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on a variety of topics by
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PREFACE

This issue of the *Midwestern Miscellany* marks two important advances as part of the Society's increasing growth and the accelerating evolution of the Center for the Study of Midwestern Literature and Culture. No longer an "occasional publication," it is now officially an annual publication, a companion to *MidAmerica VI*, which will also appear early in 1979. Particularly pleasing from an editorial point of view is the first appearance of the *Miscellany* in printed rather than mimeographed form. We hope that this will be its permanent form.

However, the editorial content of this issue follows the tradition established in *Midwestern Miscellany I* in 1974: it includes a variety of interesting and sometimes amusing essays, some of which were presented as papers at various Society programs during the past year. We invite essays, edited diaries and memoirs, and other contributions for future issues.

DAVID D. ANDERSON

November, 1978

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MARY HARTWELL CATHERWOOD'S DISGUISED HANDBOOKS OF FEMINISM

PEGGY B. TREECE

The nineteenth century was a period of tremendous change in American values and life styles. Industrialism and technology accompanied the westward movement across the American continent and the intellectual expansion of the American mind. However, many Americans were not fully prepared emotionally and mentally to cope with the rapid changes. As the search for a new and stable value system began, floods of literature appeared on the American scene. Writers attempted to provide methods of coping with change by numerous and varying styles. Instead, most only succeeded in demonstrating that any agreement on what style of literature was most representative of the times was impossible.

As mechanical objects improved living conditions and lightened housekeeping responsibilities, nineteenth century American women faced unfamiliar freedom. Society was not prepared to release women from their traditional sex role, yet the need for that sex role was slowly deteriorating.

Marriage, the assumed first goal in women's lives, separated them from men. It allowed women no means to grow socially or mentally, and hid them in the identity of their husbands. By the late 1800's methods of birth control opened discussions of sexuality, and the "woman's role" was no longer justified by procreation and childrearing. The "new women" of the 1880's completely rejected conventional marriage; others attempted gradual changes of sex roles within the traditional structure.

Too many students and laymen believe the "women's movement" and the rise of "Women's Studies Programs" at American universities and colleges is a recent development, one that has

existed only for the last two or three decades. However, such women as Lucy Stone, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton illustrate the early discontent of American women in their traditionally subordinate role in family and society. Although spoken word was the only means available to the illiterate seventeenth and eighteenth century women, the written word became a more unifying force as women struggled for one of their first steps toward "equal rights" and destruction of sex-stereotyping—education. Domestic novels and household magazines were popular reading materials for nineteenth century women who did not want to openly confront their husbands with rebellious literature. Mary Hartwell Catherwood disguised her keys to independence within the pages of these subtle and "safe" items. Women knew with certainty what she was encouraging and made her one of the most outstanding writers of the times, while their husbands lacked the insight to read between the lines.

Miss Hartwell herself was a "new independent woman" seeking gradual change. She managed multiple roles in her personal life as wife and mother, and as a professional, career-oriented member of society. In a flowery feature, a nineteenth century daily reported: ". . . As wife, mother, housekeeper, and wielder of the pen she has a high ideal and works up to it."[1] Miss Hartwell did not condemn marriage. Rather, she saw the opportunities for personal enrichment it might allow. Although she married later in life than her contemporaries, James Steel Catherwood offered her the opportunities to be independent in her actions and thoughts.

Craque-O'-Doom (1881), one of Mrs. Catherwood's early novels, offers an excellent example of Mrs. Catherwood's concept of the independent woman. Miss Rhoda Jones is an outspoken young woman who intends never to take a secondary position to any man and she will never become an "old maid," for "old maids are things of the past."[2] There are only unjust reasons for classifying a woman as an "old maid": ". . . it was set up to frighten silly women away from the fields of independence."[3] Miss Jones does plan to marry, but only after her future husband, Mr. Burns, consents to the name Jones-Burns.[4] Miss Jones wants her own identity even in marriage; after all, marriage should not be a matter of love. "As to being in love with him, I am not a bit so,"

she declares, "that would be very disagreeable and give him an advantage over me. Besides, love is a fleeting quality. . . ."[5]

