

**THOMAS MERTON**





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1915

January 31, Sunday: In an attack to cover the movement of troops, the [Germans](#) fired 18,000 tear gas shells at the Russians at Bolimov. However, freezing temperatures neutralized the gas and winds dispersed it, and no harmful effect was felt (this was the 1st use of gas in the war).

[Thomas Merton](#) was born in Prades, Pyrénées-Orientales, France to the artist Ruth Jenkins, an American [Quaker](#). The infant would be baptized in the Church of England in accordance with the wishes of the father, painter Owen Merton.

The British admiralty authorized its captains to raise a neutral (most likely US) flag if they were in danger.

**NEVER READ AHEAD! TO APPRECIATE JANUARY 31ST, 1915 AT ALL ONE MUST APPRECIATE IT AS A TODAY (THE FOLLOWING DAY, TOMORROW, IS BUT A PORTION OF THE UNREALIZED FUTURE AND IFY AT BEST).**



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1935

[Dean Elbert Russell](#)'s A BOOK OF CHAPEL TALKS (Nashville, Tennessee: Cokesbury Press).

*It was within the period of my early teaching at Earlham that I began to write moralizing stories, which literary form I developed later in chapel talks and in the "Parson Stories." It was after my return from Chicago University that I did my best work in this form. After I went to Woolman School I wrote a few, but the inspiration of the college chapel was lacking. When I finally went to Duke University, I had ample opportunity to speak in the University Chapel, but the freedom and intimacy of a small college chapel were lacking, and I put my best efforts in developing the literary form of the sermonette, which finally resulted in two books of Chapel Talks. The Parson Stories were never published in book form.*

[Thomas Merton](#), whose deceased mother had been a [Quaker](#) in Flushing, New York, attended a Friends' silent meeting for worship there. In THE SEVEN STOREY MOUNTAIN he would describe how during the silent worship of a meeting he attended, he was entering "somewhat superficially, into my own soul, and some nebulous good resolutions began to take shape there," when a middle-aged woman pulled from her purse a snapshot of the Lion of Lucerne and rose to show it around while talking about her visit to Switzerland. He left saying to himself, "They are like all the rest. In other churches it is the minister who hands out the commonplaces, and here it is liable to be just anybody." Although it would be impossible for a faith community to avoid all such "mediocrity," he concluded that the Quakers were not going to become more than what their name implied, a "Society of Friends." Consulting the writings of Friend [William Penn](#), he noticed that they were approximately "as supernatural as a Montgomery Ward catalog."

One Sunday I went to the Quaker meeting house in Flushing, where Mother had once sat and meditated with the Friends. I sat down there too, in a deep pew in the back near a window. The place was about half full. The people were mostly middle-aged or old, and there was nothing that distinguished them in any evident way from the congregation in a Methodist or a Baptist or an Episcopalian or any other Protestant church, except that they sat silent, waiting for the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. I liked that. I liked the silence. It was peaceful. In it, my shyness began to die down, and I ceased to look about and criticize the people, and entered, somewhat superficially, into my own soul and some nebulous good resolutions began to take shape there.

But it did not get very far, for presently one of the middle-aged ladies thought the Holy Ghost was after her to get up and talk. I secretly suspected that she had come to Meeting all prepared to make a speech anyway, for she reached into her handbag, as she stood up, and cried out in a loud earnest voice:—"When I was in Switzerland I took this snapshot of the famous Lion of Lucerne..." With that she pulled out a picture. Sure enough, it was the famous Lion of Lucerne. She held it up and tried to show it around to the Friends, at the same time explaining that she thought it was a splendid exemplification of Swiss courage and manliness and patience and all the other virtues of the watchmaking Swiss which she mentioned and which I have now forgotten.

The Friends accepted it in patience, without enthusiasm or

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resentment. But I went out of the meeting house saying to myself: "They are like all the rest. In other churches it is the minister who hands out the commonplaces, and here it is liable to be just anybody."

He "lost interest in the [Quakers](#)" and a few days after the attack at Pearl Harbor (after been turned aside by the military on account of bad teeth!) would wind up at the gate of the Cisterian Order of the Strict Observance at Gethsemani, Kentucky. He had been glad to become an American because this was the land of [Henry David Thoreau](#) and Emily Dickinson, and would claim that he was going into the silent service there in Kentucky in 1941 for the same reason that Thoreau had gone in 1845 to the shore of Walden Pond: "to front only the essential facts of life."



