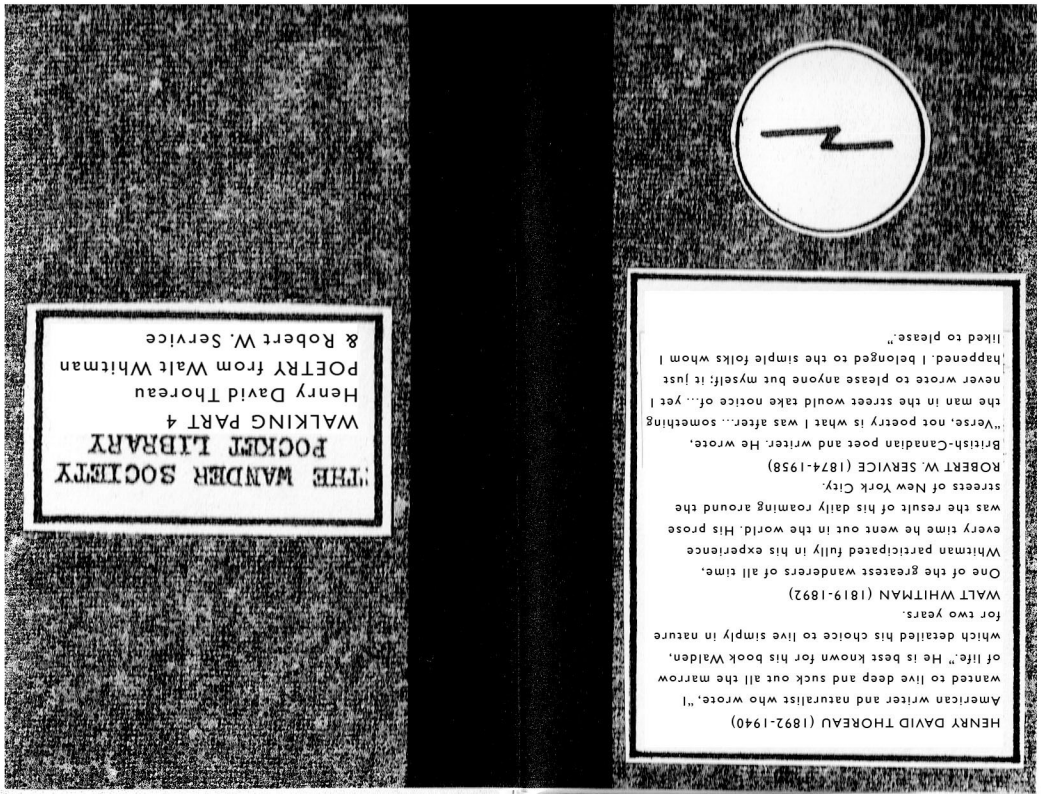

HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1892-1940)
American writer and naturalist who wrote, "I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life." He is best known for his book Walden, which detailed his choice to live simply in nature for two years.

WALT WHITMAN (1819-1892)
One of the greatest wanderers of all time. Whitman participated fully in his experience every time he went out in the world. His prose was the result of his daily roaming around the streets of New York City.

ROBERT W. SERVICE (1874-1958)
British-Canadian poet and writer. He wrote, "Verse, not poetry is what I was after... something never wrote to please anyone but myself; it just happened. I belonged to the simple folks whom I liked to please."

hears the cock crow in every barnyard within our horizon, it is belated. That sound commonly reminds us that we are growing rusty and antique in our employments and habits of thought. His philosophy comes down to a more recent time than ours. There is something suggested by it that is a newer testament—the gospel according to this moment. He has not fallen astern; he has got up early and kept up early, and to be where he is, is to be in season, in the foremost rank of time. It is an expression of the health and soundness of Nature, a brag for all the world—healthiness as of a spring burst forth, a new fountain of the Muses, to celebrate this last instant of time. Where he lives no fugitive slave laws are passed. Who has not betrayed his master many times since last he heard that note?

The merit of this bird's strain is in its freedom from all plaintiveness. The singer can easily move us to tears or to laughter, but where is he who can excite in us a pure morning joy? When, in doleful dumps, breaking the awful stillness of our wooden sidewalk on a Sunday, or, perchance, a watcher in the house of mourning, I hear a cockerel crow far or near, I think to myself, "There is one of us well, at any rate"—and with a sudden gush return to my senses.

We had a remarkable sunset one day last November. I was walking in a meadow, the source of a small brook, when the sun at last, just before setting, after a cold gray day, reached a clear stratum in the horizon, and the softest, brightest morning sunlight fell on the dry grass and on the stems of the trees in the opposite horizon and on the leaves

of the shrub oaks on the hillside, while our shadows stretched long over the meadow eastward, as if we were the only motes in its beams. It was such a light as we could not have imagined a moment before, and the air also was so warm and serene that nothing was wanting to make a paradise of that meadow. When we reflected that this was not a solitary phenomenon, never to happen again, but that it would happen forever and ever an infinite number of evenings, and cheer and reassure the latest child that walked there, it was more glorious still.

