PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

PEOPLE OF WALDEN AND THE MAINE WOODS:

MARCUS VITRUVIUS POLLIO

“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY
WALDEN: The religion and civilization which are barbaric and heathenish build splendid temples; but what you might call Christianity does not. Most of the stone a nation hammers goes towards its tomb only. It buries itself alive. As for the Pyramids, there is nothing to wonder at in them so much as the fact that so many men could be found degraded enough to spend their lives constructing a tomb for some ambitious booby, whom it would have been wiser and manlier to have drowned in the Nile, and then given his body to the dogs. I might possibly invent some excuse for them and him, but I have no time for it. As for the religion and love of art of the builders, it is much the same all the world over, whether the building be an Egyptian temple or the United States Bank. It costs more than it comes to. The mainspring is vanity, assisted by the love of garlic and bread and butter. Mr. Balcom, a promising young architect, designs it on the back of his Vitruvius, with hard pencil and ruler, and the job is let out to Dobson & Sons, stonecutters. When the thirty centuries begin to look down on it, mankind begin to look up at it. As for your high towers and monuments, there was a crazy fellow once in this town who undertook to dig through to China, and he got so far that, as he said, he heard the Chinese pots and kettles rattle; but I think that I shall not go out of my way to admire the hole which he made. Many are concerned about the monuments of the West and East, -to know who built them. For my part, I should like to know who in those days did not build them, -who were above such trifling.
As we approached the log-house, a dozen rods from the lake, and considerably elevated above it, the projecting ends of the logs lapping over each other irregularly several feet at the corners gave it a very rich and picturesque look, far removed from the meanness of weather-boards. It was a very spacious, low building, about eighty feet long, with many large apartments. The walls were well clayed between the logs, which were large and round, except on the upper and under sides, and as visible inside as out, successive bulging cheeks gradually lessening upwards and tuned to each other with the axe, like Pandean pipes. Probably the musical forest-gods had not yet cast them aside; they never do till they are split or the bark is gone. It was a style of architecture not described by Vitruvius, I suspect, though possibly hinted at in the biography of Orpheus; none of your frilled or fluted columns, which have cut such a false swell, and support nothing but a gable end and their builder’s pretensions, — that is, with the multitude; and as for “ornamentation,” one of those words with a dead tail which architects very properly use to describe their flourishes, there were the lichens and mosses and fringes of bark, which nobody troubled himself about. We certainly leave the handsomest paint and clapboards behind in the woods, when we strip off the bark and poison ourselves with white-lead in the towns. We get but half the spoils of the forest. For beauty, give me trees with the fur on. This house was designed and constructed with the freedom of stroke of a forester’s axe, without other compass and square than Nature uses. Wherever the logs were cut off by a window or door, that is, were not kept in place by alternate overlapping, they were held one upon another by very large pins, driven in diagonally on each side, where branches might have been, and then cut off so close up and down as not to project beyond the bulge of the log, as if the logs clasped each other in their arms. These logs were posts, studs, boards, clapboards, laths, plaster, and nails, all in one. Where the citizen uses a mere sliver or board, the pioneer uses the whole trunk of a tree. The house had large stone chimneys, and was roofed with spruce-bark. The windows were imported, all but the casings. One end was a regular logger’s camp, for the boarders, with the usual fir floor and log benches. Thus this house was but a slight departure from the hollow tree, which the bear still inhabits, — being a hollow made with trees piled up, with a coating of bark like its original.
At about this point in time, Aristarchus of Samos was estimating the distance and size of the Moon on the basis of the arc of the Earth’s shadow cast upon the face of the moon during a lunar eclipse. He thus established a basis for heliocentric cosmology.

Archimedes (287-212 BCE) worked out the principle of the lever and discovered the principle of buoyancy. [Greek mathematician and physicist of Syracuse, noted for his work in geometry, hydrostatics, and mechanics; Archimedes’s Principle is a law of physics stating that the apparent loss in weight of a body immersed in a fluid is equal to the weight of the displaced fluid; Archimedes’s Screw is an ancient type of water-lifting device making use of a spiral passage in an inclined cylinder. The water is raised when the spiral is rotated.]

Marcus Vitruvius Pollio gives us the famous story of Archimedes and his detection of adulterated gold in a royal crown in the shape of a laurel wreath made for King Hieron II (270-215BCE) of Syracuse, his *M. VITRUVII POLLIONIS DE ARCHITECTVRA LIBRI DECEM*, of 25 BCE — that when Archimedes realized that the volume of the laurel-leaf crown could be measured exactly by the displacement created in a bath of water he ran into the street with the cry of ἐφύστα! He was able to demonstrate that the king had been defrauded, presumably by the gold having been alloyed with some less costly material such as silver.

**NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT**
“Dans les champs de l’observation le hasard ne favorise que les esprits préparés.”

— Louis Pasteur, at the University of Lisle on December 7, 1854
The last of the Mithridatic wars of the Romans, maintaining the Pax Romana. Lucullus, and after him Pompeius, commanded against the great King of Pontus, who at last was poisoned by his son, while designing to raise the warlike tribes of the Danube against Rome, and to invade Italy from the northeast. Meanwhile Rome was making great conquests in Asia. Besides the ancient province of Pergamus, the maritime countries of Bithynia, and nearly all Paphlagonia and Pontus, would be formed into a new Roman province under the name “Bithynia,” while on the southern coast Cilicia and Pamphylia would be combined to create another new province under the name “Cilicia,” while Phoenicia and Syria would be combined to create a third, under the name “Syria.” However, Great Armenia would be under the hostile control of Tigranes, Cappadocia would be under the hostile control of Ariobarzanes, the Bosphorus would be under the hostile control of Pharnaces, Judaea would be under the hostile control of Hyrcanus, and some other small states would be granted to petty princes so long as they remained dependent on Rome.

Greek assassins were reported as blackening their faces with soot before perpetrating a pre-dawn murder.

Marcus Vitruvius Pollio would have been born in roughly this timeframe, likely as a free Roman citizen. We encounter him first as a ballista, or artilleryman, which was the 3d class of arms in the military offices, serving in the legions of Julius Caesar (like others in service in those legions, such as Marcus Aurelius, Publius Minidius, and Gnaeus Cornelius). Probably he was a senior officer over both the libratores who actually...
operated the machines, and the *doctores ballistarum* or artillery experts. He may well have served with Chief Engineer Lucius Cornelius Balbus (major). His specialty was the construction of *ballista* engines to be used during sieges against walled cities (a gigantic version of the *scorpio* antipersonnel weapon that functioned as an early crossbow). He was possibly a *praefectus fabrum* during military service, or *praefect architectus armamentarius* of the *apparitor* status group. However, little is known of his life over and above what we can infer from a close reading of his only surviving work *M. VITRUVII POLLIONIS DE ARCHITECTVRA LIBRI DECEM*, a reading that notices details such as that the material he offers about “foreign tribes” suggest duty in north Africa, Hispania, Gaul (including Aquitaine), and Pontus. In fact even his given name *Marcus* and his cognomen *Pollio* are uncertain.
NO-ONE’S LIFE IS EVER NOT DRIVEN PRIMARILY BY HAPPENSTANCE
Yet another altercation involving our favorite pushy people, the Romans: at Morbihan Gulf the legions of D. Junius Brutus defeated the Veneti, creating the Pax Romana.

The siege of Larignum (Vitruvius is our only source for the details of this siege).

In March, Cato the Younger returned to Rome from being governor of the island of Cyprus.

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.
During the Gallic War, the siege and massacre of the 40,000 residents of the Gallic *oppida* at Avaricum. Vercingetorix commented that “the Romans did not conquer by valor nor in the field, but by a kind of art and skill in assault, with which they [Gauls] themselves were unacquainted.”

Also, during this year, the broken siege of the Gallic *oppida* at Gergovia, and the circumvallation and battle of the Gallic *oppida* at Alesia, in which women and children were evicted from the encircled city to conserve food for its active defenders, only to die of starvation between the opposing walls of the defenders and the besiegers (Vitruvius offers us some information about these sieges).

Mark Antony was elected quaestor for 51, in which capacity he acted as one of Gaius Julius Caesar’s quartermaster generals, with command over legions in the field.
Cato the Younger made an unsuccessful run for consul.

During the Gallic War, the siege of the Gallic oppida at Uxellodunum (Vitruvius offers us some information about this siege).

Mark Antony, left by Gaius Iulius Caesar in the northern sector in charge of 15 cohorts, accepted the surrender of Commius, leader of the Atrebates.

Ptolemy Auletes died leaving his Egyptian kingdom to his teenage daughter, Cleopatra, and her prepubescent brother Ptolemy XIII, with whom for reasons of tradition she would need to marry. She would become the only pharaoh of the Ptolemy family ever to familiarize herself with the language of her subjects. After the death of Ptolemy XIII and the birth of Caesarion, she would marry another younger brother, Ptolemy XIV, again of course for pharaonic reasons.
2d Period of the Roman Civil Wars (Caesar versus Pompey, until 45 BCE).