**ESSENCE IS BLUR. SPECIFICITY,  
THE OPPOSITE OF ESSENCE,**



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**IS OF THE NATURE OF TRUTH.**



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1941

December 7 (7:40AM Honolulu time; December 8th in [Tokyo](#)), Sunday, a day that shall live in infamy: Admiral Husband Kimmel was giving his sailors one last weekend of liberty so they would have a chance to say farewell to their loved ones, and his fleet was all prepared to steam out of Pearl Harbor on Monday, December 8th, to seek a showdown Trafalgar-like battle with the Japanese fleet, destroying its offensive capabilities. The admiral's battle plan was 113 pages long and had already been approved by Harold Stark, Chief of Naval Operations.

But that's not what happened, is it? The Japanese were a day ahead of us. (I'm reminded of the time one of our draught horses was sick. Grandpa had a piece of water hose from an old washing machine, hanging out in the barn for just such purposes, and so, to get his horse to take its medicine, he shoved the hose down the horse's throat and poured the medicine down the hose. However, he hadn't gotten that hose far enough down the horse's throat—so the medicine wouldn't go down—so he put his lips to the end of the hose, and went to blow the medicine down the hose. Well, I'll never forget this until the day I die — that horse blew first.)

[Japan](#) attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor, Oahu, and attacked Great Britain, invading Siam and Malaya and occupying the International Settlement at [Shanghai](#). A sneak attack! (Well, but although the Japanese naval forces did not go ashore and take possession of the Kota Baharu airport until later in the day, they actually began to shell the Malayan coast at Kota Baharu and at Singora and Pattani, Thailand an hour and a half prior to the first activity at Pearl Harbor — which is strange behavior indeed for someone who is attempting to sneak up on you in your slumbers!) Soon a [Japanese](#) reply rejecting the United States note of November 26th would be delivered at [Washington DC](#), and Japan would declare a state of war with the United States and Great Britain. Later in the day, the Netherlands East Indies, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Canada would declare war against [Japan](#).

I was on my way to one of the Young Friends' meetings Sunday evening at about seven o'clock when the news of Pearl Harbor came over my car radio. Only a few others arriving there had heard it.

JOHN R. KELLAM



HDT

WHAT?

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Japanese carrier-based horizontal bombers, dive bombers, torpedo bombers, and fighters totaling 360 aircraft from naval Striking Force under Vice Admiral C. Nagumo heavily attacked ships of the United States Pacific Fleet and military installations at Pearl Harbor and other places on Oahu. Four battleships, 1 minelayer, and 1 target ship were sunk; 4 battleships, 3 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 1 seaplane tender, and 1 repair ship were damaged. Navy Yard and Naval Base, Pearl Harbor; Naval Air Station, Ford Island; Naval Patrol Plane Station, Kaneohe; Marine Corps airfield, Ewa; Army airfields Hickam, Wheeler, and Bellows were damaged; 188 Naval and Army aircraft were destroyed.

Killed or missing:

- Navy..... 2,004
- Marine Corps... 108
- Army..... 222

Wounded:

- Navy..... 912
- Marine Corps.... 75
- Army..... 360

[Personnel casualty statistics for the Pearl Harbor attack have been revised several times after evaluation of new data. The figures presented here were compiled in 1955 from official sources.]

Japanese losses:

- 5 *kaiten* suicide submarines
- 28 aircraft
- fewer than 100 men

Two Japanese destroyers shelled Midway Island. Japanese airplanes bombed Singapore, killing 63. Then bombs began to fall in Manila and other targets on Luzon and Davao in the Philippines as well as Guam, Wake Island, Midway, and Hong Kong. Japanese troops took possession of [Shanghai](#), including the buildings of the United States garrison.

United States naval vessels sunk by air attack, Pearl Harbor: [All ships sunk, except *Arizona*, *Oklahoma*, and *Utah*, would subsequently be raised, repaired, and returned to service.]

- Battleship *Oklahoma* (BB-37).
- Battleship *Arizona* (BB-39).
- Battleship *California* (BB-44).
- Battleship *West Virginia* (BB-48).
- Minelayer *Ogala* (CM-4).
- Target ship *Utah* (AG-16).

United States naval vessels damaged, Pearl Harbor:

- Battleship *Nevada* (BB-36).
- Battleship *Pennsylvania* (BB-38).
- Battleship *Tennessee* (BB-43).
- Battleship *Maryland* (BB-46).
- Light cruiser *Raleigh* (CL-7).
- Light cruiser *Honolulu* (CL-48).
- Light cruiser *Helena* (CL-50).
- Destroyer *Cassin* (DD-372).
- Destroyer *Shaw* (DD-373).
- Destroyer *Downes* (DD-375).



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- Seaplane tender *Curtiss* (AV-4).
- Repair ship *Vestal* (AR-4).

