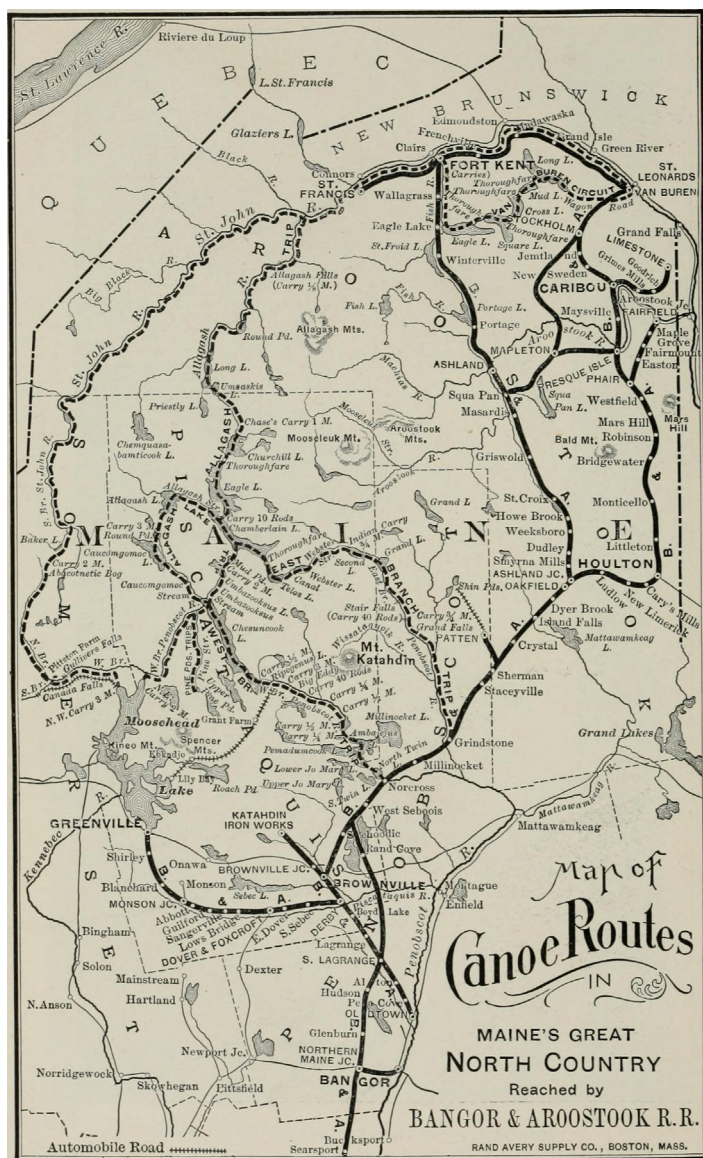
Fellow paddler Stan Tag offers another personal account of the 2014 trip. He relates not only the bonding physical and weather ordeals involved (it rained a lot), but remains attendant to the beauty and abiding mystery of the traversed lands and waters. Tag's quietly consummate knowledge of Maine Woods history, literature, and lore is evident, and his account is deepened by his curiosity and willingness to learn

from Penobscot culture, which has been enmeshed with the Maine landscape since prehistoric times.

The reader is next served a characteristically spirited academic essay by Robert Thorson on the geology and hydrology of the Maine Woods. Thorson whimsically finds geological rhomboids everywhere, even on the map tracing Thoreau's journeys in the Maine interior, and he proceeds to discuss the region's vital







Source: Wikicommons

physical characteristics from this premise. Thorson also suggests new terminology to describe the contrast between a hybrid/middle/heterotopic landscape and a natural/wild/wilderness one: “settled” versus “raw” (61). Thoreau would no doubt savor the geologic insight offered here. He might also find irresistible the opportunity to pun on the prime example Thorson gives of the supposedly “raw” Maine interior: Ches-uncook Lake (81).

Inaugurating the second section of the book, entitled “Thoreau’s Maine,” Laura Dassow Walls delves into some of the most frequently discussed aspects of Thoreau’s Maine Woods experience, including the famous “Contact!” passage on Katahdin’s tableland, his qualms about the messy business of moose hunting, and his evidently changing perspectives on the Native Americans he encountered and interacted with. She posits Thoreau’s early recognition of the Penobscot River as a geoengineered system or “organic machine,” and also reads him as embracing a novel, cosmic perspectivism in the mold of Alexander von Humboldt. This allowed Thoreau vicariously to see the earth from above—much as he imagines an eagle spying his canoe far below, as a little dot on the water. Such novel imagined perspectives, Walls argues, helped refresh Thoreau’s thoughts and writings, to renew

his understanding of Maine and its denizens. One may with Walls infer that they expanded his sense of empathy with wider creation as well.

Not surprisingly, given its status as a classic node in Thoreau scholarship, Thoreau’s famous *Contact!* passage gets a chapter all to itself. Melissa Sexton presents a new materialist re-reading of the thorny epiphany, arguing that the experience as portrayed amounts to Thoreau’s recognizing “a radical alienness within himself,” as brought about by his corollary recognition of “the material foundation of world *and* self” (115). Sexton’s interpretation thus makes the stakes personal for Thoreau, while dismissing narrowly psychological readings and interpretations focused on the sublime aesthetics seemingly in play. Sexton invites us to see the passage as affirming the bonds of materiality between language, self, and world. A shortcoming of this approach is that it does not take into account Thoreau’s Transcendentalist belief in a spiritual realm *corresponding with* but separate from the material. The best elucidation of this dichotomy remains Ronald Wesley Hoag’s insightful article “The Mark on the Wilderness.”<sup>24</sup> It is a pity that Hoag’s work is not engaged here, as it would at once challenge and perhaps modify Sexton’s argument.

Kathryn Cornell Dolan follows with a decidedly materialistic essay on Thoreau’s diet in Maine. She argues convincingly that his being offered fresh moose meat and cranberry sauce, along with other regional specialties, should have come as a relief from the increasingly beef-based New England diet of the time. Cattle were raised and transported on an industrial scale with the steady rise of U.S. railroads in the 1840s, as were staples such as potatoes and corn. Hence local alimentary regimes were gradually supplanted by what we might now recognize as pre-packaged or even “fast” food, in many places served with attention only to the very least common denominators. Being offered genuinely near-harvested fare in northern Maine, by contrast, would have deepened Thoreau’s overall experience of the landscape and its cultures, Dolan proposes.

The third and last section of the anthology, “Between Wilderness and Working Forest,” collects three essays taking a macro view of northern Maine. James S. Finley begins with a discussion of various self-styled pilgrimages to the wilds of the state, often with Thoreau cited as inspiration, by the likes of John McPhee, J. Parker Huber, and Tom Slayton. Contrary to what seekers like these commonly see as Thoreau’s “will-to-wild” regarding Maine and its future, Finley’s close reading of Thoreau instead reveals what amounts to a “bucolic view” (149), interested not so much in pristine wilderness as in a locally anchored and



Photo by Tony Hisgett. Source: Wikicommons



responsible stewardship of the land, precluding neither logging nor hunting. What Thoreau calls for, in Finley's view, is "a commons, a space delineated by multiple rights holders" (155).

Environmental historian Dale Potts congenially follows Finley's analysis with his consideration of a cohort of influential 20th-century writers and activists, William O. Douglas, Helen Hamlin, Myron Avery, and Bill Gegan, who each in their way sought to formulate and promote alternate ways of "consuming" the Maine wilds and/or what remained of them, at times citing Thoreau as inspiration. Douglas and the others were raised at a time when scars of intense logging were particularly evident in the state, along with the spread of industrial infrastructure and detritus. Potts shows how their converse enthusiasm for tourism to newly protected areas—including laudable efforts to educate the public on ecological fundamentals—gradually had to face the reality of the protected areas being overwhelmed by the sheer number of visitors.

Rounding off the academic sweep of Thoreau's applicability to modern debates over sustainable land use, environmental historian Richard W. Judd discusses what he aptly calls the "remarkable malleability" of Thoreau's public image as a wilderness advocate (194).<sup>5</sup> Echoing Finley's view of Thoreau as more of a bucolic than wilderness-oriented visionary, Judd marshals a range of seldom-quoted sources from the Thoreau literature, saliently Howard Mumford Jones, who in the early 1960s judged that what Thoreau offers is primarily "commentary on humanity." Turning (once again) to Thoreau's seminal *Contact!* passage, Judd reads it as placing limits on the value of wilderness. In the final analysis, wilderness may be to Thoreau, instrumentally,



Courtesy Jake McGinnis

"a source of precious psychic energies and poetic imagination," and also hold a place "in human fulfilment" (205). Despite the underlying ambiguities, or perhaps because of them, Judd does not deny Thoreau's allure for modern environmental movements, as his "separate identities" over time as social critic, conservationist, ecologist, poet, and wilderness prophet are ultimately interdependent.

Concluding Kucich's provocative and stimulating anthology, James Francis, tribal historian of the Penobscot Nation, offers a coda describing the Penobscot sense of place. This always presupposes a site in motion, an unfinished, creative interrelationship between sheer space and human culture. Mythical narratives might appear fantastical, but Francis shows how Penobscot myths, beyond their surface content, are always practical, yielding "clues on how to live, where to travel, or where to find resources" (217). He also demonstrates how Euro-American culture's incessant need to translate and grasp with equational logic often enough gets carried away and stumbles. Many will, as Francis points out, recognize



Photograph by Rubyk. Source: Wikicommons

Mt. Katahdin, from above

that "Katahdin" translates into "Greatest Mountain." Few, however, pause to dwell on the circumstance that the ancient name was given long before there was a precise method for measuring the heights of mountains. The name Katahdin, Francis explains, actually connotes a spiritual quality, entirely unrelated to its relative height.