The siege of Massilia (Vitruvius offers us some information about this siege).

At the beginning of the civil war between the party of Gaius Julius Caesar and the party of Gnaeus (Cneius) Pompeius Magnus, Iulius would drive Pompeius out of Italy, conquering his forces in Spain and then passing into Greece, where Pompeius and the other aristocratic chiefs had assembled a large army. Iulius would give them a decisive defeat at the great battle of Pharsalia. Pompeius would flee for refuge to Alexandria, where he would be assassinated. Iulius, who followed him there, would become involved in a war with the Egyptians, in which finally he would be victorious. Cleopatra would become Queen of Egypt. Iulius would go into Pontus

and defeat the son of Mithridates, who had taken part in the war against him. He would then proceed to the Roman province of Africa, where some of the Pompeian chiefs had established themselves, aided by Juba, a native prince. He would overthrow them at the battle of Thapsus. He would again be obliged to lead an army into Spain, where the sons of Gnaeus (Cneius) Pompeius Magnus had collected the wrecks of their father’s
party. He would crush the last of his enemies at the battle of Munda. Under the title of Dictator (which is amusing, because we don’t ordinarily think highly of dictators), Iulius would make himself sole master of the Roman world, and would make his given name, Caesar, a synonym for “Emperor of the Romans.”

Here three full centuries shall Hector’s race have kingly power; till a priestess queen, by Mars conceiving, her twin offspring bear; then Romulus, wolf-nursed and proudly clad in tawny wolf-skin mantle, shall receive the sceptre of his race. He shall uprear and on his Romans his own name bestow. To these I give no bounded times or power, but empire without end. Yea, even my Queen, Juno, who now chastiseth land and sea with her dread frown, will find a wiser way, and at my sovereign side protect and bless the Romans, masters of the whole round world, who, clad in peaceful toga, judge mankind. Such my decree! In lapse of seasons due, the heirs of Ilium’s kings shall bind in chains Mycenaean’s glory and Achilles’ towers, and over prostrate Argos sit supreme. Of Trojan stock illustriously sprung, lo, Caesar comes! whose power the ocean bounds, whose fame, the skies. He shall receive the name Iulus nobly bore, great Julius, he. Him to the skies, in Orient trophies dress, thou shalt with smiles receive; and he, like us, shall hear at his own shrines the suppliant vow. Then will the world grow mild; the battle-sound will be forgot; for olden Honor then, with spotless Vesta, and the brothers twain, Remus and Romulus, at strife no more, will publish sacred laws. The dreadful gates whence issueth war, shall with close-jointed steel be barred impregnably; and prisoned there the heaven-offending Fury, throned on swords, and fettered by a hundred brazen chains, shall belch vain curses from his lips of gore.

— Publius Vergilius Maro (Virgil), sucking up big time in 19 BCE in the Aeneid (as translated here by Theodore C. Williams), would praise the carnage of this civil war as bringing forth the Pax Romana (while he was at it he should have praised Mount Vesuvius as the cat’s pajamas of human population control)
August: Yet more battles involving our favorite pushy people: at Dyrrachium in what is now Albania the legions of Gnaeus (Cneius) Pompeius Magnus defeated the legions of Gaius Julius Caesar and at Pharsalus in Thessaly the legions of Caesar (Mark Antony commanding the army’s left wing) defeated the legions of Pompey the Great, restoring the Pax Romana (Vitruvius offers us some information about these battles).

During the civil war Marcus Terentius Varro had been in command of one of Pompey’s armies in the Ilerda campaign. He would escape the penalties of being on the losing side in a civil war through two pardons granted by Caesar, one prior to and the other subsequent to the Battle of Pharsalus.

When Pompey was defeated, Cato the Younger fled to Africa. Afterward, Julius Caesar would dispatch Antony back to Rome with the legions he did not immediately need, to look after his interests. When Caesar would be appointed dictator Antony would become his magister equitum.
Yet further altercations involving our favorite pushy people, those roamin’ Romans: at Zela in what is now Turkey the legions of Gaius Iulius Cæsar defeated the army of Pontus under Pharnaces (Vitruvius offers us some information about this battle), and at Alexandria they defeated the Egyptians under Ptolemy III, creating the Pax Romana.

(Unfortunately, while this was going down there was some unavoidable collateral damage which nobody wanted: the library of Ptolemy I Soter in Alexandria was destroyed by fire.)