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[Director J. Edgar Hoover](#) ordered existing [FBI](#) war plans put into effect and Attorney General Francis Biddle authorized the Bureau to act against dangerous enemy aliens. Local police, in cooperation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation agents, began to round up the Issei leadership of Japanese-American communities both in Hawaii and on the mainland (in today's publicity documents, the Federal Bureau of Investigation unapologetically refers to these community leaders as having amounted to "previously identified aliens who threatened national security," quote unquote).



By 6:30AM the following morning, 736 Issei would be in custody; and within 48 hours, the number would have risen to 1,291. Caught by surprise for the most part, these men would be held with no formal charges and family members would be unable to visit them. Most would spend the war years in enemy-alien internment camps run by the Justice Department.



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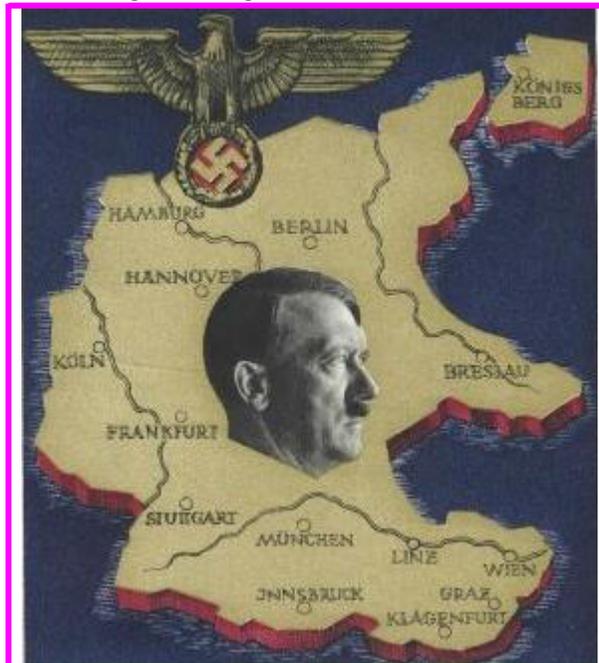
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Within 72 hours the Agents would be working a 24-hour day, at the job of rounding up Americans to take them to detention camps. They would take a total of 3,846 citizens into custody as enemy aliens. Any radio capable of short-wave reception would be seized as an obvious weapon of war, as well as any weapons of any kind, their ammo — and, the records assert, dynamite. (Was some farmer blasting out the stumps in his pasture?)

A message was sent from the Japanese Consul in Budapest to [Tokyo](#): “On the 6th, the American Minister presented to the Government of this country a British Government communique to the effect that a state of war would break out on the 7th.” The communique was the December 5th War Alert from the British Admiralty, which has since disappeared. This triple-priority alert was delivered to [President Franklin Delano Roosevelt](#) personally. The Mid-East British Air Marshall informed Colonel Bonner Fellers on Saturday that he had received a secret signal that in 24 hours America was coming into the war. [Winston Churchill](#) would summarize the message in GRAND ALLIANCE (page 601) as listing the two fleets attacking British targets and “Other Japanese fleets ... also at sea on other tasks” (there were three other Japanese fleets also at sea on these other tasks — those sailing toward Guam, toward the Philippines, and toward Hawaii).



*Führer* [Adolf Hitler](#) issued his Night and Fog decree.



Very early on this morning, two US Marines, an emergency special detail, were stationed outside the door of



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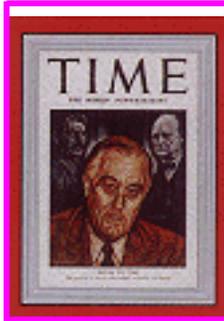
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the [Japanese](#) Naval Attache. Why, was there something special going on?



At 9:30AM Washington time, Stark's aides were begging him to send a warning to Hawaii — but he wouldn't.

At 10AM Washington time, [Commander-in-Chief Franklin Delano Roosevelt](#) read the 14th part of the decoded [Japanese](#) diplomatic declaration of war.



At 10:30AM Washington time, Bratton informed Marshall that he had a most important message (the 15th part of the decoded [Japanese](#) diplomatic declaration of war) and would bring it to Marshall's quarters, but Marshall responded that he would take it at his office.

At 11AM Washington time, [Commander-in-Chief Roosevelt](#) read the 15th part of the decoded [Japanese](#) diplomatic declaration of war, the part setting the time for the declaration of war to be delivered to the State Department as 1PM — which was about dawn Pearl Harbor time.

