

WALDEN  
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
*and Other Writings*

HENRY D. THOREAU



EDITED BY WILLIAM ROSSI

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION  
THIRD EDITION

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WALDEN,  
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE,  
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AUTHORITATIVE TEXTS  
JOURNAL  
REVIEWS AND POSTHUMOUS ASSESSMENTS  
CRITICISM

THIRD EDITION

*Edited by*

WILLIAM ROSSI

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON



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## Preface

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In the fifteen years since the second edition of this volume appeared, the influence and importance of *Walden* and "Civil Disobedience" have continued to grow both within and beyond the academy. If anything, these works have become even more timely. They speak to a present condition drenched with a daily awareness of the interdependence of all places and of the global consequences, for better and worse, of individual actions. In this, they confirm anew their author's faith that any universality his statement and actions might possess would arise out of an intimate, local knowledge, and a deep commitment to his chosen place.

To the texts of *Walden*, "Civil Disobedience," and the Journal (reprinted from Princeton Edition volumes that have since appeared), the third edition adds a contemporary map of mid-nineteenth-century Concord and three new Thoreau essays, considerably expanding this selection of his writings. Besides representing the full span of Thoreau's mature career, from 1845 to 1862, the volume now documents his greater political and proto-environmental activism after *Walden*. And, as several critical selections illustrate, these essays also open fruitful new approaches to Thoreau's masterpiece.

By adding new reviews of *Walden* as well as of the posthumous collections that contained "Walking," "Wild Apples," "Civil Disobedience," and "Slavery in Massachusetts," the third edition presents a fuller picture of Thoreau's contemporary reception. As an index of his late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century reputation as an environmental writer, I have also included John Burroughs's most comprehensive attempt to assess the work of his precursor. Both a non-New Englander and literary bioregionalist of comparable stature, Burroughs updates Thoreau for "modern" readers while answering the influential criticisms of Victorian sages Emerson and Lowell, who preceded him.

The "Criticism" section for the third edition has been revised and expanded to illuminate Thoreau's writings for a range of readers, including undergraduate and graduate students in any number of disciplines as well as interested general readers. Like the texts, the annotations, and the reviews, this criticism reflects both the revisionary and cumulative character of Thoreau scholarship, now almost seventy years' worth. These selections were chosen especially to highlight recent critical analyses of the complexity of Thoreau's engagements with questions of environment, race, political action, and gender. As curious readers who consult the updated bibliography will rapidly discover for

themselves, but for limitations of space, any number of equally excellent studies might have been excerpted for inclusion here.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the help of several people in preparing this new volume. This is a better book thanks to comments and helpful suggestions from Mike Berger, Mike Branch, Larry Buell, John Elder, Will Howarth, Bob Hudspeth, Dana Phillips, David Robinson, Laura Walls, and Leslie Perrin Wilson; for assistance that I received with texts from Brad Dean, Isabel Stirling, Andrew Wentink, and Beth Witherell; for new light on annotations from Jack Maddex, Matthew Watson, and previous annotators, including Brad Dean, Walter Harding, Lewis Hyde, Jeffrey Cramer, and Hershel Parker; for the kindness and patience of Carol Bemis, the curiosity and mischief of Rachel and Julia, and the love of Lynne Rossi.