In *A Women in Armor* (1875), Mrs. Catherwood contrasts two female characters, the new independent woman Helen Dimmock and Helen's weak, traditional sister Nina. The novel was published before Mrs. Catherwood's marriage and tells of the economic responsibilities of a young, unmarried woman caring for her sister and her sister's child. Helen "never had expected to do otherwise in life than to walk the flat, hard road of labor, and to wear always the harness of today's working woman."[6] Until 1890, teaching and writing were the only two professions open to females, but Helen exhibits a new character as she supports her family by not only teaching music, but also by composing. When Nina's husband leaves her and her child, Helen accepts the responsibility "belonging to a man," and "carried it with manlike devotion, making the dependence of her dependent ones peculiarly close and tender."[7] Nina is Helen's opposite for ". . . the smallness, daintiness, and trustfulness of womanhood expressed themselves in Nina."[8]

A Woman in Armor follows the domestic novel happy ending. However, Mrs. Catherwood combines the marriage ideal of womanhood with her independence for women. Within the acceptable tradition of the marriage and family, she encouraged her female readers to exhibit their own strengths and retain their individual identity. Helen meets and marries an immature newspaper writer. She does not become his dependent; rather, she is his support. "For he was to upright and fine of face, and she who leaned on his arm, and looked made for all the delicate uses of womanhood, looked also capable of holding that arm up instead of burdening it."[9]

"The Stirring-Off" is one of Mrs. Catherwood's most known local color stories. Young Jane Davis, the belle of Fairfield County, Ohio, is the central figure. Her beauty attracts many suitors and speculations about marriage run rampant, but societal expectations do not sway her decisions. Jan surprises her family and friends when she chooses to marry the Methodist circuit-rider, Brother Curley, instead of her choices of wealthy and handsome suitors. She does not feel compelled to choose a man socially her

equal or better; however, she selects one whom she can assist and spiritually support.[10]

"A Kentucky Princess," another short story, is concerned with the openmindedness of the daughter of a wealthy plantation owner in the pre-Civil War South.[11] Prior to America's marriage to Ross Carr, the best horseman in the county, a poor white girl comes to the plantation to turn over her baby to the baby's father, Ross Carr. America's heart reaches out to the child and she accepts the child as her own. She proceeds to marry Ross, who has demonstrated a manhood flaw, against social customs.

Some of Mrs. Catherwood's works are stories about children. These, too, reflect a new role ideal for women and the socialization of children.

Mrs. Catherwood's *The Dogberry Bunch* was first serialized in *Wide Awake* in 1879, and later appeared in book form. The imaginary Dogberry family consists of eight orphaned children living as a unit. The parental roles are held by the oldest sister Alice, eighteen years old, and Ben, one year younger. Alice is the manager of the home and also is assistant teacher at the school. A married woman with responsibilities to her family and home could not have also held a position outside the home. Alice has a dual role and meets no disapproval because she is unmarried. Ben's role as the father also demonstrates a sharing of economic responsibility, so he is learning carpentry. However, every family member has "home responsibilities" which are determined by age and not by sex.

When younger brother Jack requires medical care, he is astounded to meet his physician, Miss Gaff, a woman. In amazement he exclaims, "Let me see her. I never saw a woman doctor in my life."[12] Female doctors are few, and Jack has been socialized to expect males in the profession.

Corinne Padgett, a small girl in Mrs. Catherwood's *Old Caravan Days* (1884) realizes she likes adventure as her family travels West. Boys should not be the only ones entitled to excitement. Disgusted with her forced sex role, Corrine rebels: "Boys think they are so smart! They want to have all the good times and see all the great shows, and go slidin' in winter time, when girls have to stay in the house and knit, and they talk like they's grown up, and we's little babies!"[13]

Melissa Jane (Bluebell) Garde enjoys the mountain home of her widower father. In Mrs. Catherwood's *Rock Fork* (1882), Bluebell suffers alienation and rejection when a family friend takes her to the city to learn the social graces of womanhood. Miss Calder, the friend, is afraid Bluebell and her sister "will not only have the bringing up of boys, but their very lives will be continually endangered . . ."[14] in their mountain home. The girls' father realizes in time that his daughters' happiness in being themselves regardless of societal views is the most important aspect in life.

