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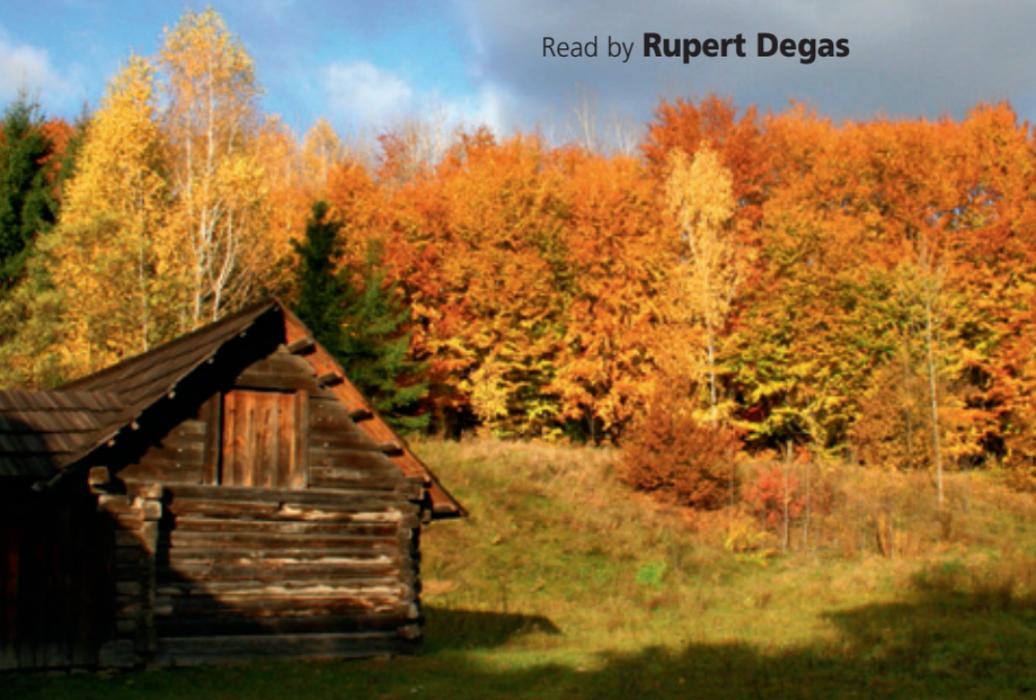
NON-
FICTION
UNABRIDGED

Henry David Thoreau

Walden

Civil Disobedience

Read by **Rupert Degas**



1	<i>Walden</i> by Henry David Thoreau	5:49
2	It is said that Deucalion and Pyrrha created men...	5:33
3	When we consider what, to use the words...	5:09
4	The greater part of what my neighbors call good...	6:03
5	The grand necessity, then, for our bodies...	5:14
6	I do not mean to prescribe rules to strong...	5:44
7	Not long since, a strolling Indian went to sell baskets...	5:06
8	As this business was to be entered into...	4:56
9	I say, beware of all enterprises that require new clothes...	5:20
10	All costume off a man is pitiful or grotesque.	4:58
11	However, if one designs to construct a dwelling-house...	5:01
12	If it is asserted that civilization is a real advance...	4:51
13	As Chapman sings, 'The false society of men...'	4:03
14	Most men appear never to have considered...	3:45
15	We now no longer camp as for a night, but have settled...	5:00
16	Though we are not so degenerate but that we...	4:47
17	By the middle of April, for I made no haste...	5:47
18	There is some of the same fitness in a man's building...	6:02
19	Boards ... \$8.03+, mostly shanty boards.	4:15
20	How could youths better learn to live than by at once...	5:17