William Rossi  
Eugene, Oregon

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## A Note on the Texts

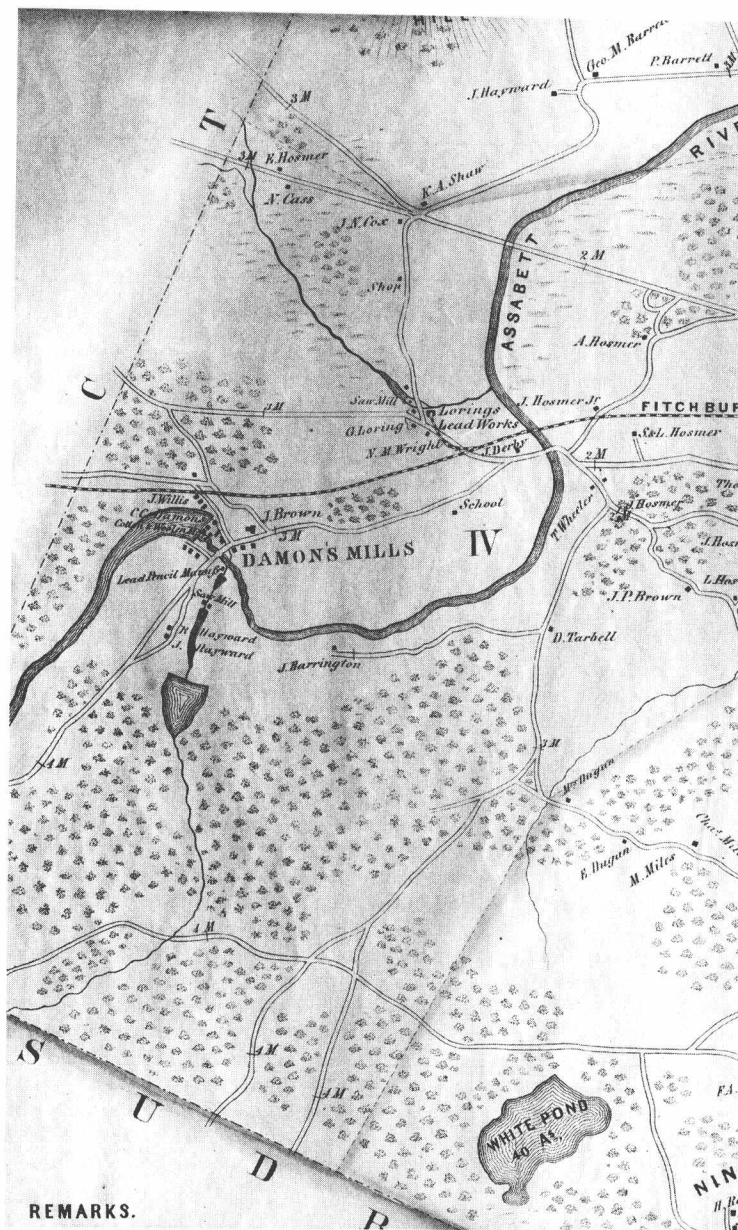
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Thoreau's most famous essay began as a lecture on "The Relation of the Individual to the State," delivered before the Concord Lyceum on January 26, 1848. Solicited by Elizabeth P. Peabody, the essay first appeared in print as "Resistance to Civil Government" in Peabody's *Aesthetic Papers* in May 1849. After Thoreau's death in 1862, his sister Sophia and his friend William Ellery Channing reprinted it in *A Yankee in Canada, with Anti-Slavery and Reform Papers* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866). In addition to several alterations of wording and sentence structure, including the deletion of a clause seeming to anticipate civil war (n. 3, p. 227); the insertion of a quotation from George Peele's *Battle of Alcazar* (p. 243); and a paraphrase of Mencius (p. 246), the essay carried a new title: "Civil Disobedience."

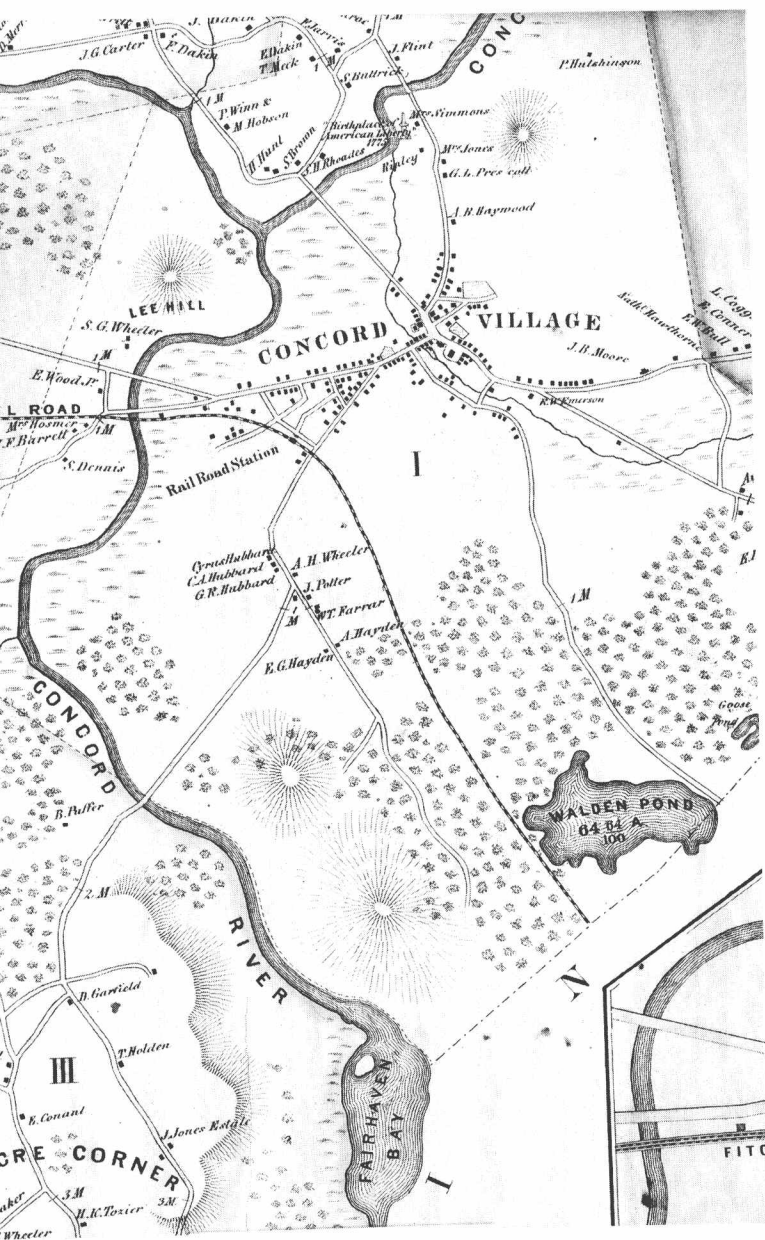
No record exists of Thoreau's having discussed the posthumous publication of this essay, as he had the reprinting of *Walden* and three late essays; nor has the famous title phrase been found in his works. Consequently, in the early 1970s, when Wendell Glick edited *Reform Papers for The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*, he conservatively chose as copy text the 1849 printing, "Resistance to Civil Government," judging the later printing non-authorial. Glick's edition spurred additional archival work and cogent arguments aimed at substantiating the authority of the second printing. The recent surfacing of Thoreau's copy of *Aesthetic Papers*, authenticated by the late Bradley P. Dean and showing several of the 1866 alterations in Thoreau's hand (unfortunately, not including the title), further increases the likelihood that the 1866 printing is indeed authoritative.<sup>1</sup> The present edition therefore restores all those changes as well as the more familiar title.