In *The Secrets of Roseladies* (1888), Sister Bidgood (Mariana) and Cousin Sarah share womanhood ties as well as family ties. The two girls are spending the summer with their cousins at Uncle Roseladies. Sarah confides in Sister that she still plays with her dolls in secrecy. Although girls are taught to prepare for womanhood by playing with dolls, a seventeen-year-old woman playing with dolls would be shamed by adults. Sister understands Sarah's confused and suppressed emotional desires. The girls cannot profess their understanding of each other's desires in public, but in the solitude of Sarah's room, Mariana exclaims, "O Cousin Sarah, I do love you so much!"[15]

Even in her juvenile works, Mrs. Catherwood attempts to loosen the restrictions on woman. Her young characters set examples for young women of the period.

In her later years, Mrs. Catherwood wrote historical romances of legendary figures and French explorers of Canada and the Old Northwest. Even her legendary female characters portray the growing independence of the nineteenth century women. In "The Chase of Saint-Castin," an Indian chief's daughter hates male dominance and argues with the explorer Saint-Castin, who has fallen in love with her, "I cannot like them. I wish they would always stay away from me."[16]

Archange Cadotte, in "The Windigo," is a woman who does not play a secondary role to her husband. Louizon, her husband, is possessive and domineering, yet he even cannot restrain his wife's independence. Archange's mother-in-law convinces Louizon to adopt a little Pensonneau named Michel. "If Archange had children," Madame Cadotte says to Louizon, "she would not seek

other amusement."[17] Archange is not to be tied to the traditional role as wife and mother, so she makes Michel her servant.

A Story of Tonty (1889) is the story of the late seventeenth century struggle by LaSalle and Henri de Tonty to control Acadia. Tonty visits Barbe Cavelier, LaSalle's niece, in a convent. The young girl is a contrast to her guardians. Tonty marvels at the girl's ambitions for independence and adventure and questions her femininity by telling her that "a woman should learn to pray, even as a man should learn to fight. He stands between her and danger, and she should stand linking him to heaven."[18] Barbe responds bravely that she can fight for herself without a man's assistance.

Old Kaskaskia (1893), another story of the Old Northwest, has a French heroine. Angelique devotes her attention to caring for her elderly aunt instead of marriage. Her aunt knows the perils of a single life in a society where a woman is respected because of her husband's worth. She wants her niece to marry and encourages a suitor:

> . . . Angelique favors no suitor. She is like me: she would live a single life to the end of her days, as holy as a nun, with never a thought of courtship and weddings, but I have set my face against such a life for her. I have seen the folly of it. Here am I, a poor old helpless woman, living without respect or consideration, when I ought to be looked up to in the Territory.[19]

Angelique does not understand society's imposition of marriage on a woman who is quite content with her single life. A friend reminds her, ". . . if you don't marry, the time will come when you'll be called an old maid."[20] However, Angelique believes name-calling an unfortunate circumstance, for "It is a pitty to make ugly names for good women."[21]

Mrs. Catherwood developed characters who exhibited the independence which many nineteenth century women sought. These women had been socialized to accept a secondary role in society and needed confidence to experiment with alternate life patterns and news roles.

Mrs. Catherwood's own life was not one filled entirely with individual satisfaction. She had dreams of independence and took

positive measures to fiulfill them. She proved that women were capable of fulfillment outside their traditional role. Her parents' deaths while she was young forced her to be independent in making decisions and developing a pattern of life ambitions. She chose teaching, one of the few courses open to women, for financial security and intellectual stimulation. Her brother and sister chose the dependence of their maternal grandfather in Hebron, Ohio. Mary left teaching to attend college and advance professionally. She was intellectually capable and self-disciplined.

Unmarried and with responsibilities only for herself, she seized opportunities to write for popular magazines and to travel. In her married life, she travelled with her husband and wrote while her husband attended to his own business.

She exerted her independence from the traditional role through her fictional characters. She was not in revolt against her role as a woman. Mrs. Catherwood merely wanted to expand woman's role and encourage the development of idntity as an individual.

In nearly every one of Mrs. Catherwood's stories there is a woman of ambition. The female characters do not survive for the sake of any man nor for the institution of marriage. Her literature was urging women to accept and prove their independence. Mrs. Catherwood's characters were the models for women to copy in thought and action. Mrs. Catherwood gives her own perspective of woman in *A Woman in Armor*, when she writes:

> . . . Woman is no helpless, weakling species of the genus man, but an independent, a cherishing, a strong, a daring nature, who in the arm of her own uprightness can fight the battles of the world and win them.[22]

In dialogue, description, and personal inference, Mrs. Catherwood portrays the independent woman.

