



A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers (Dover Thrift Editions)

Henry David Thoreau

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Based on an 1839 boat trip Thoreau took with his brother from Concord, Massachusetts, to Concord, New Hampshire, and back, this classic of American literature is not only a vivid narrative of that journey, it is also a collection of thought-provoking observations on such diverse topics as poetry, literature and philosophy, Native American and Puritan histories of New England, friendship, sacred Eastern writings, traditional Christianity, and much more.

Written, like *Walden*, while Thoreau lived at Walden Pond, and published in 1849, *A Week* (his first book) shares many themes with *Walden*, published in 1854. Both dramatize the process of self-renewal in nature and resolutely rail against the official culture and politics of the "trivial Nineteenth Century." Blending keen observation with a wealth of perceptive and informed reflections, Thoreau develops a continuous and lyrical dialogue between the past and present, as particular scenes on shore trigger reflections on the region's history and legends.

Originally conceived as a travel book, *A Week* eventually became much more — one of the most intellectually ambitious works of 19th-century America, and a requiem for Thoreau's brother John, who died from a sudden illness in 1842.

Of Thoreau and this work, Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "H. D. Thoreau is a great man in Concord, a man of original genius and character. . . . I think it [*A Week*. . .] is a book of wonderful merit, which is to go far and last long."

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