At 11:15AM Washington time, Navy Secretary Knox was given the 15th part of the decoded [Japanese](#) diplomatic declaration of war —the part setting the time for the declaration of war to be delivered to the State Department as 1PM, which was about dawn Pearl Harbor time— with this note from the Office of Naval Intelligence: “This means a sunrise attack on Pearl Harbor today.” Naval Intelligence also transmitted this prediction to Hull and about eight others, including the White House.



**Who would have thought  
they'd sneak up on us?**

At 11:25AM Washington time, according to Bratton, Marshall reached his office. Marshall's story, later, would

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be that he had been out riding horses that morning — but this cover story would be directly contradicted by the testimony of Harrison, McCollum, and Deane. We know that Marshall perjured himself, because he also testified that he had never received the prior 13 parts of the decoded [Japanese](#) diplomatic declaration of war, and yet we know by his own account that he had read those first 13 parts by 10PM the previous night. Marshall was in no hurry. He read and he re-read all of the 10-minute-long 14-part message (some parts he went over several times), taking more than an hour. Then he refused to use the scrambler phone on his desk, and also refused to send out a warning to Hawaii by the fast, more secure Navy system. Instead, three times he sent Bratton to inquire how long it would take to send out his watered-down warning. When informed that this would require 30 or 40 minutes by Army radio (meaning that his warning couldn't reach Pearl Harbor before the 1PM Washington-time deadline), he seemed satisfied. The warning would be sent out through commercial channels, without any priority identification, and although this message would reach all its other addressees, such as the Philippines and Canal Zone, in a timely manner, at Hawaii it would arrive six hours too late — which, of course, was what was intended.

At 6:30AM an American destroyer collided with a [Japanese](#) minisubmarine within the harbor area.

At 7:55AM, Hawaii time: “AIR RAID PEARL HARBOR. THIS IS NOT DRILL.”



The battleships USS *Arizona* and USS *Oklahoma* were sunk at anchor, killing 1,177 on the one and 415 on the other. Two other battleships, the USS *West Virginia* (105 killed) and the USS *Tennessee*, were damaged and 196 Navy and 65 Army Air Force planes destroyed. A total of 2,341 servicemen and 68 civilians died that day and there were 1,178 wounded. 15 Navy men would receive the Congressional Medal of Honor, 10 posthumously. We were able to shoot down only 29 of the [Japanese](#) aircraft.

At 1:50PM Washington time, Harry Hopkins, the only person with [Commander-in-Chief Roosevelt](#) when he received the phonecall from Knox that gave him the news of the attack, would write in his memoirs that the Commander-in-Chief had been unsurprised, and that he had expressed “great relief,” quote unquote. When Eleanor Roosevelt would write about the day that shall go down in infamy, on page 233 of her THIS I REMEMBER, what she would recollect was that upon Japan's attack her husband became “in a way more

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serene.”



At 3:00PM Washington time, as Harry Hopkins would later recall, “The (war cabinet) conference met in not too tense an atmosphere because I think that all of us believed that in the last analysis the enemy was Hitler ... and that [Japan](#) had given us an opportunity.”

That afternoon the Chief of Naval Operations communicated:

EXECUTE UNRESTRICTED AIR AND SUBMARINE WARFARE AGAINST JAPAN

A full nine hours after the “surprise attack” at Pearl Harbor, [General Douglas MacArthur](#)’s entire air force would get caught by surprise, and wiped out, in the Philippines. The general’s reaction to the news of Pearl Harbor was strange, for a commander who under normal circumstances prided himself upon being supremely effective. Instead of being on the scene and making necessary preparations, he locked himself in his room all morning, refusing to meet with General Breton, his air commander, and refusing to engage the [Japanese](#)



forces on Taiwan. Instead the military record of commands issued reveals that MacArthur issued a series of three conflicting orders, that ensured that his planes were on the ground most of the morning. He kept himself informed of the radar tracking of the Japanese planes as they approached, at 140 miles distance, at 100, at 80, at 60, and even at 20 miles distance, and then issued the last order of this series — obviously in order to ensure that his planes were on the ground where they could be destroyed. We would lose half of all the heavy bombers

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we had in the world. He could only have been acting under orders, since after doing this he retained his command, escaped any reprimand, and got his fourth star, along with, shortly after, the Congressional Medal of Honor. Obviously, it was important that on this day the Japanese succeed in destroying all the capability of our Pacific forces to respond immediately to the attack, putting them in the position of waiting for resupply of war materiel.