"Slavery in Massachusetts" was first published in a considerably shorter version in an anti-slavery periodical, *The Liberator*, for July 21, 1854. The revised address was then collected with "Civil Disobedience" and other reform essays in *A Yankee in Canada, with Anti-Slavery and Reform Papers* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866). The text of the essay used here is reprinted with permission from *Reform Papers*, ed-

1. See Wendell Glick, "Scholarly Editing and Dealing with Uncertainties: Thoreau's 'Resistance to Civil Government,'" *Analytic and Enumerative Bibliography* 2 (1978): 103-15; Thomas Woodson, "The Title and Text of Thoreau's 'Civil Disobedience,'" *Bulletin of Research in the Humanities* 81 (1978): 103-12; Fritz Oehlschlaeger, "Another Look at the Text and Title of Thoreau's 'Civil Disobedience,'" *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance* 36 (1990): 239-254; and James Dawson, "Recently Discovered Revisions Made by Thoreau to the First Edition Text of 'Civil Disobedience,'" forthcoming in *The Concord Saunterer: New Series* 15 (2007).



This map, completed in 1852 by Boston surveyor Henry F. Walling (1825–1888), depicts Concord village and environs at the time Thoreau was working on the *Walden* manuscript and writing “Walking” and the *Journal*. According to Walling’s “Remarks,” it incorporates “surveys of White Pond and Walden Pond by H. D. Thoreau, Civ. Engr.” Notable features include the



R. W. Emerson house, just east of the village center, and the Old Marlborough Road celebrated in "Walking," which runs southwest in the bottom left quadrant and exits at the Sudbury border, between "U" and "D." Reproduced courtesy of the Concord Free Public Library.



ited by Wendell Glick (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 91–109.

Parts of what became "Walking" were first presented before the Concord Lyceum as "Walking, or The Wild" on April 23, 1851. Delivered frequently on regional lecture circuits in the 1850s, by 1857 the manuscript had grown to more than one hundred pages and into two separate talks.<sup>2</sup> Thoreau rejoined them shortly before his death when he sold this and other essays to Boston publisher James T. Fields, junior partner of Ticknor and Fields, who had acquired the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1859. As Thoreau arranged, "Walking" and "Wild Apples" (as well as another natural history essay, "Autumnal Tints") appeared in the *Atlantic* during the months following. Along with earlier natural history and local travel writings, these essays were then collected by Sophia Thoreau and William Ellery Channing for *Excursions* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1863). Because the first magazine printings were thus partially overseen by the author, they are reprinted in the present edition: "Walking," *Atlantic Monthly* 9, no. 56, (June 1862), 657–74; "Wild Apples," *Atlantic Monthly* 10, no. 61, (November 1862), 513–26.

For a textual description and editorial principles governing the present text of *Walden*, see the Textual Appendix to *Walden*, pp. 225–26.

2. For information on Thoreau's lectures, see Bradley P. Dean and Ronald Wesley Hoag, "Thoreau's Lectures before *Walden*: An Annotated Calendar" *Studies in the American Renaissance* 1995: 127–228 and "Thoreau's Lectures after *Walden*: An Annotated Calendar" *Studies in the American Renaissance* 1996: 241–362.