21	This spending of the best part of one's life earning money...	5:14
22	Granted that some public works would not have been constructed...	5:16
23	Yes, I did eat \$8.74, all told; but I should not thus unblushingly...	4:57
24	In cold weather it was no little amusement to bake...	4:51
25	Thus I could avoid all trade and barter, so far as my food...	5:41
26	A lady once offered me a mat, but as I had no room to spare...	5:09
27	As I preferred some things to others, and especially valued...	5:01
28	While my townsmen and women are devoted in so many ways...	5:08
29	If you give him money, he will perhaps buy more rags with it.	4:13
30	Being a microcosm himself, he discovers...	4:02
31	Complemental Verses ... The Pretensions of Poverty	5:24
32	The real attractions of the Hollowell farm, to me...	5:23
33	I was seated by the shore of a small pond...	5:28
34	Morning brings back the heroic ages.	5:44
35	In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life...	4:40
36	For my part, I could easily do without the post-office.	4:35
37	I have read in a Hindoo book, that 'there was a king's son...'	5:59
38	Reading With a little more deliberation in the choice...	4:56
39	The crowds of men who merely spoke the Greek and Latin tongues...	5:25
40	The works of the great poets have never yet been read...	6:05

41	I aspire to be acquainted with wiser men than this...	3:31
42	It is time that we had uncommon schools...	3:16
43	Sounds But while we are confined to books...	4:27
44	It was pleasant to see my whole household effects...	4:01
45	The Fitchburg Railroad touches the pond...	2:53
46	I watch the passage of the morning cars with the same feeling...	3:42
47	What recommends commerce to me is its enterprise...	5:37
48	While these things go up other things come down.	5:25
49	When other birds are still, the screech owls...	5:30
50	I am not sure that I ever heard the sound of cock-crowing...	3:02
51	Solitude This is a delicious evening, when the whole body...	5:30
52	I have never felt lonesome, or in the least oppressed...	5:39
53	We are the subjects of an experiment...	4:35
54	I have a great deal of company in my house...	4:53
55	Visitors I think that I love society as much as most...	5:05
56	For my own part, I was never so effectually deterred...	5:00
57	He was about twenty-eight years old, and had left Canada...	5:49
58	I asked him if he ever wished to write his thoughts.	3:54
59	Yet I never, by any manoeuvring, could get him to take...	4:38
60	Men of almost every degree of wit called on me...	3:57

61	The Bean-Field Meanwhile my beans, the length of whose...	4:20
62	As I had little aid from horses or cattle, or hired men...	5:16
63	The hawk is aerial brother of the wave which he sails over...	5:40
64	It was on the whole a rare amusement, which...	4:42
65	We should really be fed and cheered if when we met a man...	4:54
66	The Village After hoeing, or perhaps reading and writing...	4:46
67	It was very pleasant, when I stayed late in town...	3:48
68	Every man has to learn the points of compass again...	3:18
69	The Ponds Sometimes, having had a surfeit of human society...	5:01
70	The scenery of Walden is on a humble scale...	4:34
71	The water is so transparent that the bottom can easily be...	6:06
72	But the pond has risen steadily for two years...	6:09
73	There have been caught in Walden pickerel...	4:45
74	A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature.	5:36
75	A field of water betrays the spirit that is in the air.	4:42
76	I was pleased to hear of the old log canoe...	5:38
77	I have said that Walden has no visible inlet nor outlet...	3:11
78	Flint's Pond! Such is the poverty of our nomenclature.	3:40
79	Since the wood-cutters, and the railroad, and I myself...	5:29
80	Baker Farm Sometimes I rambled to pine groves, standing like...	5:43

81	So the Muse fables. But therein, as I found...	4:23
82	If he and his family would live simply, they might all go...	5:11
83	Higher Laws As I came home through the woods...	4:59
84	There is a period in the history of the individual...	4:51
85	I believe that every man who has ever been earnest...	6:11
86	Who has not sometimes derived an inexpressible satisfaction...	4:11
87	Man flows at once to God when the channel of purity is open.	5:29
88	Brute Neighbours Sometimes I had a companion in my fishing...	4:48
89	Why do precisely these objects which we behold make a world?	4:49
90	Commonly I rested an hour or two in the shade at noon...	5:41
91	There was not one hireling there. I have no doubt...	5:49
92	In the fall the loon (<i>Colymbus glacialis</i>) came, as usual...	3:33
93	It is said that loons have been caught in the New York lakes...	3:38
94	House-Warming In October I went a-graping to the river meadows...	5:25
95	When I came to build my chimney I studied masonry...	4:26
96	I had in my cellar a firkin of potatoes, about two quarts...	6:00
97	The pond had in the meanwhile skimmed over in the shadiest...	5:03
98	In 1845 Walden froze entirely over for the first time...	5:19
99	Every man looks at his wood-pile with a kind of affection.	3:31
100	The moles nested in my cellar, nibbling every third potato...	3:37