I had occasion to ponder all this while spending the better part of a day on the ranger's porch at the Abol Trailhead, in the wake of our summer paddle on the West Branch and Chesuncook, with the majestic mountain looming behind me. A fresh leg wound, foolishly incurred, prevented my joining my colleagues up the steep slopes of Katahdin. Yet I was profoundly grateful to be precisely where I was, reading, thinking, listening, seeing, and feeling. The *solid* earth! The *actual* world! Plus a warm cup of coffee at regular intervals from the kindly ranger.

• **Henrik Otterberg, Ph.D.**, is a longstanding contributor to *TSB* and *Concord Saunterer*, and serves on the Thoreau Society board of directors.

#### Notes

1. For an at once bracing and beautiful account of what a sustained paddle on these waters may entail, see David K. Leff's candid memoir *Canoeing Maine's Legendary Allagash: Thoreau, Romance, and Survival of the Wild* (Stonington, CT: Homebound Publications, 2016). For more on the traces and scars of civilization, see Cheryl Seal's *Thoreau's Maine Woods: Yesterday and Today* (Emmaus, PA: Yankee Books, 1992). Seal's book contains a portfolio of by turns beautiful and jarring color photographs of Maine's latter-day landscapes, taken by Robert F. Bukaty.

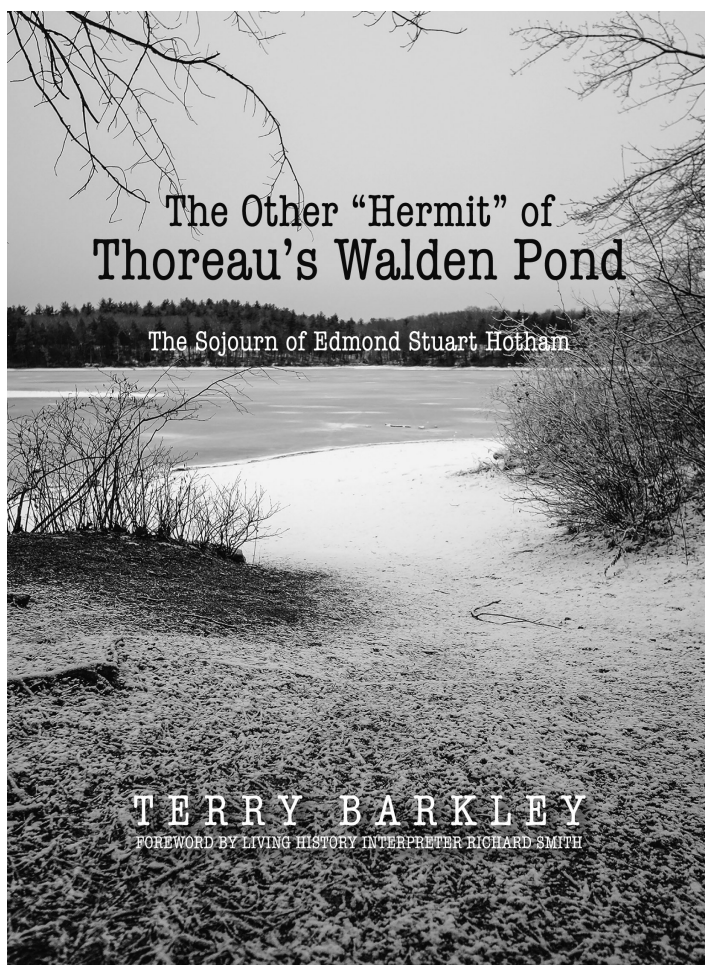
2. For more on this trip, see Mel Allen, "Thoreau's Maine: A Photo Story of an Epic Adventure," *Yankee* 79, no. 2 (March/April 2015): 60-73.

3. In fact, the sole companion that springs to mind is Bridget Besaw's *Wilderness Within, Wilderness Without: Exploring Maine's Thoreau-Wabanaki Trail* (Atkinson, ME: Besaw Publishing, 2007), a collection of essays by conservationists, historians and concerned citizens.

4. Ronald Wesley Hoag, "The Mark on the Wilderness: Thoreau's Contact with Ktaadn," *Texas Studies in Literature & Language* 24, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 23-46.

5. More on this topic can be found in Lawrence Buell's seminal *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995) and Judd's own *Finding Thoreau: The Meaning of Nature in the Making of an Environmental Icon* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010).





## ***The Other 'Hermit' of Thoreau's Walden Pond: The Sojourn of Edmond Stuart Hotham: A Review***

*by Kristi Lynn Martin, PhD*

Terry Barkley, *The Other 'Hermit' of Thoreau's Walden Pond: The Sojourn of Edmond Stuart Hotham*. El Dorado Hills, California: Savas Beatie, 2019. 120pp.

Edmond Stuart Hotham lived on the shore of Walden Pond for six months, from November 1868 to May 1869, more than twenty years after Henry David Thoreau resided in nearly the same spot. In *The Other 'Hermit' of Thoreau's Walden Pond*, Terry Barkley reconstructs the history of Hotham's life and his experiences in Concord.

Although scholars and admirers of Thoreau will be quick to tell you that "Thoreau was not a hermit!" the title of Barkley's book references the appellation used by the contemporaries and intimates of Thoreau, such as Ellery Channing and Louisa May Alcott, to describe him. The term had poetical associations, connoting the author's symbolic retreat into the natural world from the conventions of village life. In *Walden* Thoreau himself plays with the concept, first stating that he is "naturally no hermit"

("Visitors"), then comparing the water to a hermit ("The Ponds"), before adopting the role for himself ("Brute Neighbors"). Six years after the death of Thoreau, nineteenth century literary spectators cast Hotham as Concord's new "hermit."

If Hotham wanted seclusion, he picked the wrong location. Barkley rightly takes a cue from historian W. Barksdale Maynard in recognizing the impact of Walden Pond's status as a pilgrimage destination and popular recreational site on Hotham's experiences there. Hotham's home was a stop on the tour of Concord in the late 1860s, when the town was already a literary destination. He did not enjoy the publicity.

This is not the first Thoreauvian work on Edmond Stuart Hotham. In addition to building on Maynard's 2004 *Walden Pond: A History*, Barkley's research reconstitutes and expands on the primary sources assembled by Kenneth Walter Cameron in his 1962 article "Thoreau's Disciple at Walden."<sup>1</sup> Barkley treats Hotham as a subject interesting in his own right rather than marginalia in the history of Walden Pond. In the Foreword to this book, Thoreau interpreter and historian Richard Smith argues that Hotham was not an imitator of Thoreau and that his sojourn at Walden Pond was distinct from Thoreau's earlier and more famous experience. He suggests that Hotham's story represents something "quintessential" about Concord, Massachusetts, as a community that attracts freethinkers.

Hotham was a navy veteran, a religious seeker, and a missionary. In Barkley's telling, Hotham's stay at Walden was a retreat from his previous occupation as a clerk in New York City, an existence Thoreau might have described as one of "quiet desperation." With Ralph Waldo Emerson's permission, Hotham chose to build his own hut close to the location where Thoreau had settled. He even used reclaimed material from the Thoreaus' former Parkman House to finish his rustic earthen structure at half the cost and half the size of Thoreau's Walden "hut." Yet, he denied he was following Thoreau's example. Settling at Walden was not Hotham's first attempt at nature living. Why then did he choose Concord and Walden Pond? And why is his story important? The reader looks to Barkley to answer these questions.

Barkley commendably brings attention to Hotham's story. His book updates previous research and makes it accessible, no longer buried in scholarly archives or as a sub-narrative. Hotham stands as an individual and his life at Walden as a distinctive episode deserving greater analysis. However, Barkley would have served his narrative better had it been more tightly written and edited. The text is frequently repetitive within a few pages or paragraphs. Barkley gives extraneous information related to Concordians in Thoreau's and Hotham's circles, not directly related to or bearing on the significance of Hotham's story. As presented, these digressions are chronologically jarring and distract from the central narrative. Unfortunately, taken together, this gives the impression that the author needed to draw out his material to constitute the small volume. Barkley's most intriguing contention is that Ellery Channing's poem "The Hermit" is a tribute to Hotham and not Thoreau. More analysis and fleshing out of the significance of Hotham as a notable figure in his own right, to fill out the book in a way that reinforces its aims, would have been welcome. Still, Barkley's work does well as a foundation for further scholarly explorations into the interest Hotham holds as "the other hermit of Walden Pond."



• **Dr. Kristi Lynn Martin** is an archives and museum professional, historical interpreter/consultant, and author, specializing in Concord's 19th century literary circle. Her dissertation is *Creating "Concord": Making a Literary Tourist Town, 1825-1910* (Boston University, 2019).

#### Notes

1. W. Barksdale Maynard, *Walden Pond: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2004). Kenneth Walter Cameron, "Thoreau's Disciple at Walden: Edmond S. Hotham," *The Emerson Society Quarterly* 26 (1962), 34-45.

## *L'arpenteur vagabond. Cartes et cartographies dans l'œuvre de Henry David Thoreau: A Review*

by François Specq

Julien Nègre. *L'arpenteur vagabond. Cartes et cartographies dans l'œuvre de Henry David Thoreau*. Lyon: ENS Editions, 2019. 354pp.