NOTES

1. E. S. L. Thompson, "A Western Genius: Mary Hartwell Catherwood, the Novelist," *The Daily Inter Ocean, Illustrated Supplement*, 7 June 1893, p. 5.
2. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, *Craque-O'-Doom* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company, 1881), p. 27.
3. Catherwood, *Craque-O'-Doom*, p. 27.
4. Catherwood, *Craque-O'-Doom*, p. 29.

5. Catherwood, *Craque-O'-Doom,* p. 33.
6. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, *A Woman in Armor* (New York: G. W. Carleton and Company, Publishers, 1875), p. 156.
7. Catherwood, *A Woman in Armor,* p. 24.
8. Catherwood, *A Woman in Armor,* p. 23.
9. Catherwood, *A Woman in Armor,* p. 162.
10. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, "The Stirring Off," *The Queen of the Swamp and Other Plain Americans* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Riverside Press, 1899), p. 49.
11. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, "A Kentucky Princess," *The Queen of the Swamp and Other Plain Americans* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Riverside Press, 1899), pp. 129-152.
12. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, *The Dogberry Bunch* (Boston: D. Lothrop and Company, 1879), n.p.
13. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, *Old Caravan Days* (Boston: D. Lothrop and Company, 1884), p. 142.
14. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, *Rocky Fork* (Boston: D. Lothrop and Company, 1882), p. 89.
15. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, *The Secrets of Roseladies* (Boston: D. Lothrop Company, 1888), p. 182.
16. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, *The Chase of Saint-Castin and Other Stories of the French in the New World* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1894), pp. 22-23.
17. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, "The Windigo," *The Atlantic Monthly,* 73 (April 1894), 530.
18. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, *The Story of Tonty* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Company, 1889), p. 29.
19. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, *Old Kaskaskia* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1893), p. 65.
20. Catherwood, *Old Kaskaskia,* p. 100.
21. Catherwood, *Old Kaskaskia,* p. 100.
22. Catherwood, *A Woman in Armor,* p. 166.

BACK TO MITCHELL COUNTY

CLARENCE A. ANDREWS

Mitchell County is a rural county of 14,000 people, snug up against the Minnesota border in north central Iowa. Its county seat, Osage, is a market and light industrial town of some 4,000 that was platted in 1856. Its towered courthouse, modeled after one in older southeast Iowa, was built in 1858.

In the hundred and twenty-three years since its founding, Osage and Mitchell County have produced some illustrious citizens. But there are many people in the county who are unhappy that the most illustrious of all is a man who wrote some unkind things about Osage and the farmers who contributed significantly to the development of the area.

Hamlin [Hannibal] Garland (1860-1940) drew upon his boyhood days on the Dry Run prairie northeast of Osage, and upon his school days at the former Cedar Valley Seminary in town, for some of his best books: *Boy Life on the Prairie* (1899); *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891); *Other Main-Travelled Roads* (1892); *A Daughter of the Middle Border* (1921); *A Son of the Middle Border* (1917). But Garland did not begin his career as an author until after he had been exposed to the dilettantism of a Boston, Massachusetts that was existing on its past reputation as the "Center of the Universe." By the time Garland got there, the energies, ambitions and youthful imaginations of the United States were centered far to the west of the fountainhead of our beginnings as a Nation.

From Boston, Garland had gone on to Chicago where he became one of that city's turn-of-the-century Genteel crowd—writers, artists, poets, sculptors and hangers-on with their roots in Boston elitism, a group whose greatest collective achievements were not so much aesthetic as social—the pleasures, for instance,

of a Friday afternoon concert in the Auditorium followed by tea in one or another of nearby studios.

