PEOPLE MENTIONED IN CAPE COD:

LIEUTENANT CHARLES HENRY DAVIS

“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY
Cape Cod: The light-house keeper said that when the wind blew strong on to the shore, the waves ate fast into the bank, but when it blew off they took no sand away; for in the former case the wind heaped up the surface of the water next to the beach, and to preserve its equilibrium a strong undertow immediately set back again into the sea which carried with it the sand and whatever else was in the way, and left the beach hard to walk on; but in the latter case the undertow set on, and carried the sand with it, so that it was particularly difficult for shipwrecked men to get to land when the wind blew on to the shore, but easier when it blew off. This undertow, meeting the next surface wave on the bar which itself has made, forms part of the dam over which the latter breaks, as over an upright wall. The sea thus plays with the land holding a sand-bar in its mouth awhile before it swallows it, as a cat plays with a mouse; but the fatal gripe is sure to come at last. The sea sends its rapacious east wind to rob the land, but before the former has got far with its prey, the land sends its honest west wind to recover some of its own. But, according to Lieutenant Davis, the forms, extent, and distribution of sand-bars and banks are principally determined, not by winds and waves, but by tides.
January 16, Friday: Charles Henry Davis was born in Boston.

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT
August 12, Tuesday: Charles Henry Davis had spent only two years at Harvard College when he enlisted in the US Navy as a midshipman. Between sea cruises he would return to his alma mater for the study of mathematics.

Hector Berlioz’s 1st essay appeared in Le Corsaire.

In Newport, Rhode Island, Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

3rd day 12th of 8 M / I feel disposed to insert that this morning my mind has been favour’d with the fresh arisings of life to my comfort. — Tho’ much occupied in outward concerns — I have taken a survey of my early life & the rememberance of divers of my companions, now numbered with the dead was preciously revived

LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?
— NO, THAT’S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN’S STORIES.
LIFE ISN’T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.

1. Since this was the year of the Great Rebellion at Harvard, one may legitimately suspect that there may have been a reason for this abrupt alteration in young Davis’s life trajectory.
During this year and the following one, Midshipman Charles Henry Davis was serving on board the frigate USS United States in the Pacific Ocean.

**Do I have your attention? Good.**
Midshipman Charles Henry Davis received the first of many promotions, to Passed Midshipman.

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT
From this year into 1833, Passed Midshipman Charles Henry Davis would be serving aboard the sloop USS Ontario.

THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT
Passed Midshipman Charles Henry Davis was promoted to Lieutenant and reassigned to the USS Vincennes.

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT
During this year and the following one, Lieutenant Charles Henry Davis would be serving on board the USS Independence.
From this year into 1849, Lieutenant Charles Henry Davis would be working as part of the United States Coast Survey on board the USS Nantucket. He would discover the existence of a previously uncharted shoal that had been causing shipwrecks off the coast of New York. During his service in this first comprehensive survey of the coasts of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Maine, including the intricate Nantucket shoals area, he was also responsible for researching tides and currents, and acted as an inspector at a number of naval shipyards.2

2. A specie native to the coasts of New England and Nova Scotia, the “swimming anemone” that can detach itself from its rock when it senses the approach of a predator, has been designated as the Rhodactinia davisii.
According to J. Lyndon Shanley’s THE MAKING OF WALDEN (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1957, page 30), it was undoubtedly in the 1850-1851 period that Henry Thoreau went back through his WALDEN manuscript and interlined in Draft B and Draft C all or most of the quotations from Chinese and Indian sources.

At this point the first word of the manuscript became the word “When,” the word which would eventually be referred to, by Professor Robert M. Thorson, as “a white lie”:

WALDEN: 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.

The very first word in WALDEN is a white lie. “When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods.” In REVISING MYTHOLOGIES, Stephen Adams and Donald Ross build on the previous work of Lyndon Shanley to document—in excruciating detail—that the bulk of the final version of WALDEN was written after Thoreau left the pond, with “most of the important changes occurring after 1852.” They further contend that the book has two separate narratives, the first being the “false economics of Concord” leading to “spiritual anesthesia,” and the second being the “basic poetic metaphor” of organismic. For my purposes, this is a fancy way of saying that WALDEN—Part I was early and has little to do with natural science. And that WALDEN—Part II is late and has everything to do with it.