The close connection of Thoreau's writings to maps has long been acknowledged, as evidenced by the slim volume of maps gathered in *The Thoreau Gazetteer*, which was brought out at the launch of the Princeton edition in 1970 and is to be found on the shelves of many a reader of Thoreau. As Julien Nègre points out, however, no extended study of Thoreau's relation to cartography had ever sought to analyze that connection. Far from being straightforward, he argues, this is a very complex topic. Nègre's fine study is written in dense, but perfectly clear, even elegant, prose.

The study is divided into five chapters, a theoretical introduction paving the way for a series of readings which cover the entire corpus of Thoreau's writings, apart from the *Journal*. The theoretical framework can be described as post-critical: dissatisfied with what he regards as a univocal understanding of maps as imperial tools of control and domination, Nègre adopts a neopragmatist perspective, one that downplays questions of representation and accuracy and foregrounds a processual and interactionist cognitive model. Indeed, he emphasizes how maps are used and appropriated in a myriad of ways that do not quite fit in the idea of conquest, pointing to Thoreau's status as "writer-cartographer" (*écrivain-cartographe*).

Having thus situated his approach, Nègre does two things. First, he painstakingly describes the maps used by Thoreau, his tracings of some of them, and the various ways in which he appropriated them. The book is lavishly illustrated with excellent color reproductions, albeit their legibility is sometimes inevitably constrained by the dimensions of the book. Every possible pain has been taken to identify these maps, trace them to their sources, and decipher Thoreau's annotations. The information gathered in the book is invaluable, and supersedes that provided by *The Thoreau Gazetteer*. The discussion of Thoreau's maps and their uses is excellent, and it exemplifies the precision that more broadly characterizes the book: Nègre is highly knowledgeable regarding

all aspects of Thoreau's life and writings, and the information throughout is accurate and reliable.

Second, the author offers a series of readings of individual works by Thoreau, ranging from the early excursions to the final essays on the succession of forest trees and on wild fruits. In each case, the method is clear: the analysis examines the maps explicitly mentioned or created by Thoreau, or underlying the work under consideration, and then explores how the written text modifies or complexifies those maps. Nègre indeed constantly emphasizes how Thoreau's art as a writer, while heeding cartographic representations closely, always sought to unsettle or destabilize their fixity.

One of the more fascinating aspects of the book is that it provides readings not only of such expected works as *A Week*, *Walden*, *The Maine Woods*, and *Cape Cod*, but also of those essays that have usually been labeled as political writings or "reform papers." The rationale behind that more unexpected part of the book is that these essays actually enact what philosopher Jacques Rancière has termed a "distribution of the sensible" (*partage du sensible*) which is akin to cartography, in so far as they define the spatial relations around which society is structured.

Nègre's fine readings here simultaneously point to a limitation of his book, which is a tendency to expand the notion of maps





to include any and all form of structure or organizing. Although the book opens with a strong emphasis on the necessity to study maps as material objects, thus distancing itself from other studies, one often gets the sense that maps are increasingly understood metaphorically, to the point of incorporating any form of mapping, whether conceptual or literary (although, surprisingly enough, science does not seem to be regarded as such). Thus, any “spatial dimension,” such as the one evinced by the loon’s antics in *Walden*, comes to be analyzed as a form of mapping, especially if it features what are described as “gaps,” “fault lines,” and other kinds of “uncertainty” or “conflict.” One could perhaps summarize this book by saying that, despite Nègre’s initial claim to the contrary, Thoreau’s writings, through their very literary strategies, are actually shown to be *anti-cartographic*, as writing is shown to constantly offer an alternative cartography, or, even, an alternative to cartography. In other words, far from being really a writer-cartographer, Thoreau is actually much closer to being a writer *and* a cartographer, as long recognized by a number of Thoreau scholars.

That being said, the reader will certainly delight in both the fascinating documentation gathered in this book, and in the series of readings that delineate the intricate relations between cartography and Thoreau’s writing and thinking, which are not without similarity to those that characterized his relation to science.

• **François Specq** is Professor of American Literature and Culture at the École Normale Supérieure de Lyon, Université de Lyon, France.

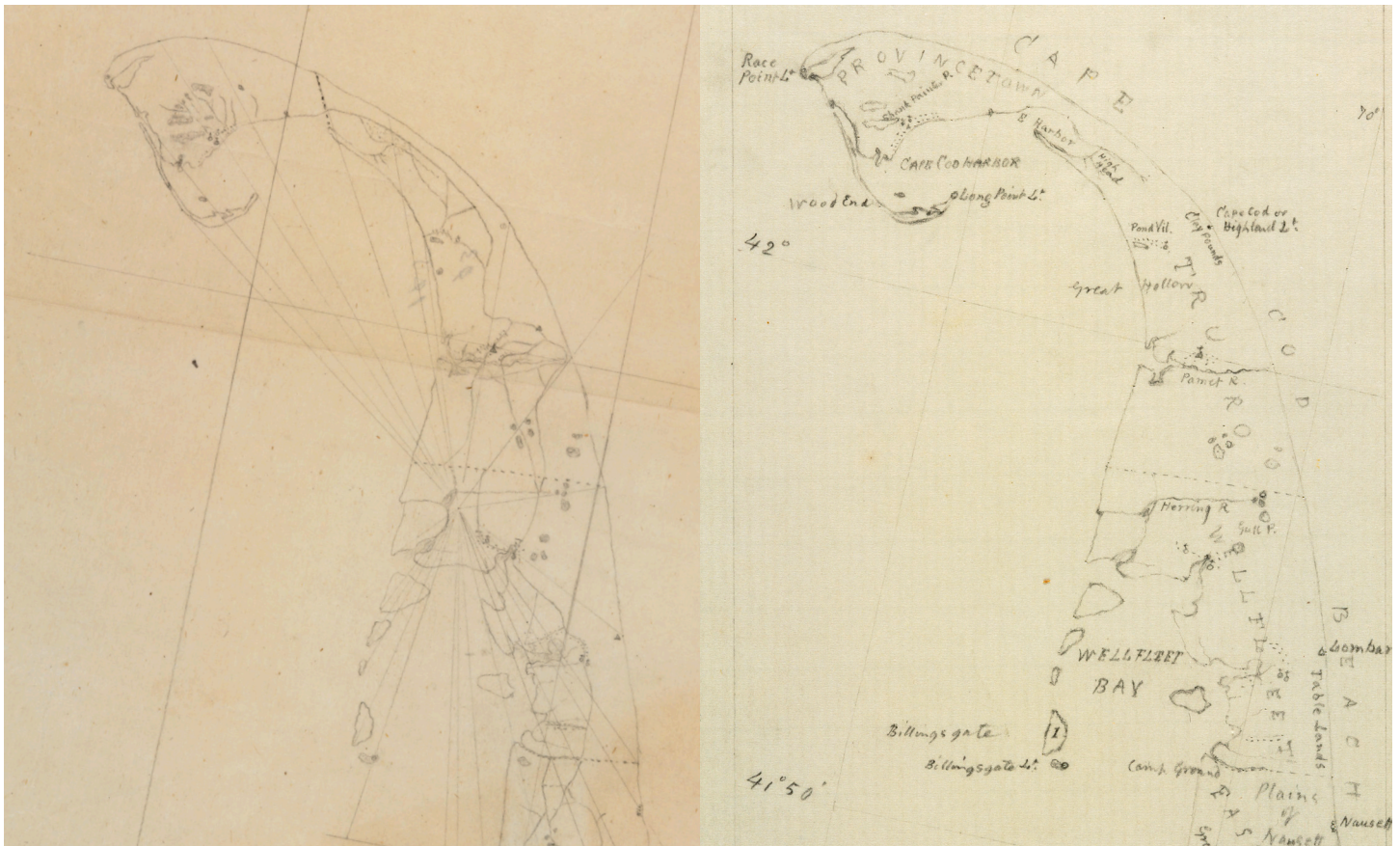
## Teaching Thoreau

### Exploring Place and Space in Online Teaching of *A Week*

by Michael S. Martin

In defining place within aboriginal cultures, the contemporary nature writer Barry Lopez suggests that “their history in a place, a combination of tribal and personal history, is typically deep. This history creates a temporal dimension in what is otherwise only a spatial landscape.”<sup>1</sup> For place to be understood, a given culture needs a broad, diachronic settling into that particular world. But for online teaching, concepts of ‘place’ would be encountered as individual and sometimes synchronic and abbreviated experiences, not diachronic ones; an in-seat course, by contrast, could emphasize a more sustained relationship with the same setting over the course of a sixteen-week semester. I faced the pedagogical problem of re-creating a storied or temporal dimension in a digitized domain. Despite this digital impediment, I nonetheless made one of my course goals to include an emphasis on place and region in teaching an eight-week online *Survey of American Literature I* course in Summer 2018 at Nicholls State University in Southern Louisiana.

After a brief foray into nineteenth-century American fiction, both imaginative (Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “Young Goodman Brown”) and didactic (Harriet Beecher Stowe’s “The Seamstress”), the course ended with a concentrated two-week study of Henry



Thoreau, Henry David, 1817-1862, mssHM 13206, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Courtesy Julien Nègre, who obtained the images with the support of the LARCA research team (Université de Paris / CNRS)

Sequential tracings/reproductions of the Cape Cod section of an 1844 map by Simeon Borden, in Thoreau’s hand





David Thoreau's *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*. The temporal equivalent for this amount of concentrated study in an in-seat course would be nearly four weeks. Finishing the course with Thoreau's long work and spending an extended amount of time on the book were deliberate decisions.