Rural people, Garland decided, when he turned to write about them, were essentially peasants, "pushed out into [their] lonely, ugly shacks by the force of landlordism behind."[1] For Cultural improvement, they had only an occasional circus, a Grange picnic, the Fourth of July celebration, the County Fair, or "play-party songs" at a "sociable" in a rural school. "The landscape is beautiful," he wrote, "but how much of its beauty penetrates the heart of the men who are in the midst of it?"[2] He looked down his nose at Osage's "wooden sidewalks," and he wrote condescendingly of his boyhood neighbors:

> Men who were growing bent into digging into the soil spoke to me of their desire to see something of the great eastern world before they died. Women whose eyes were faded and dim with tears, listened to me with almost breathless interest whilst I told them of the great cities I had seen, of wonderful buildings, of theaters, of the music of the sea. Young girls expressed to me their longing for a life which was better worth while, and lads, eager for adventure and excitement, confided to me their secret intention to leave the [area] at the earliest possible moment. . . .[3]

Garland's patronizing attitudes toward midwest farm and small town life are even today indoctrinated in the minds of impressionable young people in passages such as this:

> How poor and dull and sleepy and squalid [the town] seemed! The one main street ended at the hillside at his left, and stretched away to the north, between two rows of the usual village stores, unrelieved by a tree or a touch of beauty. An unpaved street, with walled, drab-colored, miserable, rotting wooden buildings, with the inevitable battlements; the same—only worse and more squalid—was the town.[4]

Garland's writings make it clear that he was capable of seeing mostly the drab and dull in Osage and the other places he lived in before he encountered the good life of Chicago, Boston, New York and London—a life which he presently accepted as the goal of all right-thinking Americans after they had rejected the

world of agriculture and small towns. He observed, for example, that in Osage his "mother's visitors were never from the few pretentious homes of the town" of 200 (at the time), and that he saw the "dignity of Banker [Avery] Brush and the grandeur of Congressman [Nathaniel C.] Deering" only in church.[5]

There have been many protests against Garland's version of rural and small town life, as he himself reported.[6] William Allen White, the "Sage of Emporia," Kansas, another midwestern small town, once referred to literature of this type as "the Goddam School of Literature," and lamented the fact that writers like Garland saw only a mechanistic universe.[7] Corey Ford called this style of writing "kitchen sink realism,"[8] and Phil Stong reported the John Towner Frederick's *Midland* "was devoted to stories showing what a horrid place the Iowa farmlands were . . .

> Farm gentlemen were butted by bulls and farm ladies drank sheep dip; scrawny farm children groveled with the pigs and little farm girls all made for the haymow where the hired man was waiting with lust in his eyes and manure on his overalls. . . . It was Eugene O'Neill gone mad in the pigpens; yet Frederick was such an excellent editor that he made the business seem plausible.[9]

One may still find evidences in Mitchell County of the life that Garland rejected. A few miles outside Osage, a city of attractive, well-kept homes, is the small frame house and red barn which Garland's father built when the family first came on the native prairie:

> Meanwhile, on a little rise near the road, neighbor [John] Gammons and John Bowers were building . . . our home. It did not in the least resemble the foundation of and everlasting family seat, but it deeply excited us all. It was of pine and had the usual three rooms below and a long garret above and as it stood on a plain, bare to the winds, my father took the precaution of lining it with brick to hold it down. It was as good as most of the dwellings round about us but it stood naked on the sod, devoid of grace as a dry goods box. Its walls were rough plaster, its floor of white pine, its furniture poor, scanty and worn. There was a little picture on the face of the clock, a chromo on the

wall, and a printed portrait of General Grant—nothing more.[10]

Garland and his brothers slept in the garret, entering their quarters by means of a ladder propped against an exterior window!

Just west of the Osage business district is the Main Hall of the Cedar Valley Seminary, among whose graduates an 1883 history lists one "H. Garland" and his good friend, Burton Babcock.[11] Across is an ancient but well-kept hotel where Garland roomed while he was a student. A block on either side of these buildings are three of those "pretentious" homes, although none of them belonged to Banker Brush or Congressman Deering.

A block west is the imposing structure built in 1856 by Dr. Sumner B. Chase, who in that same year platted the town and named it. He also named the streets, although the street on which he built has since been changed to "Chase" Street.

The house, which shows plainly in an 1875 "aerial view" of Osage, has three sections.[12] The east section, a two-story structure with a glass-windowed cupola above the roof's central peak, was the doctor's living quarters. The center section served as his medical offices. The west section had quarters for the "help," and stables for the horses, including his famous matched team of "Clay-Banks"—Dr. Chase made house calls. Dr. Chase figured prominently in Osage's history as a lawyer, druggist, postmaster, and a trustee of the Seminary. Here he is in Garland's *A Son of the Middle Border*.