WHAT I’M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF
April 6: Yet another battle involving our favorite pushy people: at Thapsus to the east of Carthage on the coast of Africa the legions of Gaius Julius Caesar defeated the legions of Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio, creating the Pax Romana. Cato the Younger, at Utica to the west of Carthage (he had not participated in the battle), concluded that there was no longer any way to continue the struggle.
Here he is as depicted in the Musee du Louvre, reading Plato’s Phaedo in preparation for offing himself.

According to Plutarch, when Cato stabbed himself the wound was not fatal, the sword was taken away, and a physician stitched him up, but after the physician had left Cato managed to complete the job — by stoically pulling out his intestines. If the above statue made Cato out as being younger than he actually was when he came to this messy end of his road, in the HBO series “Rome” Karl Johnson plays a Cato who is noticeably too old.
Vitruvius offers us some information about this battle, as he likewise offers us some information about the siege at Larignum in 56 BCE, the sieges at Avaricum, Gergovia, and Alesia in 52 BCE, the siege at Uxellodunum in 51 BCE, siege at Massilia in 49 BCE, the battles at Dyrrachium and Pharsalus in 48 BCE, and the battle at Zela in 47 BCE (this offers us evidence that he had most likely been serving in the ballista auxiliary unit of the Roman legion Legio VI Ferrata).
Augustus Caesar married his daughter Julia to his sister’s son Marcellus.

During the reign of the emperor Augustus, Vitruvius was being sponsored through his sister Octavia Minor, who would presumably have arranged for him to have a pension. Here is Marcus Vitruvius Pollio presenting his *M. VITRVVII POLLIONIS DE ARCHITECTVRA LIBRI DECEM* (TEN BOOKS ON ARCHITECTURE), written in Latin and Greek, to the emperor Augustus (this woodcut was done in 1684):

![Woodcut of Marcus Vitruvius Pollio presenting his works to Augustus]

It is likely that Book I refers to the campaign of public repairs and improvements led by Marcus Agrippa. Book VIII offers empirical observation of laborer illnesses in the lead foundries of his time and advises that clay pipes and masonry channels be used to conduct drinking water — not lead pipes. Book X describes the construction of the “Archimedes’s screw” device widely used for raising water to irrigate fields and dewater mines.

![Diagram of Archimedes’s screw]

He was writing in the period during which many of the surviving Roman aqueducts were built, such as those at Segovia and the Pont du Gard, and describes in detail the use of the inverted siphon, including practical problems of the high pressures developed in the pipe at the base of such a siphon. Vitruvius asserts that a structure must exhibit the three qualities *firmitas, utilitas, and venustas* (it must be solid and useful, as well as...
Architecture is an imitation of nature — just as birds and bees built their nests, so do humans construct shelters, against the elements, out of natural materials.
In the 1st Century BCE the job of the “architect” (the term derives from the Greek for “master” and “builder”) was considerably broader than the specialty that we today know under that rubric. It included such categories as arms manufacturer, hydraulics engineer, and city planner — the only actual building we know of that the 1st Century BCE “architect” Vitruvius worked on is a basilica completed during this year at Fanum Fortunae on the Adriatic coast (this is now the town of Fano, where is no trace of such a structure, one hypothesis being that its ancient site may now be beneath the Christian basilica).

At about this point Albius Tibullus died. He may have been assassinated. During his lifetime he had published love elegies about a “Delia” (she was a married woman whose husband was at war, Tibullus was not her only lover, and her real name was Plania) and a “Nemesis” (this one, a courtesan, also had other admirers). After his death a 3d publication would encompass some doubtfully attributed pieces in addition to poems by others. A snippet from one of the poems in this posthumous book, apparently by an otherwise unattested Roman poet.
named Lygdamus rather than by Tibullus himself, would appear in Thoreau’s *Walden*:

> **Walden**: I was never molested by any person but those who represented the state. I had no lock nor bolt but for the desk which held my papers, not even a nail to put over my latch or windows. I never fastened my door night or day, though I was to be absent several days; not even when the next fall I spent a fortnight in the woods of Maine. And yet my house was more respected than if it had been surrounded by a file of soldiers. The tired rambler could rest and warm himself by my fire, the literary amuse himself with the few books on my table, or the curious, by opening my closet door, see what was left of my dinner, and what prospect I had of a supper. Yet, though many people of every class came this way to the pond, I suffered no serious inconvenience from these sources, and I never missed any thing but one small book, a volume of Homer, which perhaps was improperly gilded and this I trust a soldier of our camp has found by this time. I am convinced, that if all men were to live as simply as I then did, thieving and robbery would be unknown. These take place only in communities where some have got more than is sufficient while others have not enough. The Pope’s Homers would soon get properly distributed.