The lesson plan for *A Week* was built around three assignments: summarizing a chapter from the book, analyzing Thoreau's poetic interludes, and creating a drawing of the geography and topography associated with the selected chapter. On the whole, the strongest submitted work was from the poetic interlude analysis, which included having students look up literary and historical references, and in the drawing component. For the drawing assignment, students were to draw either by hand or by computer the major events, towns passed, and river trajectory in their chosen chapter. Most students chose a hand-drawn, colored pencil approach; the completed images were uploaded by students to the course website. This assignment was prompted in part by a desire to have students move beyond solely composing and reflecting upon the readings in written form. (The course also included an oral recording requirement on slave narratives.) I also wanted my students, many of whom are from Louisiana and have never ventured to Massachusetts and New Hampshire, to visualize the actual spatial dimensions and places the brothers encountered on their canoe trip.

After this two-week unit, the class had one week for a final project, and I included two options related to *A Week*: a straightforward essay that focuses on a single topic of their choosing from Thoreau's *A Week*, or a creative memoir that compares a new boating or hiking experience of their own in nature, during the final weeks of class, to Thoreau's own observations. The latter assignment, the creative memoir, was chosen by a majority of the students. One stipulation was that they must make rigorous comparisons, with directly quoted evidence from the book, between Thoreau's observations, whether external phenomena encountered on the canoe trip or his internalized thoughts, and their own boating or hiking trip. Inspired by Thoreau's boat trip northward towards Nashua, several of my students took canoe and boating trips of their own in Southeastern rivers. The most vivid re-creation was from a student who took a boat ride up the Blind River in St. James Parish, Louisiana. Finding an

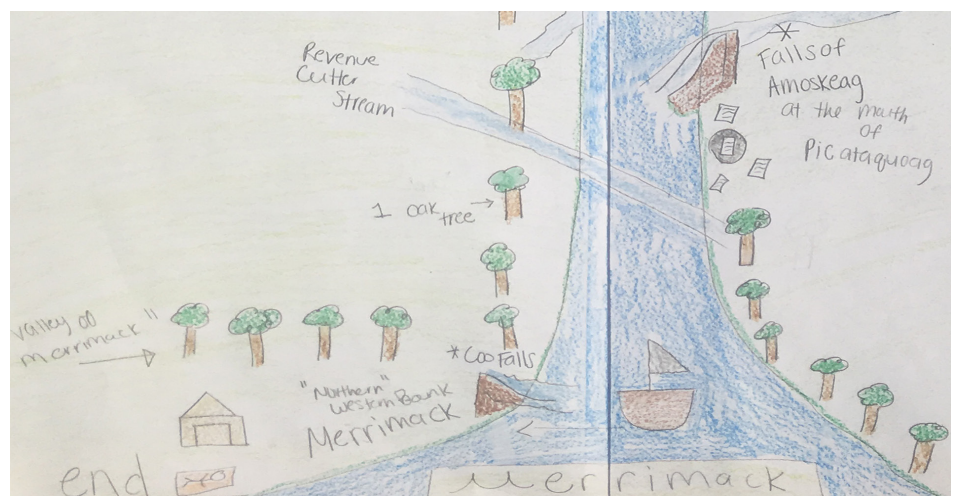
old church chapel on a dock, for example, she compared it to Thoreau's religious ruminations in the "Sunday" chapter. In *A Week*, Thoreau uses the word "swamp" quite a bit for portraying the river marshes, so the respective topographies, both Southern and Northern, weren't completely different. Another student went rafting down the Comal and Guadalupe Rivers in Southern Texas and reflected on differences between Thoreau's riversides and her own sometimes rocky shoreline. Two other students went hiking, one on private land in Lafourche Parish, one on an elevated boardwalk in a National Park system. These two memoirs emphasized shifts in elevation, a comparison of animals (nutria, snakes, and alligators in Louisiana versus Thoreau's squirrels), and similarities in their and Thoreau's experience of morning light.

This assignment led me to believe that the pedagogical challenge of emphasizing physical space and place within a digitized, online domain is not insurmountable. I suspect that assigning an analytical essay on "Thoreau and place" in an in-seat classroom probably would not have been nearly as effective as it was having students in this online community actually mirror his trip as an independent project in their own space and place.

• **Dr. Michael S. Martin** is an Assistant Professor of Languages and Literature at Nicholls State University, where he teaches courses in American literature and academic writing.

#### Notes

1. Barry Lopez, "We are shaped by the sound of wind, the slant of sunlight," *High Country News* 138 (14 September 1998).



Courtesy Angelle Boudreax

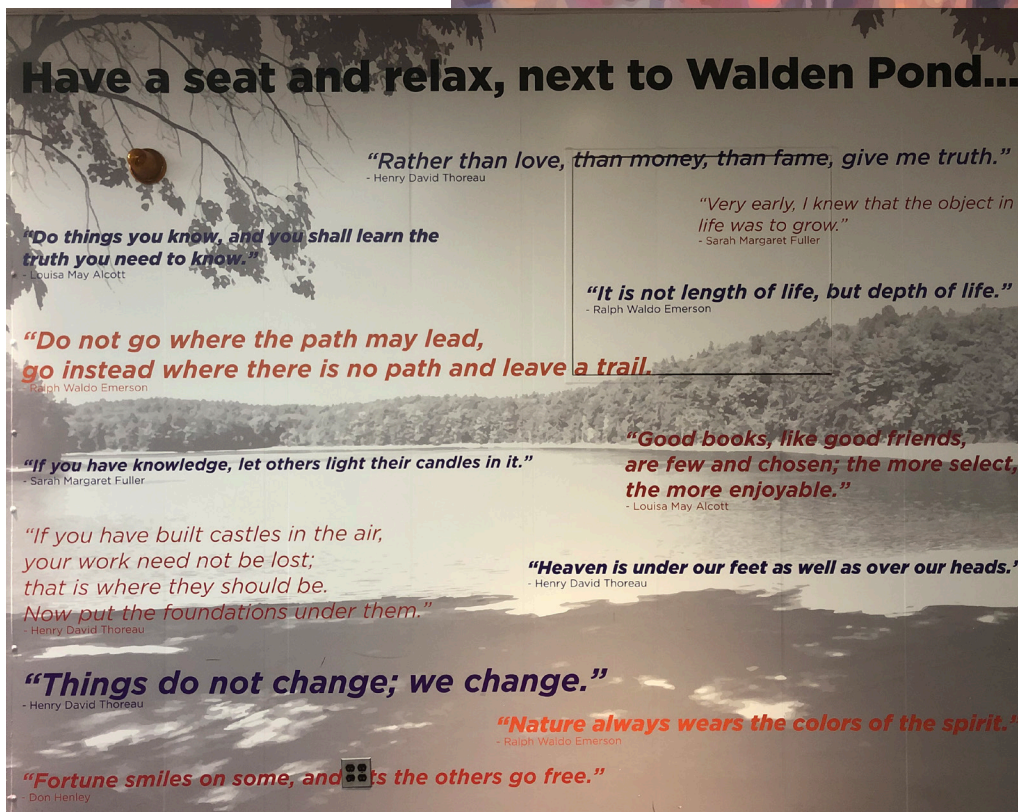
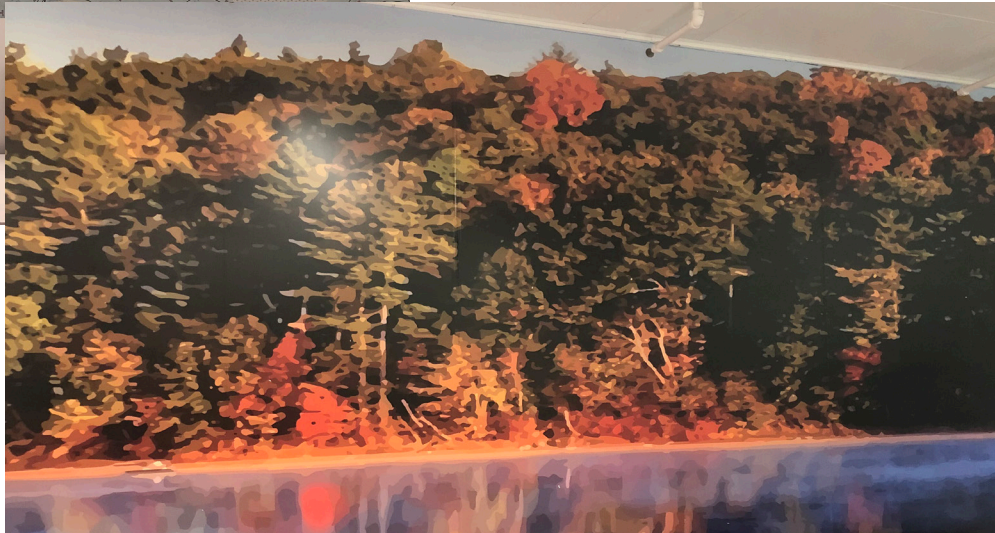
Detail from map of the "Thursday" chapter of *A Week*, by student Angelle Boudreax





## Walden Pond at Logan Airport

by Mark Gallagher and Brent Ranalli



Photos by Mark Gallagher

Oops! One of these quotations is apocryphal. Can you tell which? See Notes & Queries for the answer.

At Boston's Logan airport, one can now catch a few moments of reflection and relaxation under a mural of Walden Pond. This corner of Terminal E also features notable quotes by Transcendentalists and a wall-sized map of the pond and environs. As Thoreau Society member Jym St. Pierre puts it: "The best thing about having to wait for hours in Logan Airport for our flight to Paris is visiting Walden Pond virtually."