At 8:30PM Washington time, the President was commenting to his cabinet, “We have reason to believe that the [Germans](#) have told the [Japanese](#) that if Japan declares war, they will too. In other words, a declaration of war by Japan automatically brings....” (At this point he was interrupted, and we can only wonder what he had had on his mind to say. ;-)

By 9:30PM Washington time, the [FBI](#) was in war mode, on a 24-hour schedule. (It would need to augment its Agent force with National Academy graduates who took only an abbreviated training course. As a result, the total number of agency employees would rise from 7,400 to over 13,000, of whom approximately 4,000 would be Agents, by the end of 1943.)

At midnight, Washington time, [Commander-in-Chief Roosevelt](#) met with CBS newsman Edward R. Murrow, who found him calm. After going over the latest from Pearl Harbor, the President inquired: “Did this surprise you?” Murrow said it had. Roosevelt then, cryptically, went “Maybe you think it didn’t surprise us?”



The Washington conspirators had produced war, exactly as they desired.

**WORLD WAR II**

Why would we have been surprised? Our military men do study the history of warfare, and they knew perfectly well that the [Japanese](#) had, once before, initiated a war with this precisely sort of successful surprise assault upon a fleet:

When entomologist G.W. Kirkaldy provided species descriptions for a series of insects whose names all ended in “-chisme” (pronounced “kiss me”), the guy must have been terminally horny, for among his species names are such as *Polychisme*, *Marichisme* and *Dollischisme*.

By means of a surprise attack of undeclared war, the [Japanese](#) destroyed a Russian

Due to the circumstances of betrayal by their Commander in Chief, the US Marine detachments stationed at Tientsin and Beijing were of course obliged to surrender to the [Japanese](#).

### Shine, Empire

Powerful and armed, neutral in the midst of madness, we might have held the whole world’s balance and stood



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Like a mountain in a wind. We were misled and took sides. We have  
chosen to share the crime and the punishment.

Perhaps justly, being part of Europe. Three thousand miles of ocean would  
hardly wash out the stains  
Of all that mish-mash, blood, language, religion, snobbery. Three thousand  
miles in a ship would not make Americans.

I have often in weak moments thought of this people as something higher  
than the natural run of the earth.  
I was quite wrong; we are lower. We are the people who hope to win wars  
with money as we win elections.

Hate no one. Roosevelt's intentions *were* good, and Hitler is a patriot. They  
have split the planet into two mill-stones  
That will grind small and bloody; but still let us keep some dignity, these  
days are tragic, and fight without hating.

It is war, and no man can see an end of it. We must put freedom away and  
stiffen into bitter empire.  
All Europe was hardly worth the precarious freedom of one of our states:  
what will her ashes fetch?

If I were hunting in the Ventana canyons again with my strong sons, and to  
sleep under stars,  
I should be happy again. It is not time for happiness. Happy the blind, the  
witless, the dead.

Now, thoroughly compromised, we aim at world rule, like Assyria, Rome,  
Britain, Germany, to inherit those hoards  
Of guilt and doom. I am American, what can I say but again, "Shine,  
perishing republic?" ... Shine, empire.

— [Robinson Jeffers](#)



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As the Red Army attacked Tikhvin, near Leningrad, the [Germans](#) retired to defensive positions before Moscow on a line Kursk-Orel-Medyn-Rzhev.

Areas ceded by Finland to the USSR on March 12, 1940 were reintegrated into Finland.

[Thomas Merton](#), who had “lost interest in the [Quakers](#),” would attempt to enlist in the military after the attack at Pearl Harbor only to find himself rejected on account of bad teeth. (A few days after this rejection, he would wind up at the gate of the Cisterian Order of the Strict Observance at Gethsemani, Kentucky. He had been glad to become an American because this was the land of [Henry David Thoreau](#) and Emily Dickinson, and would claim that he was going into the silent service there in Kentucky in 1941 for the same reason that Thoreau had gone in 1845 to the shore of Walden Pond: “to front only the essential facts of life.”)<sup>1</sup>



More than 34,000,000 male United States citizens would be registered for the military draft. Of those 34 million, an estimated 72,000 would apply for [conscientious objector](#) status. Approximately 6,000 of those 72,000 applicants for “[CO](#)” status would, like [Friend John R. Kellam](#), be imprisoned. Considering that warfare was not a proper path toward peace was going to constitute a sacrifice — your local draft board made up of your fellow citizens was going to ensure that there would be severe consequences, that this was an attitude that was going to generate not only persistent accusations of cowardice but also as great as possible a level of personal unsafety.