The sun sets on some retired meadow, where no house is visible, with all the glory and splendor that it lavishes on cities, and perchance as it has never set before—where there is but a solitary marsh hawk to have his wings gilded by it, or only a musquash looks out from his cabin, and there is some little black-veined brook in the midst of the marsh, just beginning to meander, winding slowly round a decaying stump. We walked in so pure and bright a light, gilding the withered grass and leaves, so softly and serenely bright, I thought I had never bathed in such a golden flood, without a ripple or a murmur to it. The west side of every wood and rising ground gleamed like the boundary of Elysium, and the sun on our backs seemed like a gentle herdsman driving us home at evening.

So we saunter toward the Holy Land, till one day the sun shall shine more brightly than ever he has done, shall perchance shine into our minds and hearts, and light up our whole lives with a great awakening light, as warm and serene and golden as on a bankside in autumn.

THE CALL OF THE WILD
BY: ROBERT W. SERVICE

Have you gazed on naked grandeur
where there's nothing else to gaze on,
Set places and drop curtain scenes galore,
Big mountains heaved to heaven,
which the blinding sunsets blazon,
Black canyons where the rapids rip and roar?
Have you swept the visioned valley
with the green stream streaking through it,
Searched the Vastness for a something you have lost?
Have you strung your soul to silence?
Then for God's sake go and do it;
Hear the challenge, learn the lesson, pay the cost.

Have you wandered in the wilderness,
the sagebrush desolation,
The bunch-grass levels where the cattle graze?
Have you whistled bits of rag-time
at the end of all creation,
And learned to know the desert's little ways?
Have you camped upon the foothills,
have you galloped o'er the ranges,
Have you roamed the arid sun-lands
through and through?
Have you chummed up with the mesa?
Do you know its moods and changes?
Then listen to the Wild -- it's calling you.

Have you known the Great White Silence,
not a snow-gemmed twig aquiver?
(Eternal truths that shame our soothing lies).
Have you broken trail on snowshoes?
mushed your huskies up the river,
Dared the unknown, led the way, and clutched the prize?
Have you marked the map's void spaces,
mingled with the mongrel races,
Felt the savage strength of brute in every thew?
And though grim as hell the worst is,
can you round it ~~off~~ off with curses?
Then hearken to the Wild -- it's wanting you.

Have you suffered, starved and triumphed,
groveled down, yet grasped at glory,
Grown bigger in the bigness of the whole?
"Done things" just for the doing,
letting babblers tell the story,
Seeing through the nice veneer the naked soul?
Have you seen God in His splendors,
heard the text that nature renders?
(You'll never hear it in the family pew).
The simple things, the true things,
the silent men who do things --
Then listen to the Wild -- it's calling you.

They have cradled you in custom,
they have primed you with their preaching,
they have soaked you in convention
through and through;
They have put you in a showcase;
you're a credit to their teaching --
But can't you hear the Wild?
-- it's calling you.
Let us probe the silent places,
let us ~~seek~~ weekwhat luck betide us;
Let us journey to a lonely land I know.
There's a whisper on the night wind,
there's a star agleam to guide us,
And the Wild is calling, calling...let us go.

* * *

excerpt from LEAVES OF GRASS
by WALT WHITMAN

Who goes there? Hankering, gross, mystical, nude;
How is it I extract strength from the beef I eat?

What is a man anyhow? what am I? what are you?

All I mark as my own you shall offset it with your own,
Else it were time lost listening to me.

Why should I pray? why should I venerate and be
ceremonious?

Having pried through the strata, analyzed to a hair,
counsel'd with doctors and calculated close,
I find no sweeter fat than sticks to my own bones.

In all people I see myself, none more and not one a barley-
corn less,
And the good or bad I say of myself I say of them.
I know I am solid and sound,
To me the converging objects of the universe perpetually
flow,
All are written to me, and I must get what the writing
means.

I know I am deathless,
I know this orbit of mine cannot be swept by a carpenter's
compass,
I know I shall not pass like a child's carlacue cut with a
burnt stick at night.

I know I am august,
I do not trouble my spirit to vindicate itself or be
understood,
I see that the elementary laws never apologize,
(I reckon I behave no prouder than the level I plant my
house by, after all.)

I exist as I am, that is enough,
If no other in the world be aware I sit content,
And if each and all be aware I sit content.

One world is aware and by far the largest to me, and that is
myself,
And whether I come to my own to-day or in ten thousand
or ten million years,
I can cheerfully take it now, or with equal cheerfulness I
can wait.