The installation is maintained by the Boston Logan International Airport Public Art Program. The idea behind the Public Art Program is to add a bit of



refinement to the airport environment while supporting local artists and institutions. The Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) states: "By creating an ambience in the airport that reflects the sophistication and cultural diversity of the City of Boston, the region of New England, and the world at large, we aim to educate, inspire and entertain all Logan visitors." Other installations, scattered around the airport, celebrate Boston's history of boat-building, Massachusetts Nobel Prize winners, New England state flowers, local sports teams, and major studio films shot in Massachusetts

• **Mark Gallagher** and **Brent Ranalli** are the former editor and the current editor of the *Thoreau Society Bulletin*.



# Additions to the Thoreau Bibliography

by Henrik Otterberg

- Abizaïd, Dana E. "A New Generation of Thoreaus." *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 307 (Fall, 2019): 1-2. [Prints speech given by Abizaïd to graduates of the Open Society Foundation (OSF) Summer School in Tbilisi, Georgia, in August 2018, urging the students—many from war-torn or closed societies, now preparing for graduate studies in Europe and the USA—to learn from Western thought while not neglecting their own background and traditions.]
- Barkley, Terry. *The "Other" Hermit of Walden Pond: The Sojourn of Edmond Stuart Hotham*. El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, 2019. 122 pp. Cloth (ISBN: 978-1-61121-481-9), USD 18. [Compelling skeletal biography of the mysterious Hotham (1835-1908), who came to live on the beach of Walden Pond for a winter a near quarter-century after Thoreau, before unwanted press attention prompted him to leave. Retired librarian Barkley's research is impeccable in sleuthing for relevant records and documentation, while he concedes that his subject remains largely elusive. For Hotham is by now a virtual ghost, briefly if memorably conjured by the many Concord illuminati and their acquaintances who were intrigued by him, welcomed him, and discussed him in their letters: the Emersons, Frank Sanborn, the Alcotts, Theo Brown, Daniel Ricketson. Only a couple of letters written by Hotham himself have survived. These are addressed to the Emersons, who granted him permission to erect his Walden shanty in 1869. They reveal an intelligent, searching, eloquent, but also exceedingly private, self-effacing individual, harbouring an unnamed chronic disease—tuberculosis? PTSD?—and a restless disposition. Hotham's shadow also rises from Barkley's dive into in a range of archives, whose notaries struggle tragically to get his name right. Nevertheless, they reveal Hotham's birth in Ontario, Canada; his parents having died early; his foster care in upstate New York. Eventually follow enlistments in the U.S. Navy, including during the Civil War; a stint at Walden followed by a longer one in the wilds of the Adirondacks; and ordination as a Swedenborgian minister in Detroit. Then he moved on to Pennsylvania and New York City, working variously as a cabinet maker, engraver, secretary, and rubber-stamp fashioner—truly a Thoreauvian jack-of-all-trades. Finally, he received an invalid's pension from the Navy in 1896, married a woman almost half his age, and eventually died in obscurity. Hotham at his death was without children, literary output, or any other legacy to make his name resonate through time, save for a few patents for drawers and portable fences. Presumably the latter concerned better ways to keep strangers out.] Reviewed by Kristi Lynn Martin in the present *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 308 (Winter 2020): 8-9.
- Chow, Juliana. "Partial Readings: Thoreau's Studies as Natural History's Casualties." In *Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times*, ed. Tobias Menely and Jesse Oak Taylor, 117-31. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017. [Fascinating and stringent reading of Thoreau's "The Dispersion of Seeds" manuscript of circa 1860-61. Chow questions established understandings of Thoreau the writer and scientist as always patiently garnering facts while retaining his faith in fully graspable and predictable wholes as their inevitable outcome. Instead, Thoreau's open-ended discussion of various identified seed-transport mechanisms—e.g., that of milkweed—show Thoreau's commitment to "a *merismus*, or dividing, where parts might add up to a whole but [nevertheless] remain distinct parts: thread, pod, tip, casket, ray; milkweed, milkweed, milkweed, milkweed." Thus, Chow shows, Thoreau's various identified vehicles and forces "of seed dispersal *remain* differential rather than becoming representative aggregations" (125; my emphasis). This in turn points at once to the surprising resilience and inherent vulnerability of our natural environments in Thoreau's telling, and so serves as an apt warning for our Anthropocene age. C.f. the Dimick entry below.]
- Cramer, Jeffrey S. *Solid Seasons: The Friendship of Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2019. 353 pp. Cloth (ISBN: 978-1-64009-131-3), USD 26. [Largely an appealing selection of primary texts and snippets by Emerson and Thoreau on their own friendship, and on friendship in the ideal. Despite professing it "essential to find the truth of their friendship" beyond myths and stories, biographies and critical works (xii), what "new light" (xi) the present collection brings will be largely up to the reader to discover for herself. Juxtaposing the two men's writings on the topic is admittedly a refreshing move, while it is unfortunate that the latest anthology into the same subject matter is neither considered nor mentioned: John T. Lysaker and William Rossi's *Emerson & Thoreau: Figures of Friendship*, brought out by Indiana University Press in 2010. This latter volume collects insightful and learned essays on the complexity of Thoreau's and Emerson's relationship, as well as on their respective theories of friendship, by Lawrence Buell, Barbara Packer, David M. Robinson, and the editors themselves.]
- Davis, Lydia. "Cohabiting with beautiful weeds." *Times Literary Supplement*, October 25, 2019: 19. [Author describes her joyful turn to perma-gardening, allowing wildflowers and weeds to partially invade her grounds. Davis cites Thoreau as the source of her inspiration, specifically as edited by Geoff Wisner in his recent *Thoreau's Wildflowers* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2016).]
- Dawson, James. "Alfred Hosmer's Notes in Salt's Biography of Thoreau, and an Unpublished Salt Letter." *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 307 (Fall, 2019): 3-5. [This article, which with a dose of humorous license may have been titled "Salt with Pepperings of Hosmer," reprints a letter from Salt, tipped-in with Dawson's copy of the book, thanking Hosmer for sending him evocative photos of Thoreau country. Englishman Henry S. Salt (1851-1939), whose biographies of Thoreau remain of interest for their sympathetic insights into Thoreau's inner life, was also a noted promoter of vegetarianism, school and prison reform, and animal rights. Dedicated Thoreauvian and Concord photographer Alfred Hosmer (1851-1903), who had been an important



source for Salt, quietly corrected some minor mistakes of attribution and reference in his copy of Salt's 1896 edition. Dawson reproduces and comments upon these corrections. Intriguingly, the Concord Free Public Library today houses in its Special Collections yet another Hosmer copy of Salt's 1896 biography, this one copiously grangerized with Hosmer's marginal notes—with their authority coming to influence our later understandings of Thoreau.]

Dimick, Sarah. "Disordered Environmental Time: Phenology, Climate Change, and Seasonal Form in the Work of Henry David Thoreau and Aldo Leopold." *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 25, no. 4 (Autumn 2018): 700-721. [Presents novel research into the relationship between Aldo Leopold and Thoreau, and importantly a well-wrought contextualization of their respective approaches to botanical science and its underpinnings. Dimick shows how both men, active respectively during nascent and maturing years of the Anthropocene age, "practiced phenology [i.e., the study of cyclic seasonal phenomena] as a means of intuiting the environment's temporal order." In other words, both Thoreau and Leopold were convinced, according to Dimick's reading, that the underlying seasonal cycles they followed were stable, even permanent in their expected recurrence. This while by contrast, and dire necessity, "current phenologists track environmental events to intuit change" (716). The article includes a harrowing vision, from Richard Primack, of how Thoreau would find Walden Pond and its environs in 2046: the water "too warm for trout," while the swamps and bogs where he "used to enjoy choruses of peepers and other frogs have now dried up and are silent (715). Cf. the Chow entry above.]

Dolan, Kathryn Cornell. "Eating Moose: Thoreau, Regional Cuisine, and National Identity." In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich, 123-38. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Finley, James S. "Pilgrimages and Working Forests: Envisioning the Commons in The Maine Woods." In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich, 141-68. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Francis, James. "Carrying Place: Penobscot Language, Land, and Memory." In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich, 215-22. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Hoag, Ron. "Our *Extra-vagant Society* and the Next Annual Gatherings." *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 307 (Fall, 2019): 14. [Celebrates the diversity inherent in Thoreau's legacy, including his scholarly and activist following, and emphasizes how this plenitude will be reflected in the 2020 and 2021 Annual Gatherings to come.]

Judd, Richard W. "Thoreau's Maine Woods and the Problem of Wildness." In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich, 193-214. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Kucich, John J. "Introduction." In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich, 1-20. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Kucich, John J., ed. *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019. 228 pp. Softcover (ISBN: 978-162534-417-5), USD 26. Reviewed in Josh Christie's omnibus "Books to prepare you for the other side of mud season" in the *Maine Sunday Telegram*, May 5, 2019: C7, and by Henrik Otterberg in the present *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 308 (Winter 2020): 5-8.

Lacroix, Patrick. "Finding Thoreau in French Canada: The Ideological Legacy of the American Revolution." *American Review of Canadian Studies* 47, no. 3 (2017): 266-279. [The author highlights Thoreau's oft-neglected *A Yankee in Canada*, arguing that Thoreau's ultimate aims in his travelogue are republican. That is, Lacroix sees Thoreau as promoting republican values by "emphasizing the contrast between these and the poor and morally stunted life under Old World institutions" such as the Catholic Church and British Crown, prevalent in Canada when he visited the country (266). However, as Lacroix deftly points out, the historical moment when republican values could have been consolidated in the U.S. was lost by the time of Thoreau's death: economic pressures, the Civil War, large-scale immigration, and influences of Social Darwinism all "conspired to close a window that had promised the blessings of American liberty to all" (276).