> “Nec bella fuerunt,  
> Faginus astabat dum scyphus ante dapes.”

> “Nor wars did men molest,  
> When only beechen bowls were in request.”

> You who govern public affairs, what need have you to employ punishments? Love virtue, and the people will be virtuous. The virtues of a superior man are like the wind; the virtues of a common man are like the grass; the grass, when the wind passes over it, bends.”

*ALEXANDER POPE  
ALBIUS TIBULLUS  
ALEK THERIEN  
LYGDMAMUS  
CONFUCIUS  
MENCUS  
HOMER*
Ovid’s *Heroides* (love letters from legendary heroines to their lords) 1-15.

Marcus Vitruvius Pollio was still alive at about this point (that his death is not of record implies to us that he could not have been greatly regarded in his own time).
At about this point Caius Plinius Secundus or Pliny the Elder, in his Natural History, was discussing approximately a thousand different plants. Well known throughout the middle ages, this book constituted a major source of information on botany. Primarily a storyteller and historian, Pliny edited uncritically. Once the original, rarer source documents were discovered, many errors in Pliny’s account would become all too obvious.

That doesn’t mean that Pliny was always wrong when he related a marvel. For instance, he reported that he had learned from certain monuments that milk and blood had rained from the lower part of the atmosphere not only during the consulship of Marcus Acilius Glabrio and Marcus Porcius Cato but also at other times, and that flesh had fallen from the sky in the consulship of Publius Volumnius and Servius Sulpicius, “and it is said that what was not devoured by the birds did not become putrid.” There is no reason to doubt this ancient account as similar events have been observed during the modern era — it seems that the power of dust devils and waterspouts and tornados is adroit to scoop schools of small fishes from the surface layers of water and drop them flopping on suburban lawns, and to raise even heavy bodies into the air and there shred them to bits and pieces, and then transport these objects a distance through the upper atmosphere and deposit them as a rain of fragments in a calmer atmosphere.
It is through Pliny that we know the exact costs of many products, and that farmers alternated crops of beans with spelt. He commented on the growing trend of farm land consolidation to create slave-maintained plantations.

Pliny’s description of the manner of constructing mosaics makes us confident that Marcus Vitruvius Pollio’s *De Architectura* was known to him — despite the fact that his name appears merely in the Table of Contents.

The betrothal ring originated earlier than the wedding band. The giving of an iron ring to mark a betrothal was a Roman custom. It was presumably a marker of the pledge, *pignus*, the contract between families that was to be fulfilled (such rings found in Christian burials in the catacombs of Rome appear to have been more commonly of bronze than of iron). At this point conservative custom still required a plain ring of iron, but the gold band would be becoming usual in the course of the 2d Century. “Even now,” according to Pliny’s *Natural History*, “the bridal ring is made of iron and without jewels.” Pliny commended the ancient Romans for teaching women “modesty and sobriety” by condemning the wearing of gold “save on the finger, which, with the bridal ring, her husband had sacredly pledged to himself.”

At about this point Hero of Alexandria was demonstrating by means of geometry, in *Catoptrica*, that a ray of light in reflecting from a plane mirror will follow the shortest path that it can possibly follow, between its source and the point of its observation.

(OK, how does it know to do that?)
December 25, Christmas: Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of the Roman Empire of the West by Pope Leo III in St. Peter’s Church, Rome. An enormously good time was had by all.

On this auspicious occasion the emperor presented the pope with the authentic foreskin of Jesus Christ — what a singularly appropriate present for a pope! Although this object may have been given to Chuck as a wedding present by the Byzantine Empress Irene, the story he told was that it had been given to him by an angel, of
course while praying at the Holy Sepulchre. The pope would deposit this sacred piece of Jesus in the Sanctum 
sanctorum of the Lateran basilica in Rome (from which it would be looted during the Sack of Rome in 1527).
Marcus Vitruvius Pollio’s *M. VITRUVII POLLIONIS DE ARCHITECTVRA LIBRI DECEM* was rediscovered by the Florentine humanist Gian Francesco Poggio Bracciolini.
To lift 2-ton stones for the dome of the cathedral Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, called the “Duomo,” over the following 16 years of construction, Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1476) needed to invent a new type of hoist. His inspiration for this was the inspection of surviving structures such as Rome’s Pantheon and Baths of Diocletian, and the surviving 1st architectural tome, the *M. VITRUVII POLLIONIS DE ARCHITECTVRA LIBRI DECEM* of Marcus Vitruvius Pollio.
THE PEOPLE OF MAINE WOODS: MARCUS VITRUVIUS POLLIO