101	Former Inhabitants and Winter Visitors	5:52
102	Breed's hut was standing only a dozen years ago...	5:23
103	The last inhabitant of these woods before me was an Irishman...	5:44
104	At this season I seldom had a visitor.	5:53
105	The one who came from farthest to my lodge...	5:31
106	Winter Animals When the ponds were firmly frozen...	5:01
107	In the course of the winter I threw out half a bushel of ears...	6:05
108	In dark winter mornings, or in short winter afternoons...	5:16
109	The hunter who told me this could remember one Sam Nutting...	5:19
110	The Pond in Winter After a still winter night I awoke...	4:15
111	When I strolled around the pond in misty weather...	5:00
112	William Gilpin, who is so admirable in all that relates...	4:39
113	Given, then, the length and breadth of the cove...	4:39
114	When the ice-men were at work here in '46-7, the cakes...	4:59
115	They went to work at once, plowing, barrowing, rolling...	4:53
116	Ice is an interesting subject for contemplation.	2:50
117	Spring The opening of large tracts by the ice-cutters...	5:05
118	It took a short siesta at noon, and boomed once more...	4:18
119	It was a warm day, and he was surprised to see...	3:36
120	The whole cut impressed me as if it were a cave...	3:46

121	When the sun withdraws the sand ceases to flow...	5:09
122	When the ground was partially bare of snow...	4:56
123	Such is the contrast between winter and spring.	5:29
124	Through our own recovered innocence we discern...	5:05
125	Beside this I got a rare mess of golden and silver...	4:45
126	Conclusion To the sick the doctors wisely recommend...	5:30
127	It is said that Mirabeau took to highway robbery...	5:09
128	Why level downward to our dullest perception...	5:09
129	No face which we can give to a matter will stead us so well...	3:44
130	I live in the angle of a leaden wall, into whose composition...	4:25
131	Consider the China pride and stagnant self-complacency...	5:17
132	<i>On the Duty of Civil Disobedience by Henry David Thoreau</i>	5:03
133	A common and natural result of an undue respect for law...	5:32
134	This principle being admitted, the justice of every particular...	5:36
135	Oh for a man who is a man, and, as my neighbor says...	4:41
136	Unjust laws exist; shall we be content to obey them...	5:11
137	I know this well, that if one thousand, if one hundred...	4:06
138	To such the State renders comparatively small service...	5:39
139	I wondered that it should have concluded at length...	5:34
140	I was to see my native village in the light of the Middle Ages...	5:48
141	You do not resist cold and hunger, the winds and the waves...	5:29
142	There are really no blows to be given by him but defensive ones.	5:25

Total time: 11:43:53

Henry David Thoreau

(1817–1862)

Walden

Civil Disobedience

‘If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.’

‘I am a Schoolmaster – a Private Tutor, a Surveyor – a Gardener, a Farmer – a Painter, I mean a House Painter, a Carpenter, a Mason, a Day-Laborer, a Pencil-Maker, a Glass-paper Maker, a Writer, and sometimes a Poetaster.’ So wrote Henry David Thoreau.

But he is remembered for his two extraordinary years of reflection while sojourning in nature, and his account of it, *Walden*. Although it had little impact

during Thoreau’s lifetime, *Walden* is now recognised as one of the great works of American literature, a sensitive but clear essay on life and living in nature, informed by an abiding interest in classic literature and philosophy.

Henry David Thoreau was born in the village of Concord, Massachusetts, in 1817, into an unremarkable family. His father owned a pencil factory. Henry revealed academic potential early, and went to Harvard to study ‘navigation’ (as he says in *Walden*), but spent much of his student years in the library, pursuing his own vicarious literary interests. On his return in 1837 he became a teacher at

the Concord Academy – for two weeks. His sensitive, poetic temperament was not suited to keeping boisterous pupils in order. He left to join his father in the pencil-making business. The following year, in 1838, he started a school with his brother John, putting into practice his more progressive ideas about education. John's growing ill health forced closure, however.