Lamonde, Yves. *Emerson, Thoreau et Brownson au Québec: Elements pour une comparaison des milieux intellectuels en Nouvelle-Angleterre et au Bas-Canada (1830-1860)*. Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2018. 138 pp. Softcover (ISBN: 978-2-76373-966-3), CAN 40 / USD 30. Reviewed by Julien Nègre in the *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 307 (Fall, 2019): 7-8.

Morgan, Patrick Thomas. "Biological Aesthetics: Thoreau, Gender, and Botany." *Nineteenth-Century Prose* 45, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 1-28. [An intriguing take on Thoreau's conceptualization and evocation of gender. Morgan pivots from a winter 1854 Journal entry where Thoreau ascribes to leaves at once a typically 'male,' indurated and colored upper side, and a 'female,' more tender and colorless underside. Assiduously working through Thoreau's readings in botany the same year, as well as extant research on the supposed contrasts or intersections of his 'scientific' and 'literary' trajectories, Morgan argues for a synthetic Thoreau, harmonizing his interests while deconstructing stable concepts of gender. An immediate challenge to Morgan's argument is of course that plant leaves are sexless, and would also have been identified by Thoreau as such. The mechanisms of pollination were passably understood already by the century preceding Thoreau's own, as well as the circumstance that most flowers and plants were hermaphroditic. Thus Thoreau's playful 'gendering' of his leaves might have had more to do with received cultural concepts of putatively 'male' and 'female' traits, and liberal doses of literary-imaginative license, than any serious attempts to engage and undermine the same. Nevertheless, Morgan's carefully researched essay invites the reader to reconsider the long-held Thoreauvian binary, whereby "his associational mind [supposedly gave] way to his descriptive mind" (20).]



Nègre, Julien. *L'arpenteur vagabond. Cartes et cartographies dans l'œuvre de Henry David Thoreau*. Lyon: ENS Editions, 2019. 354 pp. Softcover (ISBN: 979-10-3620-115-8), EUR 28 / USD 30. Reviewed by François Specq in the present *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 308 (Winter, 2020): 9-10.

Potts, Dale. "Multiple Use and Its Discontents: Popular Conservation Writing in the Maine Woods a Century after Thoreau." In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich, 169-192. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Sexton, Melissa. "Sublime Matter: Materiality and Language in Thoreau's 'Ktaadn.'" In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich, 105-22. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Sockalexis, Chris. "Crossing Moosehead Lake." In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich, 23-28. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Tag, Stan. "Undercurrents." In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich, 29-58. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Thoreau; Henry D. *The Correspondence: Volume 2: 1849-1856*. Ed. Robert N. Hudspeth, et al. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018. 700 pp. Cloth (ISBN: 978-0-69118-902-4), USD 100. Reviewed by Sandra Harbert Petruionis in the *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 307 (Fall, 2019): 6-7.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden, cam Kyankn antarum & Qaxaqatzian anhnazandutyun [Walden; or, Life in the Woods & "Civil Disobedience"]*. Translated, introduced, and annotated by Vardan Aslanyan. Yerevan, Armenia: Antares, Sargis Khachents & Printinfo, 2019. 475 pp. Clothbound (ISBN: 978-99398-724-07), USD 15 plus shipping from: [www.onlinearmenianstore.com](http://www.onlinearmenianstore.com). [The first translation of Thoreau's works into Armenian, by theologian and scholar Aslanyan, currently based at the University of Tübingen in Germany. The handsome hardcover includes an ample introduction to Thoreau's life and works, a chronology, relevant annotations to the main text, and a descriptive bibliography of sources employed and recommended. In short, a thorough introduction of Thoreau for Armenian readers.]

Thorson, Robert M. "The Maine Woods Rhomboid." In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich, 59-84. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Walls, Laura Dassow. "'Some Star's Surface': Thoreau in the Maine Woods." In *Rediscovering the Maine Woods: Thoreau's Legacy in an Unsettled Land*, ed. John J. Kucich: 87-104. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019.

Wheeler, Joseph C. "Thoreau Society Honors Leslie Perrin Wilson." *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 307 (Fall, 2019): 3. [Remarks by Wheeler marking Perrin Wilson's retirement as Curator of Special Collections at the Concord Free Public Library, after 23 years of distinguished service.]

## Historical Records

Anonymous. Announcement in *The Bay State* of Lynn, Mass., dated Thursday, April 28, 1859, page 2, paragraph 7, under heading "Special Notices": "A Course of Five Lectures at Frazier's Hall, will commence on Tuesday evening next, April 12. The Course will consist of the following lecturers:- George Sumner, Esq., April 12th; Wendell Phillips, Esq., April 19th; Rev. T. Starr King, April 26th; Henry Thoreau, Esq., May 3d; Rev. C. C. Shackford, May 10th. Tickets for the Course, 50 cents; to be had at Herbert's, Munroe's, Warren Tapley's, and Lafavour's. NO EVENING TICKETS SOLD. To commence at 7 ½ o'clock." [At the time of this late posting, only Shackford's lecture remained to be given. As detailed by Bradley P. Dean and Ronald Wesley Hoag in their "Thoreau's Lectures after Walden: An Annotated Calendar," Thoreau had actually delivered his lecture on "Autumnal Tints" at Frazier's Hall on April 26th, earlier than stated in this notice. They add that the *Lynn Weekly Reporter* on April 30 "praised [the lecture's] colourful content but condemned what the reviewer perceived as Thoreau's colorless delivery" (301); the relevant review

is also reprinted in full. Cf. Dean & Hoag in *Studies in the American Renaissance* 1996: 241-362 (300-303).]

Anonymous. Obituary in *The Daily Herald* of Newburyport, Mass., vol. XXX, no. 275, dated Friday, May 9, 1862, page 2, paragraph 5, under heading "Deaths": "In Concord, May 7, David Henry Thoreau, about 45 – a graduate of Harvard, in the class of 1837, and one of the most original thinkers and writers of the day."



We are indebted to the following generous informants for contributions to this bibliography: Corinne H. Smith, Richard Schneider, Geoff Wisner, and Richard Winslow III. Please contact the Additions editor with any further tips you may have, at: [henrik.otterberg@lir.gu.se](mailto:henrik.otterberg@lir.gu.se).





# President's Column: Thoreau, Lyceums, and the Thoreau Society: An Ongoing Story

by Ron Hoag

"The one hundred and twenty-five dollars annually subscribed for a Lyceum in the winter is better spent than any other equal sum raised in the town. . . . New England can hire all the wise men in the world to come and teach her."

*Walden, "Reading"*

Thoreau was engaged with the Concord Lyceum in various ways from its founding, and as the lyceum movement expanded, he lectured elsewhere in Massachusetts and other states. The movement was launched by Josiah Holbrook with an 1826 proposal in the *American Journal of Education* for "associations for mutual instruction in the sciences and other branches of useful knowledge . . . in our villages." The Concord Lyceum, established in 1829, answered Holbrook's call with a commitment, in its constitution, to "the advancement of Popular Education, and the diffusion of useful information throughout the community." By-laws called for weekly meetings with alternating lectures, if available, or "discussions, readings, or familiar conversations."

The Concord Lyceum was a formative influence and lifelong allegiance for Thoreau. He attended meetings in his youth, says Walter Harding, where "numerous lectures . . . on geology, botany, and ornithology . . . undoubtedly were an important factor in developing just such interests."<sup>1</sup> Thereafter, as an adult, he served his hometown lyceum from 1838 to 1845 as secretary, curator, and associate director, with duties including preparing programs, arranging lectures, and securing the lighted and heated hall. His greatest contribution, however, was the twenty-two lectures he gave there, all without pay, from 1838 to 1859. Indeed, his Concord Lyceum lectures approach thirty percent of his seventy-five total in a lecturing career from 1837 to 1860.

The nineteenth-century lyceum movement was a widespread democratic attempt to provide uplifting education apart from formal schooling. Over time its character shifted from volunteer practical instruction with a scientific-technological emphasis to paid professional lectures on eclectic subjects, popular "events" combining education with entertainment. Outgrowing Josiah Holbrook's formulaic "American Lyceum," the "lyceum" name itself became a generic label for variously sponsored lectures and lecture series.

Thoreau's involvement grew with the lyceum movement, from its 1820s seeding to its 1860s blight by Civil War. With regard to professional lecturing he was increasingly *odd man in*, involved but skeptically so. Warmed by professional validation and the

forum to profess his beliefs, he was chilled by unsympathetic auditors and by the disruption of his life in nature. "I fear that it is impossible *for me* to combine such things with the business of lecturing," he complained to Daniel Ricketson.<sup>2</sup>

There is an evolutionary connection between Henry Thoreau, the nineteenth-century lyceum movement, and the Thoreau Society today. The present Thoreau Society is the result of a 1983 merger with the Thoreau Foundation, formed in 1966 to manage the Thoreau Lyceum in a nineteenth-century Belknap Street house next to the site where the Thoreau family's "Texas House" once stood. This new Lyceum, not descended from the Concord original, offered programs and also displayed artifacts and memorabilia and a backyard replica of the Walden cabin, designed by Roland Robbins and now at the Concord Museum. A merger committee report described both parties as of 1983: "The Society is somewhat more a community of scholars. . . . The Lyceum is a Thoreau learning center, with research library, Spring, Fall, and Summer lecture series, bookshop, gift shop, and instruction for individuals and groups." The report stipulates that "all the work now being done by both groups will be carried on under the name of the Thoreau Society."<sup>3</sup> That work included the *Concord Saunterer*, which had been intermittently published by the Thoreau Lyceum.