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

WALDEN: The religion and civilization which are barbaric and heathenish build splendid temples; but what you might call Christianity does not. Most of the stone a nation hammers goes towards its tomb only. It buries itself alive. As for the Pyramids, there is nothing to wonder at in them so much as the fact that so many men could be found degraded enough to spend their lives constructing a tomb for some ambitious booby, whom it would have been wiser and manlier to have drowned in the Nile, and then given his body to the dogs. I might possibly invent some excuse for them and him, but I have no time for it. As for the religion and love of art of the builders, it is much the same all the world over, whether the building be an Egyptian temple or the United States Bank. It costs more than it comes to. The mainspring is vanity, assisted by the love of garlic and bread and butter. Mr. Balcom, a promising young architect, designs it on the back of his Vitruvius, with hard pencil and ruler, and the job is let out to Dobson & Sons, stonecutters. When the thirty centuries begin to look down on it, mankind begin to look up at it. As for your high towers and monuments, there was a crazy fellow once in this town who undertook to dig through to China, and he got so far that, as he said, he heard the Chinese pots and kettles rattle; but I think that I shall not go out of my way to admire the hole which he made. Many are concerned about the monuments of the West and East, to know who built them. For my part, I should like to know who in those days did not build them, who were above such trifling.
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The inquisitor Nicolaus Jacquerius’s *De calcatione daemonum*.

Leon Battista Alberti began to reformulate Marcus Vitruvius Pollio’s *M. Vitrvi Pollionis De architectura libri decem* as *De Re Aedificatoria* (Ten Books of Architecture).
Posthumous completion of publication of Leon Battista Alberti’s *De Re Aedificatoria* (Ten Books of Architecture) based upon Marcus Vitruvius Pollio’s *M. VitrVII PollioniS De ArchitectVra Libri Decem* as *De Re Aedificatoria*, in Rome by George Herolt, under the superintendence of Fra Giovanni Sulpitius.
Pope Innocent VIII declared that when a Christian killed one of the Waldensians—followers of the way of “Peter Waldo”—he inherited his or her property (well, if they could perchance find any).¹

This drawing by Leonardo da Vinci is known as “The Vitruvian Man” because in it we see the human body inscribed in a circle and a square (which, according to that 1st-Century BCE Roman architect, were the fundamental geometric patterns of the cosmic order).

¹ As an exercise in contrarian thinking: Do we call this pope “Innocent VIII” because the other 7/8ths of him was Guilty?
Republication of Ptolemy’s 2d-Century *Liber Geographiae*:

The original (Roman scroll) illustrations having been lost, the 1st modern illustrated book edition of Vitruvius’s 1st-Century BCE *De Architectura* was published in Venice with new woodcut illustrations, probably by Fra Giovanni Giocondo, based on descriptions in the text (later in the century Andrea Palladio would provide illustrations for commentaries by Daniele Barbaro in Italian and Latin).
An Italian translation of Vitruvius’s *De Architectura* (Como).
English and German translations of Vitruvius’s *De Architectura* (Walter H. Ryff).
A French translation of Vitruvius’s *De Architectura* (Jean Martin).
Johannes de Laet’s edition of Marcus Vitruvius Pollio’s *M. VITRUVII POLLIONIS DE ARCHITECTYRA LIBRI DECEM, CUM NOTIS, CASTIGATIONIBUS, ET OBSERVATIONIBUS GULIELMI PHILANDRI INTEGRIS; DANIELIS BARBARI EXCERPTIS, ET CLAUDII SALMASII PASSIM INSERTIS* ... (Amstelodami, apud Ludovicum Elzevirium).
A “villa book” was published, *A Treatise on the Decorative Part of Civil Architecture*, which included an adaptation of the classic author Marcus Vitruvius Pollio and also included William Chambers’s “Of the Origin and Progress of BUILDING.” Would Henry Thoreau ever consult this as a source for his architectural remarks in *Walden; Or, Life in the Woods*?
THE PEOPLE OF MAINE WOODS: MARCUS VITRUVIUS POLLIO

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

1826


"MAGISTERIAL HISTORY" IS FANTASIZING: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY
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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 8, 2015
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.