**YOUR GARDEN-VARIETY ACADEMIC HISTORIAN INVITES YOU TO CLIMB ABOARD A HOVERING TIME MACHINE TO SKIM IN METATIME BACK ACROSS THE GEOLOGY OF OUR PAST TIMESLICES, WHILE OFFERING UP A GARDEN VARIETY OF COGENT ASSESSMENTS OF OUR PROGRESSION. WHAT A LOAD OF CRAP! YOU SHOULD REFUSE THIS HELICOPTERISH**



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OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORICAL PAST, FOR IN THE REAL WORLD THINGS HAPPEN ONLY AS THEY HAPPEN. WHAT THIS SORT WRITES AMOUNTS, LIKE MERE “SCIENCE FICTION,” MERELY TO “HISTORY FICTION”: IT’S NOT WORTH YOUR ATTENTION.

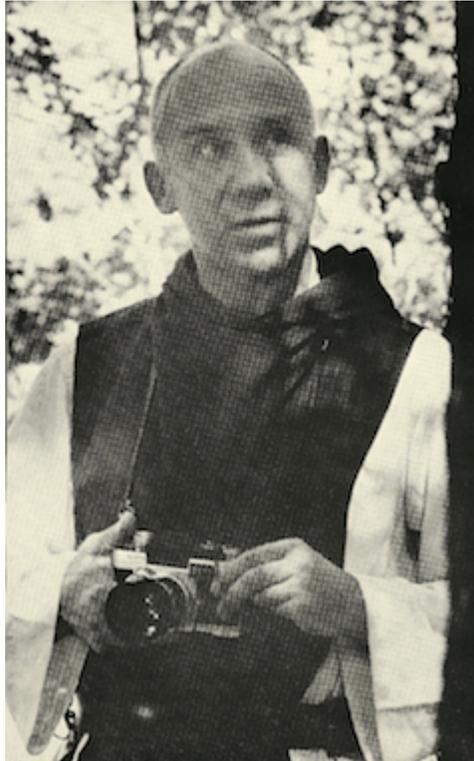
1. As a result of [Roosevelt](#)’s trick to get us into war, 2,403 American lives were lost at Pearl Harbor, and 1,178 Americans received nonfatal wounds, inclusive of our civilian casualties.



Eighteen of our ships were sunk or seriously damaged, including 5 battleships — we visit the USS *Arizona* today, with waving flags, to restore our patriotism. Of our aircraft, 188 were destroyed and 162 damaged. Out of their raiding force of 31 ships and 353 raiding planes, which in this way “achieved complete surprise,” the [Japanese](#) lost only 64 men, 29 planes, and 5 *kaiten* suicide submarines. The Commander-in-Chief’s trick to get us into war has recently been justified by certain historians, on the grounds of necessity: their argument is that we needed to get involved in this war but the American public was, unfortunately, reluctant, and thus we needed to be persuaded by being tricked in some manner. What these historians have missed is that the President had succeeded in two linked objectives rather than one objective on this day: not only had he obtained a morally righteous position by way of a “sneak attack” posturing, but also he had obtained, through the cooperation of [General Douglas MacArthur](#), adequate destruction of our ability to respond in the Pacific to ensure that, as he desired, Japan would be forced to take a back seat and wait to be destroyed until after our VE-day victory over [Germany](#) (“...in the last analysis the enemy was Hitler...”).

1948

October 11, Monday: THE SEVEN STOREY MOUNTAIN by [Thomas Merton](#) was published by Harcourt Brace.



“The Young Guard,” Part 1, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich, was shown for the initial time.

**ESSENCES ARE FUZZY, GENERIC, CONCEPTUAL;  
ARISTOTLE WAS RIGHT WHEN HE INSISTED THAT ALL TRUTH IS  
SPECIFIC AND PARTICULAR (AND WRONG WHEN HE CHARACTERIZED  
TRUTH AS A GENERALIZATION).**

1949

May 26, Thursday: British authorities in Hamburg released Field Marshal Karl von Rundstedt.

[Thomas Merton](#) was ordained a Trappist priest at Our Lady of Gethsemani Monastery in Kentucky.



**“HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE” BEING A VIEW FROM A PARTICULAR POINT IN TIME (JUST AS THE PERSPECTIVE IN A PAINTING IS A VIEW FROM A PARTICULAR POINT IN SPACE), TO “LOOK AT THE COURSE OF HISTORY MORE GENERALLY” WOULD BE TO SACRIFICE PERSPECTIVE ALTOGETHER. THIS IS FANTASY-LAND, YOU’RE FOOLING YOURSELF. THERE CANNOT BE ANY SUCH THINGIE, AS SUCH A PERSPECTIVE.**



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1968

December 9, Monday: [Thomas Merton](#) died at Suwanganiwas, the Red Cross Centre at Samut Prakan outside Bangkok, at the age of 53, 27 years after entering the Gethsemani monastery. He had gone to Thailand to attend an interfaith conference between Catholic and non-Christian monks and had concluded his morning talk with “So I will disappear from view and we can all have a coke or something.” Back in his cottage, he stepped out of the shower and attempted to adjust a large 220-volt electric fan. When he was found there were severe electric burns on his torso.