Our evolved Thoreau Society, now and going forward, perpetuates Thoreau's contributions to the Concord Lyceum and others of his lifetime. It also continues the work of the merged Thoreau Lyceum. Consider our Society's many scholar members and our affiliation with educational organizations and institutions; our presence at conferences in this and other countries; our journals and other publications; our research collections

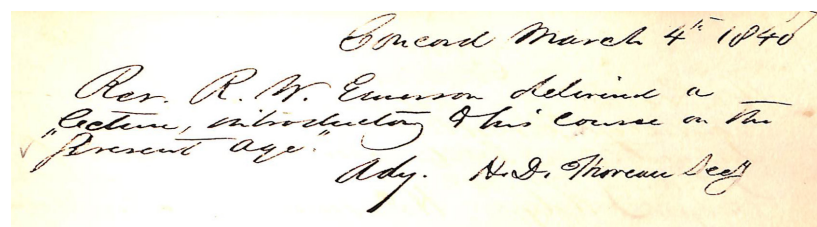
and fellowships program; our links with libraries, museums, and historic sites; our many local programs and collaborations; our shop and information center at the Walden Pond State Reservation; our Thoreau Farm alliance and our office at Henry's birthhouse; our Thoreau Country excursions. These and other efforts promote deliberate, conscientious living.

Consider, too, our Annual Gatherings with four days of presentations, discussions, field trips, outdoor recreations, and friendships new and renewed. These Gatherings offer more than condensed full seasons of lyceum enrichment. Consider, especially, this coming July's edition, promising to be one of our best. Your effort to attend will be amply rewarded.

• **Ron Hoag** is the President of the Thoreau Society

## Notes

1. Walter Harding, *The Days of Henry David Thoreau* (New York: Dover, 1982), 29.
2. Henry D. Thoreau, *The Correspondence, Volume 2: 1849-1856*, ed. Robert N. Hudspeth (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 289.
3. "The Proposed Merger of the Thoreau Society and the Thoreau Lyceum," *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 163 (Spring 1983), 1-2.



Courtesy Concord Free Public Library

Henry David Thoreau, Secretary of the Concord Lyceum, records the delivery of a lecture by Ralph Waldo Emerson, the first in a series by Emerson on the "Present Age"



## 2020 Thoreau Prize Announcement

by Dale Peterson

The 2020 winner of the Henry David Thoreau Prize for Literary Excellence in Nature Writing is Dr. George Schaller. He will receive the prize in a public event to take place on July 13, 2020, at the First Parish Church in Concord.

George Schaller is recognized as one of the greatest field biologists of the twentieth century; he continues to work into the twenty-first as both a biologist and a conservationist. He also writes. He writes wonderfully, in fact, and the bulk of his writing has been addressed not to his scientific peers but rather to the general public.

As a pioneering field biologist, perhaps only Jane Goodall is more widely known. But while Dr. Goodall achieved an unquestionably deserved fame as the first person to conduct an intensive scientific study of chimpanzees in the wild (one of the four non-human great ape species), starting in the summer of 1960, Dr. Schaller began the first significant study of another great ape species, gorillas, more than a year earlier, in 1959. While Goodall first became recognized as the brave young woman who studied her subjects as a calm, non-threatening presence among wild animals who were “known” to be ferociously violent, young Schaller was a brave young man who also approached putatively dangerous wild apes by presenting himself as a solitary, non-threatening presence. While Goodall was lauded for her intuitive approach—giving her study subjects names instead of numbers, treating them as if they were sentient and emotional beings—Schaller took precisely the same approach. Both Jane Goodall and George Schaller, in summary, were pioneers who together, by applying an original and courageous methodology, began the great revolution in primate studies.

Schaller started his career living among the gorillas. Then he went to India to study tigers, then he went back to Africa—the Serengeti—to consider the social behavior of lions. By the 1970s, he was in Nepal looking for the Himalayan bharal (blue sheep)

and snow leopards; then it was on to South America, studying jaguars, capybaras, caiman. A decade later, he had been invited to China, where he would study pandas; then he traveled to Laos, Vietnam, Tibet, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan for more field work. It may be impossible for a professional animal-watcher to remain content with simply watching these days, when the animals are threatened, declining, and disappearing everywhere, almost entirely due to the global explosion in human numbers. Yes, Schaller is also reflexively a dedicated conservationist whose work has led to the protection of more than 20 parks and reserves

around the planet, including the 130,000 square-mile Chang Tang Nature Reserve in the Tibetan Plateau, which is the world’s third-largest nature reserve.

The Thoreau Prize is a literary prize that strives to celebrate those nature writers who best embody in their lives and work the spirit of Henry David Thoreau. George Schaller’s life is one Thoreau would have envied tremendously, while his written work is extensive and multifaceted. His first book was a scientific summary of that early study conducted while living among mountain gorillas; his second book took the same material and molded it into a compelling and personal story directed to an audience of intelligent lay readers. Indeed, *The Year of the Gorilla* (1964) was a work of literary quality, and it was followed by many other enlightening books for the general reader including *The*

*Deer and the Tiger* (1967), *The Tiger* (1969), *Serengeti: A Kingdom of Predators* (1972), *Golden Shadows, Flying Hooves* (1973), *The Serengeti Lion* (1976), *Wonders of Lions* (1977), *Stones of Silence* (1980), *Mountain Monarchs* (1983), *The Giant Pandas of Wolong* (1985), *The Last Panda* (1993), *Tibet’s Hidden Wilderness* (1997), *Wildlife of the Tibetan Steppe* (2000), *A Naturalist and Other Beasts* (2010), and the latest—just released—*Into Wild Mongolia* (2020). George Schaller has also written a book of poems, *One Last Walk* (2016).

• **Dale Peterson** is the founder of the Henry David Thoreau Prize for Literary Excellence in Nature Writing.



Photo by Ksuryawanshi, from Wikicommons)

Dr. George Schaller

## Notes & Queries

by Brent Ranalli

The BBC sent correspondent Susan Marling across the pond (not that pond, the other one) in 2017 to put together a program on the Thoreau bicentennial. The result, a 44-minute feature titled “The Battle for Henry David Thoreau,” is now available for free on the BBC’s website. (Thanks to **Michiko Ono** for the tip.) The “battle” is over whether Thoreau’s legacy belongs to the environmentalists or the libertarians, and also whether Thoreau was a hypocrite (and a “joyless prig”) and whether that matters today. The program is full of interviews, with a number with Thoreau Society stalwarts in the line-up. Voices heard include: Jeffrey Cramer, Richard Smith, Alex Beam, Elisa New, Deborah Medenbach, Peter Alden, Mark Gallagher, Laura Dassow Walls, Douglas Brinkley, Don Henley,

Richard Primack, Randal O’Toole, Dan Volaro, Wen Stephenson, and Ernesto Estrella, plus Walden Pond visitors.

Last fall, Concord was treated to a second visit (at the Old Manse) by the touring TigerLion Arts production of “Nature,” a music-filled outdoor walking play about the relationship between Emerson and Thoreau. According to a clipping from the *Mesabi Daily News* of Virginia, MN, dated Aug 16, 2019, that was received by the Thoreau Society office, the Minnesota-based play has been performed in over 20 parks and arboretums nationwide. Tyson Forbes, author of the play and great-great-great-grandson of Emerson, whom he portrays in the play, is quoted as saying that Emerson and Thoreau “were authors, friends, and radicals of their time, calling on their peers to think for themselves, live more deeply, and be agents of change. . . . I believe their words and ideas are as relevant and necessary now as they were then, and



I am thrilled to be able to share this story of their friendship and history.”

Even today, Walden Pond continues to inspire authors. Mystery writer Peter Swanson reports in an interview with *Publisher's Weekly* that the idea for his latest book, *Eight Perfect Murders*, came during a walk around the pond. (Each perfect murder, committed by a serial killer who is following a bookstore blog, is based on a classic mystery.) Spotted by **Corinne H. Smith**.

Following a portage to the Penobscot River on his third trip into the Maine Woods, Thoreau met a party of St. Francis Indians building a canoe, drying moosemeat, and feeding a young moose held in an impromptu enclosure. One of the party talked shop with Joe Polis, Thoreau's Penobscot guide, disagreeing about whether white or black spruce roots are best for sewing canoes. Thoreau supposed that he could build a canoe himself, and the St. Francis Indian expressed skepticism. Based on notes made by her father, Manly Hardy, who knew the local Indians well and who followed the same path as Thoreau shortly after him, historian Fannie Hardy Eckstorm identified Louis Annance (1794-1875) as among the St. Francis Indians present. A letter from Eckstorm with this identification and other *Maine Woods* marginalia was published in *TSB* 51 (Spring 1955). Thanks to the University of Maine, Eckstorm's typewritten notes on Annance (“Old Louis Annance and his Decendents [sic]”) are now freely available online. In 2018, Maine historian James Myall wrote up a biosketch of Annance for the *Bangor Daily News* (thanks to **Jym St. Pierre** for the tip). Despite unfortunately confusing Annance with Penobscot Joe Aitteon (e.g., writing that Annance had guided Thoreau on an earlier trip and that Thoreau had been surprised to learn that he was Protestant), Myall's account is a nice window into the life of this fascinating figure. Louis Annance straddled the boundary between Native and White society, not to mention the Catholic / Protestant and Canadian / American divides, with apparent ease (though one wonders just how easy it all really was). Born in the Abenaki village of Odanak on the St. Francis river in Quebec, of mixed blood (two of his great-grandparents having been Euro-Americans abducted by Abenakis as children during the French and Indian war), Annance attended the Moore Charity School in Hanover, New Hampshire (soon to be re-invented as Dartmouth College), which had a mission of educating and assimilating Abenaki and Iroquois children. Despite returning to the Catholic Abenaki community in Odanak

to marry and later to have his children baptized, he appears to have identified as a Protestant. He joined the Freemasons in Hanover, and remained affiliated with masonic lodges when he later moved to Lancaster, New Hampshire and Greenville, Maine. He and his wife, Marguerite, had three children. Annance appears to have made his living primarily as a guide and hunter. So it was that Thoreau and Polis encountered Annance deep in the woods. If Annance was indeed the member of the St. Francis Indian party who spoke to the newcomers on July 25, 1857, it must have been a remarkable meeting: Louis Annance, the Dartmouth-alumnus Freemason who

“kept himself well up on current events [and] could sit down with an educated person and converse with him on almost any subject” (Eckstrom's words), and Joe Polis, the negotiator who had gone toe-to-toe with politicians and administrators in Augusta and Washington D.C., debating the merits of spruce roots. This particular huckleberry party was chock-full of overqualified captains.