In 1839, together with John, he went on a canoe trip down the McCormack and Concord rivers. This was a key experience, crystallising his need to combine his interests in nature and writing. It resulted in the publication 10 years later of *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*.

By this time he had formed a close friendship with the poet and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was prominent among the Transcendentalists (and who by coincidence had settled in Concord). In this movement, and particularly in the fatherly figure of Emerson, Thoreau found an external, eloquent voice which accorded with his inner feelings: the concern for the individual vision, the emphasis on living with an awareness of

nature, and the elevation of intuition over reason in dealing with life.

It was the vision that Thoreau craved, one that provided a stance against the growing commercialism and materialism that he found everywhere in the burgeoning American society. Prompted by Emerson, Thoreau started a diary and wrote copiously. He began writing for *The Dial*, the Transcendentalist magazine, producing essays, reviews and poetry. It was here that his first writings on nature appeared. Between 1841 and 1843 Thoreau lived mainly with Emerson, his wife and children. It was a difficult period for Thoreau. His brother John died of lockjaw, and his time spent on Staten Island (with the family of Emerson's brother William) trying to establish himself as a poet in a more metropolitan society failed.

Thoreau went back to Concord, and to his father's pencil factory. And then early in 1845, he decided to live alone in the countryside. Emerson owned some land two miles outside Concord, by a small lake named Walden Pond – and Thoreau, now aged 27, found it ideally

suit to his purpose. There he built a small cabin and, dwelling in nature, read and observed, living on food that he could gather, and beans that he grew. This living in nature, all senses alert, combined with his background in classic literature and philosophy and a sense of spiritual purpose, produced *Walden*.

Thoreau spent two years by Walden Pond – not exclusively, for he returned to Concord from time to time. When he left his cabin finally, in 1847, he went back to stay at the Emerson home while Emerson was away in Europe. And gradually he accustomed himself to more conventional society. He took charge of his father's pencil factory though it never became particularly profitable; he developed a reputation as a reliable surveyor; he made other naturalist trips.

But he also became involved in a variety of causes, principally the abolition of slavery. He supported the Underground Railroad, the clandestine movement that helped runaway slaves reach Canada and freedom. He admired John Brown, the anti-slavery campaigner, who was hanged for the debacle at Harper's Ferry. Thoreau's

decided political views led to his essay *Civil Disobedience*. Originally published as *Resistance to Civil Government*, in 1849, just a year after the revolutionary turmoil in Europe, this essay grew out of a series of lectures called *The Rights and Duties of the Individual in Relation to Government* which he had given the year before at the Concord Lyceum. In *Resistance to Civil Government* Thoreau argued that citizens had a duty to resist a government that was in the wrong, and its most famous sentence is 'the government is best which governs least.' After his death the essay was reprinted as *Civil Disobedience*, and it went on to be used by campaigners as a justification for opposing established government. Among its champions were Mahatma Gandhi and Dr Martin Luther King.

However, it is for *Walden* that Thoreau is principally remembered. He had continued to work at his writings and memories of his time at Walden Pond and in 1854 *Walden* was finally published. Even though it wasn't immediately a critical success, it did reach a select circle. In 1855 George Eliot, in London,

praised it in a review in the *Westminster Magazine*, commenting on its 'deep poetic sensibility' and remarking on its 'unworldliness'.

When *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* was published in 1849, 1,000 copies were printed. A mere 100 were sold, 75 were given away, and in 1853 the publisher dumped 706 copies on Thoreau's doorstep. *Walden* fared better – the initial print run of 2,000 was sold within five years – but it was only in the 20th century that it achieved status as a classic in its own right.

Thoreau died, probably of tuberculosis, in 1862, at the age of 44. It was said that he went out into the woods to count tree rings, and caught a bad cold. He was buried in Concord. His cabin didn't last much longer. After Thoreau had left, Emerson bought the cabin and sold it on to his gardener, Hugh Whelan. It started to fall into disrepair, and in 1849, a farmer who purchased it moved it to his farm where it was used to store grain. In 1868 the roof was used to make a pigsty and in 1875 the last pieces of timber shored up a barn. However, a replica has now been

built and can be viewed, by Route 126, on the original site by Walden Pond.