A news item relating to the development of ELECTRIC WALDEN technology: The first demonstration of a computer mouse, by its inventor, Douglas Engelbart of Stanford, took place at a computer conference at Stanford University.

Concerto-Rhapsody for piano and orchestra by Aram Khachaturian was performed for the initial time, in Gorky.

Stimmung für sex-tête no.24 for six voices by Karlheinz Stockhausen was performed for initial first time, in Paris.

Das Floss der “Medusa,” an oratorio volgare e militare for soprano, baritone, speaker, chorus, boys’ chorus, and orchestra by Hans Werner Henze to words of Schnabel, was to be premiered on this evening in Hamburg. Before the performance a poster of Che Guevara was placed on stage, only to be torn down by the organizer of the concert. In retaliation, leftist students stuck a red flag on the platform. When concert officials attempt to remove the banner, the students vigorously defended it. Meanwhile, some members of the West German Radio Chorus refused to sing under the red flag but the composer would not allow it to be removed. Under these circumstances the chorus exited. Meanwhile police arrived in battle gear and arrested several students and shoved the poet, Ernst Schnabel, through a glass door before arresting him as well. Under these conditions the composer refused to go on and the concert was canceled.

A concerto for amplified piano, brass, string basses, and percussion was performed for the initial time in Royce Hall at the University of California at Los Angeles, with the composer Roy Harris himself conducting.

**THE TASK OF THE HISTORIAN IS TO CREATE HINDSIGHT WHILE INTERCEPTING ANY ILLUSION OF FORESIGHT. NOTHING A HUMAN CAN SEE CAN EVER BE SEEN AS IF THROUGH THE EYE OF GOD.**



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1992

July: A simple physical experiment was conducted, in which 30 persons stood inside a 10X15 replica cabin, and it was discovered that so long as all 30 remained standing as [Henry Thoreau](#) had stipulated in [WALDEN](#) — there was indeed still room for a cot, a desk, a fireplace, and 3 chairs:

[WALDEN](#): I think that I love society as much as most, and am ready enough to fasten myself like a blood-sucker for the time to any full-blooded man that comes in my way. I am naturally no hermit, but might possibly sit out the sturdiest frequenter of the bar-room, if my business called me thither.

I had three chairs in my house; one for solitude, two for friendship, three for society. When visitors came in larger and unexpected numbers there was but the third chair for them all, but they generally economized the room by standing up. It is surprising how many great men and women a small house will contain. I have had twenty-five or thirty souls, with their bodies, at once under my roof, and yet we often parted without being aware that we had come very near to one another. Many of our houses, both public and private, with their almost innumerable apartments, their huge halls and their cellars for the storage of wines and other munitions of peace, appear to me extravagantly large for their inhabitants. They are so vast and magnificent that the latter seem to be only vermin which infest them. I am surprised when the herald blows his summons before some Tremont or Astor or Middlesex House, to see come creeping out over the piazza for all inhabitants a ridiculous mouse, which soon again slinks into some hole in the pavement.