The essayist who wrote Part I lived at the pond and spent much of his time there writing A WEEK and other works with neoclassical and transcendental themes. The field scientist who wrote Part II lived with his parents in town, sojourned widely over miles of territory each day, and—in early 1852—decided to use his observations of natural phenomena to upgrade his dormant WALDEN manuscript, most of which was then social critique. During this later stage, Thoreau’s modus operandi was to walk away from the village each afternoon, move outward into nature in whatever direction his inner compass suggested, and then drench himself in outdoor sensations until something caught his attention. At that point, his intellect would automatically
THE PEOPLE OF CAPE COD:  

engage, scientifically at first, and then poetically. On those days, Walden Pond was only one of many bright stars in the broader galaxy of his sojourning space. But on those nights and subsequent mornings—when sitting at his desk in his garret on Main Street—the pond became a potent literary black hole that drew everything inward and downward from his broader experience, concentrating the results.

This is “reaching” a little bit, I fear, for rather than categorizing that 1st word “When” as a lie, we might prefer to say that at the point at which Thoreau changed the initial sentence of his Draft B to begin with the word “When”—sometime before or during Summer 1849—the bulk of the pages of the manuscript had in fact been Draft A with some Draft B additions, and Draft A dates at the very latest to September 1847 while Thoreau was moving back from his shanty at the pond, into the loft room of the Thoreau family’s boardinghouse in town. In other words, when it was written in pencil on this sheet of paper, it had been in no sense anything but the literal truth. We might as well add that the sentence “I lived there two years and two months” was another such “white lie,” because in very fact the author had lived there two years, two months, and two days. Rather than categorize this word “When” as a lie, therefore, we might better categorize it as something which through oversight would later fall through the cracks, neglecting to get itself updated as the manuscript grew and grew under Thoreau’s nurturing hand. (I am a bit sensitized to this word “lie” because Professor Walter Harding in his manifestly defective annotated edition of WALDEN had considered Thoreau’s words “a mile from any neighbor” to have constituted a material falsehood because—without offering any corroboration whatever—he was opinioning as of 1995 something new that no commentator however discerning had ever before noticed, that the Irish families of the laborers who had created the railroad embankments and tracks must have still been in residence in their shanties alongside the tracks within conversational hearing of Thoreau’s shanty.)

US Navy Lieutenant Charles Henry Davis’s “A Memoir upon the Geological Action of Tidal and Other Currents of the Ocean” saw publication in the MEMOIRS OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES (Boston), 4th series, part I (1849-1850), on pages 117-156:

CAPE COD: The light-house keeper said that when the wind blowed strong on to the shore, the waves ate fast into the bank, but when it blowed off they took no sand away; for in the former case the wind heaped up the surface of the water next to the beach, and to preserve its equilibrium a strong undertow immediately set back again into the sea which carried with it the sand and whatever else was in the way, and left the beach hard to walk on; but in the latter case the undertow set on, and carried the sand with it, so that it was particularly difficult for shipwrecked men to get to land when the wind blowed on to the shore, but easier when it blowed off. This undertow, meeting the next surface wave on the bar which itself has made, forms part of the dam over which the latter breaks, as over an upright wall. The sea thus plays with the land holding a sand-bar in its mouth awhile before it swallows it, as a cat plays with a mouse; but the fatal gripe is sure to come at last. The sea sends its rapacious east wind to rob the land, but before the former has got far with its prey, the land sends its honest west wind to recover some of its own. But, according to Lieutenant Davis, the forms, extent, and distribution of sand-bars and banks are principally determined, not by winds and waves, but by tides.
After July 29, 1850: Do a little more of that work which you have sometime confessed to be good—which you feel that society & your justest judge rightly demands of you— Do what you reprove yourself for not doing. Know that you are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with yourself without reason— Let me say to you & to myself in one breath— Cultivate the tree which you have found to bear fruit in your soil. Regard not your past failures nor successes—all the past is equally a failure & a success it is a success in as much as it offers you the present opportunity.