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# Contents

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Preface	ix
A Note on the Texts	xi
Map of Thoreau's Concord	xii

## The Texts of *Walden*, Civil Disobedience, and Other Writings

WALDEN	5
Map of Walden Pond	193
Textual Appendix to <i>Walden</i>	225
OTHER WRITINGS	
Civil Disobedience	227
Slavery in Massachusetts	247
Walking	260
Wild Apples	288

## Journal

The Journal and <i>Walden</i>	313
Selections from the Journal, 1845–54	319

## Reviews and Posthumous Assessments

[Review of <i>Walden</i> ]	380
[Review of <i>Walden</i> ]	381
[Gamaliel Bailey?] • [Review of <i>Walden</i> ]	382
Elizabeth Barstow Stoddard • [Review of <i>Walden</i> ]	383
Charles Frederick Briggs • A Yankee Diogenes	384
[Review of <i>Walden</i> ]	387
[Lydia Maria Child?] • [Review of <i>A Week on the     Concord and Merrimack Rivers and Walden</i> ]	388
George Eliot • [Review of <i>Walden</i> ]	390
[Review of <i>Excursions</i> ]	391
[Review of <i>Excursions</i> ]	392
[Review of <i>Excursions</i> ]	393

[Review of <i>A Yankee in Canada, with Anti-Slavery and Reform Papers</i> ]	393
Sidney H. Morse • [Review of <i>A Yankee in Canada, with Anti-Slavery and Reform Papers</i> ]	394
Ralph Waldo Emerson • Thoreau	394
James Russell Lowell • Thoreau	410
John Burroughs • Another Word on Thoreau	418

## Modern Criticism

### WALDEN

F. O. Matthiessen • <i>Walden</i> : Craftsmanship vs. Technique	433
E. B. White • <i>Walden</i> —1954	442
Leo Marx • [ <i>Walden's</i> Transcendental Pastoral Design]	450
Stanley Cavell • [Captivity and Despair in <i>Walden</i> and "Civil Disobedience"]	465
Barbara Johnson • A Hound, a Bay Horse, and a Turtle Dove: Obscurity in <i>Walden</i>	482
Robert Sattelmeyer • The Remaking of <i>Walden</i>	489
H. Daniel Peck • The Worlding of <i>Walden</i>	507
Laura Dassow Walls • <i>Walden</i> as Feminist Manifesto	521
Lawrence Buell • Thoreau and the Natural Environment	527

### "CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE" AND "SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS"

Richard Drinnon • Thoreau's Politics of the Upright Man	544
Barry Wood • Thoreau's Narrative Art in "Civil Disobedience"	556
Evan Carton • The Price of Privilege: "Civil Disobedience" at 150	564
Robert A. Gross • Quiet War with the State: Henry Thoreau and Civil Disobedience	572
Albert J. von Frank • Fourth of July	586

### "WALKING" AND "WILD APPLES"

William Rossi • "The Limits of an Afternoon Walk": Coleridgean Polarity in Thoreau's "Walking"	596
Neill Matheson • Thoreau's <i>Gramática Parda</i> : Conjugating Race and Nature	613
Steven Fink • The Language of Prophecy: Thoreau's "Wild Apples"	632

CONTENTS

vii

Lance Newman • [Capitalism and Community in <i>Walden</i> and <i>Wild Fruits</i> ]	645
Henry D. Thoreau: A Chronology	661
Selected Bibliography	667

The Texts of  
WALDEN,  
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE,  
AND OTHER WRITINGS





## The Contents of *Walden*

Economy	5
Where I Lived, and What I Lived For	58
Reading	71
Sounds	78
Solitude	90
Visitors	97
The Bean-Field	107
The Village	115
The Ponds	119
Baker Farm	137
Higher Laws	143
Brute Neighbors	151
House-Warming	161
Former Inhabitants; and Winter Visitors	172
Winter Animals	182
The Pond in Winter	189
Spring	201
Conclusion	214





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# Walden

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I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up.

## Economy

When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner in civilized life again.

I should not obtrude my affairs so much on the notice of my readers if very particular inquiries had not been made by my townsmen concerning my mode of life, which some would call impertinent, though they do not appear to me at all impertinent, but, considering the circumstances, very natural and pertinent. Some have asked what I got to eat; if I did not feel lonesome; if I was not afraid; and the like. Others have been curious to learn what portion of my income I devoted to charitable purposes; and some, who have large families, how many poor children I maintained. I will therefore ask those of my readers who feel no particular interest in me to pardon me if I undertake to answer some of these questions in this book. In most books, the *I*, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained; that, in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were any body else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience. Moreover, I, on my side, require of every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men's lives; some such account as he would send to his kindred from a distant land; for if he has lived sincerely, it must have been in a distant land to me. Perhaps these pages are more particularly addressed to poor students. As for the rest of my read-