Notes by Nicolas Soames



Rupert Degas, a versatile and charismatic audiobook reader, has read a substantial list of books for Naxos AudioBooks, notably Murakami's *A Wild Sheep Chase*, *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* and *Dance Dance Dance*, Kafka's *The Trial*, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, Rose Tremain's *Restoration* and Tom McNab's *Flanagan's Run*. He is in considerable demand as a voice for cartoons, and is the voice of Pantalaimon in Philip Pullman's *Northern Lights*, but is also regularly seen in London's West End in plays as varied as *Stones in his Pockets* and *The 39 Steps*.

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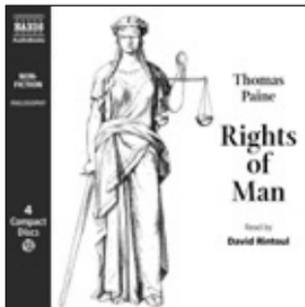
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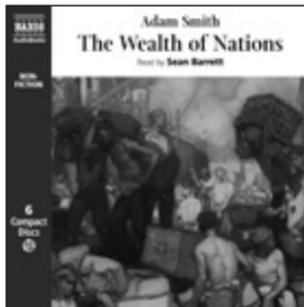
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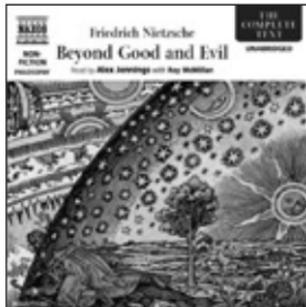
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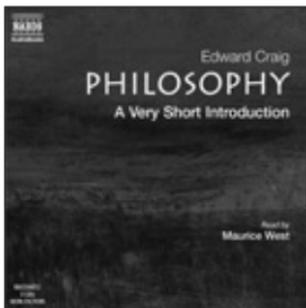
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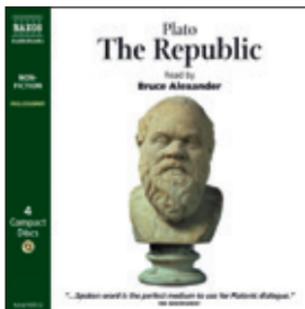
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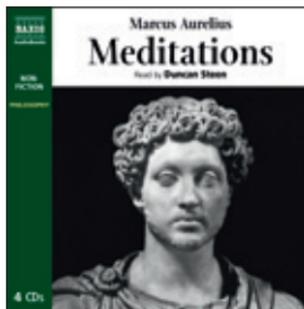
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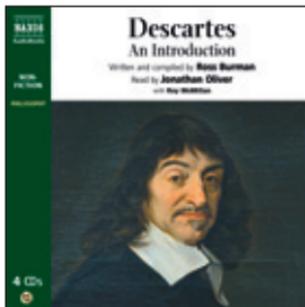
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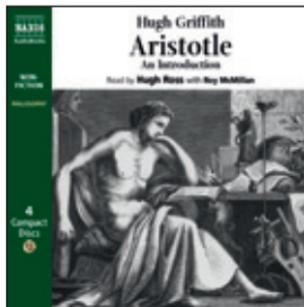
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Henry David Thoreau

Walden

Civil Disobedience

Read by **Rupert Degas**

*'If a man does not keep pace with his companions,
perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer.'*

In 1845 Henry David Thoreau, one of the principal New England Transcendentalists, left the small town of Concord for the country. Beside the lake of Walden he built himself a log cabin and returned to nature, to observe and reflect – while surviving on eight dollars a year. From this experience emerged *Walden*, one of the great classics of American literature, and a deeply personal reaction against the commercialism and materialism that Thoreau saw as the main impulses of mid-19th-century America.

Here also is *Civil Disobedience*, Thoreau's essay on just resistance to government which not only challenged the establishment of his day but has been used as a flag for later campaigners from Mahatma Gandhi to Dr Martin Luther King.



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