Have you not a pretty good thinking faculty—worth more than the rarest gold-watch?— Can you not pass a judgment on something— Does not the stream still rise to its fountain head in you? Go to the Devil & come back again. Dispose of evil— Get punished once for all— Die if you can— Depart— Exchange your salvation for a glass of water: If you know of any risk to run—run it. If you dont know of any enjoy confidence. Do not trouble yourself to be religious you will never get a thank you for it. If you can drive a nail & have any nails to drive drive them. If you have any experiments you would like to try—try them—now’s your chance. Do not entertain doubts if they are not agreeable to you. Send them to the tavern. Do not eat unless you are hungry— There’s no need of it. Do not read the newspapers. Improve every opportunity to be melancholy— Be as melancholy as you can be and note the result— Rejoice with fate. As for health, consider yourself well— & mind your business—

Who knows but you are dead already? Do not stop to be scared yet—there are more terrible things to come—and ever to come— Men die of fright & live of confidence.— Be not simply obedient like the vegetables—set up your own Ebeneezer— Of man’s “dis obaedience & the fruit”— &c Do not engage to find things as you think they are. Do what nobody can do for you— Omit to do every thing else.

According to Lieutenant Davis’ the forms extent & distribution of sand bars & banks are principally determined by tides—not by wind & waves. On sand bars recently elevated above the level of the ocean fresh water is obtained by digging a foot or two. It is very common for wells near the shore to rise & fall with the tide— It is an interesting fact that the low sand bars in the midst of the ocean, even those which are laid bare at low tide are reservoirs of fresh water at which the thirsty mariner can supply himself. Perchance like huge sponges they hold the rain & dew which falls on them and which by capillary attraction is prevented from mingling with the surrounding brine.

It is not easy to make our lives respectable to ourselves by any course of activity— We have repeatedly to withdraw ourselves into our shells of thought like the tortoise—somewhat helplessly— & yet there is even more than philosophy in that. I do not love to entertain doubts & questions. I am sure that my acquaintances mistake me— I am not the man they take me for. On a little nearer view they would find me out. They ask my advice on high matters— but they do not even know how poorly on’t I am for hats & shoes— I have hardly a shift. Just as shabby as I am in my outward apparel aye & more lamentably shabby, for nakedness is not so bad a condition after all am I in my inward apparel. If I should turn myself inside out my rags & meanness would appear. I am something to him that made me, undoubtedly, but not much to any other that he has made. All I can say is that I live & breathe & have my thoughts. What is peculiar in the life of a man consists not in his obedience but in his opposition to his instincts—in one direction or another he strives to live a super natural life.

Would it not be worth the while to discover nature in Milton? Be native to the universe. I too love Concord best— But I am glad when I discover in oceans & wilderne ses far away the materials out of which a million Concord’s can be made. Indeed unless I discover them I am lost myself. That there too I am at home. Nature is as far from me as God.— And sometimes I have thought to go west after her. Though the city is no more attractive to me than ever—yet I see less difference between a city & and a some dismallest swamp than formerly— It is a swamp too dismal & dreary even for me— I would as lief find a few owls & frogs & mosquitoes less.

I prefer even a more cultivated place—free from miasma & crocodiles— & I will take my choice. From time to time I overlook the promised land but I do not feel that I am travelling toward it. The moment I begin to look these men & institutions get out of the way that I may see. I see nothing permanent formerly— It is a swamp too dismal & dreary even for me— I would as lief find a few owls & frogs & mosquitoes less. The heaven-born Numa or Lycurgus or Solon gravely makes laws to regulate the exportation of Tobacco. Will a divine legislator—legislate for slaves or to regulate the exportation of Tobacco— What shall a state say for itself at the last day in which this is a principal production?

What have grave—not to say divine legislators—Numas—Lycurguses—Solons—to do with the exportation or the importation of Tobacco. There was a man appealed to me the other day—“Can you give me a chaw of tobacco?”— I legislated for him. Suppose you were to submit the question to any son of God in what state would you get it again?