**Jym St. Pierre** also directs our attention to *Chasing Maine's Second*, a recent book that tells the story of the 2018 Congressional race in Maine's Second District. Whereas Maine's First District, centered on Portland in the south, “has an umbilical cord to the go-go economy of Massachusetts,” the Second is the district of Maine's northern forests and rivers—rural, stubborn, independent-minded, and possibly a bellwether. (The Second voted by decisive margins for Obama in 2008 and 2012 and for Trump in 2016.) Over \$30 million of mostly outside money was spent on the 2018 race. Author Michael Norton eases into a character



Collections of Maine Historical Society, item #17721.

Used with permission

Louis Annance

sketch of the Second district with some history, and he begins that history with Thoreau, who remarked on the active intelligence of the pioneers that he found deep in the woods—more “men of the world” than the complacent and sedentary citizens of Concord. A copy of Emerson's address on West Indian emancipation that had made its way to one remote corner of northern Maine, he noted, had already made two converts to the radical pro-abolition Liberty Party. Spoiler alert: the Democratic challenger squeaked out a narrow win over the Republican incumbent in 2018, thanks in part to a new system of ranked choice voting that ultimately put the decision in the hands of the 8% of the population that preferred third-party candidates.

The brief feature on Logan Airport's Walden exhibition (see page 12) took a long time to put together, since it had to be scheduled around actual travel—one can't simply walk into Terminal E to



take pictures! Thanks to Mark Gallagher for taking the photos and performing the initial background research. Among the quotations on the wall, the apocryphal one is “Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail,” which was *not* written by Ralph Waldo Emerson. **Jeffrey Cramer** of the Walden Woods Project assures us that Massport is aware of the error and has promised to fix it.

Mark your calendars! Planning is underway for Iceland’s first Thoreau Symposium, to be held at The Snorrastofa Cultural and Medieval Centre, Reykholt, on May 27-29 (Wed-Fri), 2021, followed by excursions on May 30-31 (Sat-Sun), 2021. The theme is: “Thoreau’s Time: Slowing & Circling, Bustling & Charging.” Further details and a formal call for papers will follow. Please direct your enquiries to **Henrik Otterberg** at “henrik.otterberg@lir.gu.se.”

In a 2012 interview with *Esquire* magazine shared by **Mike Frederick**, actor Bill Murray has this to say: “I read a great essay: Thoreau on friendship. I was staying over at my friend’s house and there it was on the bedside table, and I’m reading it and I’m thinking it’s an essay, so it’s gonna be like four pages. Well, it goes on and on and on and on—Thoreau was a guy who lived alone, so he just had to get it all out, you know? He just keeps saying, ‘You have to love what is best in that other person and only what’s best in that other person. That’s what you have to love.’” Mike adds an observation, that Thoreau seems to habitually address the reader as a friend.

**Mark Sullivan** points out that Nancy Rosenblum’s book *Good Neighbors: The Democracy of Everyday Life in America* (Princeton University Press, 2016) devotes an entire chapter to Thoreau’s sense of neighborliness, and how his concept of a good neighbor might serve as a model for Americans of today.

**Pat O’Connell** notes that in Jon Meacham’s 2018 bestseller *The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angels*, Thoreau is credited with inspiring the most memorable line from Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s first inaugural address: “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” Meacham writes that “[First Lady] Eleanor [Roosevelt] told Roosevelt advisor Samuel Rosenman that a friend of hers had given the president-elect a volume of the writings of Henry David Thoreau not long before the inauguration. ‘Nothing is so much to be feared as fear,’ Thoreau had written in his journal entry for September 7, 1851. FDR had the book with him during his pre-inaugural stay in Suite 776 of the Mayflower Hotel. ‘Roosevelt frequently picked up a book at his bedside for a brief reading before turning out the lights,’ Rosenman recalled. ‘It may be that in this way he came across the phrase, it stuck in his mind, and found its way into the speech.’” For more detail on this link between Thoreau and FDR, including an informed discussion of which book may have been on FDR’s bedside table, see George Hendrick’s article “Thoreau, F.D.R., and ‘Fear’” in *TSB* 62 (Winter 1958).

Meacham followed up in 2019 with another book, *Songs of America*, co-authored with country singer Tim McGraw. **Reverend John F. Butkis** points out that near the end of a short introduction titled “The Music of History,” the authors quote Thoreau (from a January 13, 1857, Journal entry): “When I *hear* music, I fear no danger. I am invulnerable. I see no foe. I am related to the earliest times, and to the latest.” Rev. Butkis brings two other items to our attention as well. The summer 2019 issue of *Journal West* includes an article on Edward Abbey that puts a new twist on the trope of nature-writer Abbey as “the Thoreau of the American West.” Author

Leonard Engel argues that Abbey represents “a curious blend of Thoreau’s philosophy and Whitman’s tone.” And the September-December 2019 issue of the *Oratory* magazine, published by the Holy Cross Congregation for the St. Joseph’s Oratory in Montreal, prominently features a Thoreau quotation: “Launch yourself on every wave, find your eternity in each moment” (from the Journal, April 24, 1859).

**C. David Luther** observes that Thoreau is mentioned in Andrea Wulf’s 2019 graphic-novel-style science biography, *The Adventures of Alexander Von Humboldt*. Thoreau is credited as having taken to heart Humboldt’s warnings about deforestation. “Thoreau insisted that every town should have a protected forest of several hundred acres. The man had clearly read and liked my books.” Wulf’s editor made the bold choice of not including any page numbers, so if you want to find the quote you’ll need to count your way to page 168.

The world’s oldest surviving aerial photo is an 1860 photograph of Boston—Thoreau’s Boston—taken from a balloon at 2,000 feet. (Thanks to **Richard Smith** for the find.) According to an article on the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s website, the photograph was part of a series that launched the career of James Black, a former daguerrotype technician. Oliver Wendell Holmes enthused about the photo on the pages of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1863: “Boston, as the eagle and wild goose see it, is a very different object from the same place as the solid citizen looks up at its eaves and chimneys. . . . Milk Street [left center] winds as if the old cowpath which gave it a name had been followed by the builders of its commercial palaces.”



Source: Metropolitan Museum of Art  
Boston, from above. Photo taken October 13, 1860, by J. W. Black, from a hot-air balloon





Courtesy Jake McGinnis

Two items spotted by **Jim Dawson** on eBay: A glow-in-the-dark statuette of Henry backpacking in shorts, and a ceramic model of “Thoreau Residence Cottage.” The cottage is three stories tall, with two chimneys. If less-than-historically-accurate kitschy memorabilia is not your thing, you might check out instead the “Thoreau’s Flame” scented candles offered by Frenchies’ Natural Products, based in Portland, Maine (spotted by **Jym St. Pierre**). “To this day, reading Thoreau’s *The Maine Woods* awakens the imagination and instills a deep appreciation for all things wild. Made with essential oils of balsam, pine and cedar—all native to the Maine Woods—this natural soy-based candle pays homage to all spirits past and present who LOVE THE WOODS.” Or maybe what you’re really looking for is Thoreau-themed beard oil. The website of A.J. Murrays, maker of fine beard oils, states: “In addition to walking, observing, and writing a lot of good stuff, Henry David Thoreau had one nasty growth of hair on his face. That’s why we’ve developed our Thoreau Beard Oil, a lightweight, moisturizing oil perfect for daily use on all skin and hair types. Thoreau blends petitgrain, cedarwood, and sage to create a soothing, calming scent and also will make your beard or mustache feel, smell, and look a lot better than his.”

• **Brent Ranalli** is the editor of the *Thoreau Society Bulletin*.

Please send your submissions  
for the *Bulletin* to the editor:  
[brent.ranalli@thoreausociety.org](mailto:brent.ranalli@thoreausociety.org)

Although exceptions will occasionally be made for longer pieces, in general articles and reviews should be no longer than 1500 words. Longer submissions may be forwarded by the editor to *The Concord Saunterer*. All submissions should conform to *The Chicago Manual of Style*. The Thoreau Edition texts (Princeton University Press) should be used as the standard for quotations from Thoreau’s writings, when possible. Contributors need not be members of the Thoreau Society, but all non-members are heartily encouraged to join.

The *Thoreau Society Bulletin* is a quarterly publication containing Thoreau Society news, additions to the Thoreau bibliography, and short articles about Thoreau and related topics. It is indexed in *American Humanities Index*, *American Literary Scholarship*, and *MLA International Bibliography*.

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