PEOPLE OF  
WALDEN

HERMIT  
HORACE

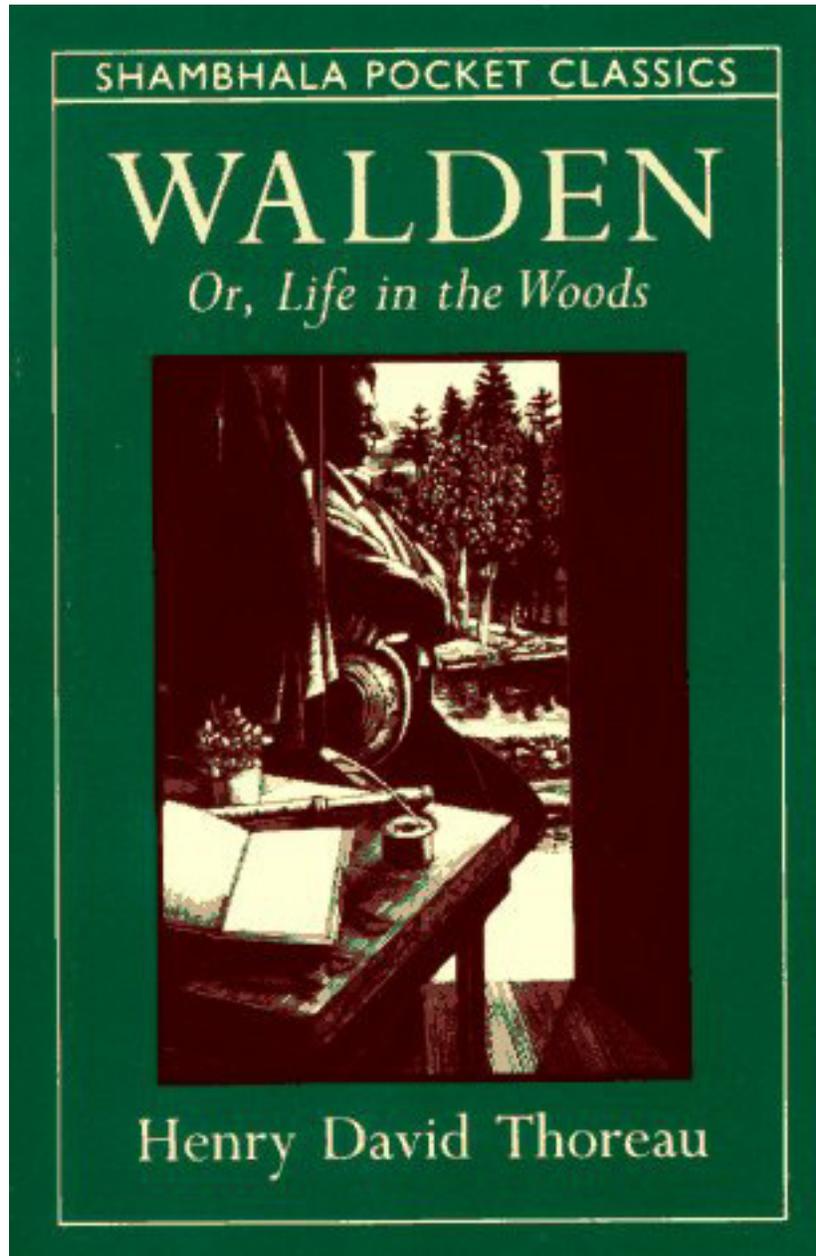
I have no idea whether the replica of [Emerson's \(Thoreau's\) shanty](#) by the parking lot at Walden Pond State Reservation had as yet been erected. This may have been an experiment conducted in the replica shanty in the back yard behind the old Thoreau Society store in Concord Center. The only thing I know about the replica in the reservation parking lot is that it sits at the same angle as the original shanty, so that the visitor may see the sun come in the door just as [Thoreau](#) did.

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## THOMAS MERTON

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To its Pocket Classics editions, 3- by 4-1/2-inch paperback books that would fit nicely into a Christmas stocking, a shirt pocket, or the palm of one's hand, which had included Krishnamurti's *MEDITATIONS*, Cleary's *I CHING*, [Sun Tzu](#)'s *THE ART OF WAR*, and [Thomas Merton](#)'s *THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE*, Shambhala added a 267-page distilled version of [Thoreau](#)'s [WALDEN OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) (ISBN 0-87773-685-5), the royalties from which were to go to the Walden Woods Project:



**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,  
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**



**THOMAS MERTON**

**THOMAS MERTON**



THOMAS MERTON

THOMAS MERTON

1997

October 5, Sunday: Carol Zaleski<sup>2</sup> reviewed a new book, Peter France's HERMITS: THE INSIGHTS OF SOLITUDE (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1997, 240 pages, \$23.95), on page 32 of the New York Times Book Review. The last paragraph of this review began as follows:

Two literary hermits are featured: [Thoreau](#), ornamental hermit of the Transcendentalists, and Robert Lax, Minimalist poet and friend of [Merton](#)'s, now living alone on Patmos.

HERMITS

TRANSCENDENTALISM

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT



2. Robert Richardson <[rdrichardson@wesleyan.edu](mailto:rdrichardson@wesleyan.edu)> clearly has taken no offense at this characterization of [Thoreau](#) as a mere "ornamental hermit" of the [Transcendentalists](#): "I know Carol Zaleski. She is completely brilliant and has written what is, I think, the best piece I've seen on Wm James VARIETIES... I would say that anything she writes is worth a look. Her James piece (can we stretch Transcendentalism this far?) is 'Speaking of Wm James to the Cultured Among his Despisers' in Journal of Psychology of Religion 2,3, pages 127-170."



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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



Prepared: April 3, 2016

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT  
GENERATION HOTLINE



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.



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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.