Do not waste any reverence on my attitude— I manage to sit up where I have dropped. Except as you reverence the evil one—or rather the evil myriad. As for missing friends—fortunate perhaps is he who has any to miss— whose place a thought will not supply— I have an ideal friend in whose place actual persons sometimes stand for a season The last I may often miss—but the first I recover when I am myself again— What if we do miss one another—have we not agreed—have we not agreed upon a Rendezvous? While each travels his own way through the wood with serene & inexpressible joy—though it be on his hands and knees over the rocks & fallen trees—he cannot but be on the
right way—There is no wrong way to him. I have found myself as well off when I have fallen into a quagmire—as in an arm chair in the most hospitable house.—The prospect was pretty much the same. Without anxiety let us wander on admiring whatever beauty the woods exhibit.

Do you know on what bushes a little peace faith & contentment grow—Go aberrying early & late after them. Miss our friends! It is not easy to get rid of them. We shall miss our bodies directly. A man who missed his friends at a turn in the woods—went on bountifully {Three-fourths page missing} ge of Probate—As to conforming outwardly—and living your own life inwardly—I have not a very high opinion of that course—Do not let your right hand know what your left hand does in that line of business. I have no doubt it will prove a failure. Just as successfully can you walk against a sharp steel edge—which divides you cleanly {Three-fourths page missing}

The wind through the blind—just now sounded like the baying of a distant hound—somewhat plaintive and melodious.

The rail-road cuts make cliffs for swallows.

Getting into Patchogue late one night in an oyster-boat, there was a drunken Dutchman aboard whose wit reminded me of Shakspeare. When we came to leave the Beach our boat was aground and we were detained 3 hours waiting for the tide—In the meanwhile two of the fishermen took an extra dram at the Beach house—Then they stretched themselves on the sea-weed in the sun to sleep off their debauch—One was an inconceivably broadfaced Dutchman—a rather young man—but oh of such a peculiar breadth & heavy look—I should not know whether to call it more ridiculous or sublime. You would say that he had humbled himself so much that he was beginning to be exalted. An indescribable Mynheerish stupidity— I was less disgusted by their filthiness & vulgarity because I was compelled to look on them as animals—as swine in their sty. For the whole voyage they lay flat on their backs on the bottom of the boat—in the bilge water—& wet with each bailing—half insensible & wallowing in their vomit— But ever and anon when aroused by the rude kicks or curses of the skipper—the Dutchman who never lost his wit nor equanimity—though snoring & rolling in the vomit produced by his debauch—blurted forth some happy repartee like an illuminated swine. It was the earthiest slickest wit I ever heard. The countenance was one of a million. It was unmistakeable Dutch. In the midst of a million faces of other races it could not be mistaken. An indescribable Mynheerish stupidity— I was less disgusted by their filthiness & vulgarity because I was compelled to look on them as animals—as swine in their sty. For the whole voyage they lay flat on their backs on the bottom of the boat—in the bilge water—& wet with each bailing—half insensible & wallowing in their vomit— But ever and anon when aroused by the rude kicks or curses of the skipper—the Dutchman who never lost his wit nor equanimity—though snoring & rolling in the vomit produced by his debauch—blurted forth some happy repartee like an illuminated swine. It was the earthiest slickest wit I ever heard. The countenance was one of a million. It was unmistakable Dutch. In the midst of a million faces of other races it could not be mistaken. It told of Amsterdams. I kept wracking my brains to conceive how he ever heard. The countenance was one of a million. It was unmistakeable Dutch. In the midst of a million faces of other races it could not be mistaken.

The wind through the blind—just now sounded like the baying of a distant hound—somewhat plaintive and melodious.

I have been impressed by one or two men in their cups. There was really a divinity stirred within them—So that that identical hole was a first rate place for eels—And again he roused himself at the right time & declared what luck he had once had in another place which we were floating over in the dark. At last he suddenly stepped on to another boat which was moored to the shore—with a divine ease & sureness saying “Well—good night—take care of yourselves—I can’t be with you any longer.” He was one of the few remarkable men whom I have met. I have been impressed by one or two men in their cups. There was really a divinity stirred within them—So that in their case I have reverence the drunken—as savages the insane man. So stupid that he could never be intoxicated— When I said “you have had a hard time of it today” he answered with—indescribable good humor—out of the very midst of his debauch with watery eyes—“Well it does’nt happen every day.” It was happening then. He had taken me aboard on his back the boat lying a rod from the shore—before I knew his condition. In that identical hole was a first rate place for eels—And again he roused himself at the right time & declared what luck he had once had in another place which we were floating over in the dark. At last he suddenly stepped on to another boat which was moored to the shore—with a divine ease & sureness saying “Well—good night—take care of yourselves—I can’t be with you any longer.” He was one of the few remarkable men whom I have met. I have been impressed by one or two men in their cups. There was really a divinity stirred within them—So that in their case I have reverence the drunken—as savages the insane man. So stupid that he could never be intoxicated— When I said “you have had a hard time of it today” he answered with—indescribable good humor—out of the very midst of his debauch with watery eyes—“Well it does’nt happen every day.” It was happening then. 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He had taken me aboard on his back the boat lying a rod from the shore—before I knew his condition. In the darkness our skipper steered with a pole on the bottom—for an oysterman knows the bottom of his bay as well as the shores. and can tell where he is by the soundings.

There was a glorious lurid sunset tonight accompanied with many sombre clouds—and when I looked into the west with my head turned—the grass had the same fresh green—and the distant herbage & foliage in the horizon the same dark blue—& the clouds & sky the same bright colors beautifully mingled & dissolving into one another that I have seen in pictures of tropical landscapes & skies. Pale saffron skies with faint fishes of rosy clouds dissolving in them. A blood stained sky. I regretted that I had an impatient companion. What shall we make of the fact that—you have only to stand on your head a moment to be enchanted with the beauty of the landscape. I met with a man on the beach who told me that when he wanted to jump over a brook he held up one leg a certain height, and then if a line from his eye through his toe touched the opposite bank—he knew that he could jump it. I asked him how he knew when he held his leg at the right angle— oh he said he knew the hitch very well— An Irishman told me that he held up one leg and if he could bring his toe in a range with his eye & the opposite bank he knew that he could jump it— Why, I told him, I can blot out a star with my toe—but I would not engage to jump the distance It then appeared that he knew when he had got his leg at the right height by a certain hitch there was in it. I suggested that he should connect his two ankles with a string.
Lieutenant Charles Henry Davis was promoted to Commander and given the command of the *USS St. Mary’s*, an older sailing vessel that had been one of the fastest warships of those times.\(^4\)
While commanding the *USS St. Mary’s*, Commander Charles Henry Davis was ordered to proceed to Baker Island and collect samples of nitrogen-rich guano for fertilizer. He would become perhaps the first American to set foot there since the United States annexed the island in 1857. Although Commodore William Mervine had previously approached the island, he had considered it to be inaccessible (ground inspection would indicate that it had been landed on prior to 1857, by whalers).

Baker Island is near the equator in the South Pacific. It is a low featureless island approximately one and one half square kilometers in extent above the waterline. Vegetation consists of four kinds of grasses and some low shrubs and weedy herbs. An emergency landing strip has now been cleared, and some radio relay towers erected.

The Guano Act of August 18, 1856 had provided that if any citizen of the United States were to take peaceful possession of any island, rock, or key anywhere on the globe, not within the lawful jurisdiction of any other government, containing a deposit of guano, that piece of land would hereafter be considered to appertain to the United States. From 1850 to 1891, Americans would work this deposit and one on nearby Howland Island. With the advent of naval aviation in 1935, a settlement named “Meyerton” would be attempted (four persons), but during WWII the island would need of course to be evacuated. There is a small cemetery and some remnants of structures on the west coast of the island. In 1964 a number of feral cats were eradicated. Now the island is visited annually by representatives of the US Fish and Wildlife Service aboard a vessel of the US Coast Guard.

WHAT I’M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF
Commander Charles Henry Davis was promoted to Captain.
May 9, Friday: The Springfield, Massachusetts Daily Republican noted Henry Thoreau’s demise:

Henry D. Thoreau, the recluse author, died of consumption at Concord, 7th inst. aged 44 years. His work entitled “Walden” and his magazine writings evinced great originality and keenness as a student of nature. He was a favorite disciple of Ralph Waldo Emerson.

(It intrigues me, that an obituary can be published by the popular press in such manner as to bear a suppressed final summation: “So that’s it, that’s all there was, that’s everything it amounted to.” And, nobody needs to be offended.)

David Hunter, the commander of the federal government’s Department of the South, proclaimed the freedom of all the slaves of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

Friend Daniel Ricketson went into Boston to Dunshee’s to secure the ambrotype which he had had taken of his friend during his visit in August 1861, and then arranged as precious objects the 27 letters which Henry had written to him.

Captain Charles Henry Davis became the Acting Flag Officer in command of the Western Gunboat Flotilla.

May 10, Saturday: The Bunker-Hill Aurora and Boston Mirror noted Henry Thoreau’s demise:

Henry D. Thoreau, a well-known writer and author of Walden, &c. died at Concord, of consumption. The funeral services took place yesterday afternoon at Rev Mr Reynold’s church, when a brief eulogistic address was pronounced by Mr Emerson, his friend and neighbor.

Captain Charles Henry Davis’s Western Gunboat Flotilla fought a short battle with Confederate ships on the Mississippi River at Plum Point Bend. Caught unready for battle, two of the Union ships were badly damaged and had to be run into shoal water to keep them from sinking. The Confederate vessels escaped with only minor damage.
June 6, Friday: Captain Charles Henry Davis’s Western Gunboat Flotilla took part in a river action near Memphis which resulted in the sinking or capture of seven of eight Confederate gunboats and rams, sustaining damage to but one Union vessel. Afterward it was Captain Davis who received the surrender of the city of Memphis.

Waldo Emerson read in the Reverend Henry Hart Milman’s translation of Nala and Damayanti, a book bequeathed to him by Henry Thoreau.

July: Captain Charles Henry Davis’s Western Gunboat Flotilla joined with the fleet of Flag Officer David G. Farragut for an attack on Vicksburg, Mississippi, but were forced to withdraw.

The Seven Days’ Battles. Between June 26th and July 2d, Union and Confederate forces fought a series of battles: Mechanicsville (June 26-27), Gaines’s Mill (June 27), Savage’s Station (June 29), Frayser’s Farm (June 30), and Malvern Hill (July 1). On July 2d the Confederates withdrew to Richmond, ending the Peninsular Campaign.

August 16, Saturday: At St. Paul, Minnesota, a shipment of gold coins amounting to $71,000 belatedly arrived, to make that year’s annuity payment to the Dakota.

Franklin Benjamin Sanborn married a 2d time, with his cousin Louisa Augusta Leavitt of Woburn, Massachusetts. The wedding took place in Boston at the Reverend James Freeman Clarke’s Church of the Disciples.

On this day and the following one there was fighting at Lone Jack. From this day until the 27th, Captain Charles Henry Davis’s Western Gunboat Flotilla would be cooperating with the Army expedition up the Yazoo River and would successfully seize Confederate supplies and munitions. Afterward Captain Davis would be made Chief of the Bureau of Navigation in Washington DC.
February 7, Saturday: Captain Charles Henry Davis was promoted to Rear Admiral.
Since 1845 there had been a time ball above the US Naval Observatory, to announce astronomical high noon by the visual signal of its being rapidly lowered. By the end of the American Civil War, however, the observatory’s clocks had been linked via telegraph with all of the firehouses in Washington DC in such manner that an alarm would sound for the firemen three times a day.

Until 1867, Rear Admiral Charles Henry Davis would be serving as Superintendent of the observatory.
Rear Admiral Charles Henry Davis served as Commander in Chief, South Atlantic Squadron, with the USS Guerriere as his flagship.
Rear Admiral Charles Henry Davis returned to Washington DC and became Commandant of Norfolk Navy Yard. In his senior years he would serve on the Lighthouse Board as well as at the US Naval Observatory.
February 18, Sunday: Charles Henry Davis died in Washington DC.  

“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FANTASIZING: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY

5. Torpedo Boat USS Davis (TB-12), Destroyer USS Davis (DD-65), and Destroyer USS Davis (DD-395) have since been named in his honor.
THE PEOPLE OF CAPE COD:

CHARLES HENRY DAVIS

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

- Remark by character “Garin Stevens”
in William Faulkner’s INTRUDER IN THE DUST

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

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

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