> At last a gleam of light! Someone in the village was awake. I passed another lighted window. Then the green and red lamps of the drug store [the house's center section] cheered me with their promise of aid for the doctor lived next door. There too a dim ray shone.
>
> Slipping from my weary horse I tied her to the rail and hurried up the walk toward the doctor's bell. I remembered just where the knob rested. Twice I pulled sharply, strongly, putting into it some part of the anxiety and impatience I felt. I could hear its imperative jingle as it died away in the house.

> At last the door opened and the doctor, a big blonde handsome man in a long night gown, confronted me with impassive face. "What is it, my boy?" he asked kindly.
>
> As I told him he looked down at my water-soaked form and wild-eyed countenance with gentle patience. Then he peered out over my head into the dismal night. He was a man of resolution but he hesitated for a moment. "Your father is suffering sharply, is he?"
>
> "Yes, sir. I could hear him groan—Please hurry."
>
> He mused a moment. "He is a soldier. He would not complain of a little thing—I will come." (142)

Across Chase Street from the Chase house, Edward S. Fonda, an implement dealer, a President of the Cedar Valley Seminary, a member of the Board of Directors of the Iowa Agricultural Society, and an owner of land next to the Garlands, also built a brick and stone house with a four-story tower up which a walnut stairway led. Both houses, with their glass-windowed cupolas, are, like the Garland home, prominent in the area today.

In 1871, about the time Garland's father built his farm home, Cyrus Foreman built the third "pretentious" home, of brick and masonry walls eighteen inches thick, a block east of the Seminary. Like the other houses, its brick and masonry walls were built to withstand not only Iowa's blizzards and sometimes cyclonic winds, but also as a protection against prairie fires which were still a hazard at that time. It too has a windowed cupola which, like the others, was intended to serve as a lookout when smoke from prairie fires appeared on the distant horison.

The Foreman house has two sections, the one to the east for the Foreman family, the one to the west for the "help." (One suspects the word "servant" never made it across the Mississippi River.) A nearby carriage house had a second-floor apartment for the man who cared for the horses downstairs and who occasionally served as the family coachman.

Cyrus Foreman was another of Osage's distinguished early lawyers, active in the affairs of the Cedar Valley Seminary, in agricultural affairs, and in local and state Democratic politics. Although never elected to office—in 1876 he was defeated by the perennial winner, Republican Congressman Nathaniel C. Deering—he was appointed in 1878 a member of the Board of Com-

missioners for the creation of the Iowa State Capitol Building in Des Moines.

Foreman's wife, Sarah, died the same year he ran against Congressman Deering and he deeded the house to a daughter. The third owner was Dr. Ralph Whitley, a son of a pioneer Osage physician, Dr. John L. Whitley. John Whitley was a partner of Sumner B. Chase, and married Chase's daughter.

Garland was somewhat aware of the life in these more "pretentious" homes in Osage. Once, in "A Day's Pleasure," he glances at such a home—"by no means the costliest in the town, but . . . the most attractive" with its "Swedish girl" [she was probably Norwegian] in help, and its piano, pictures, curtains and tea-stand. But Garland quickly passes over the home to return to the "forlorn, weary woman" who is the central character in his story.[13]

In those early years of Mitchell County's history, when the Garlands were trying to wrest a living raising wheat in an area where wheat should never have been planted, the land was being taken up by hundreds of others who also came out of the east. The county was open to settlement about 1850 after the last of the Sac and Fox and the Sioux Indians had been removed to the Dakota territory and Nebraska in the late 1840's. In 1853, the "Norwegian Colony" had taken up land in the St. Ansgar and Newburg localities, about ten miles north and west of Osage, along the Cedar River. Three years later, Simeon Rose McKinley, a distant relative of President William McKinley, brought his wife, Elizabeth and their ten children to the same area from Kanesville, Illinois. Simeon settled his family on the west bank of the Cedar, thus becoming one of the first "Americans" in that part of the county.[14] Unlike the Garlands who were to move away from Mitchell County, the McKinleys were to stay in the county and become one of its most prominent families.

Simeon was one of the founders of the town of Newburg; he built a hotel and was active in milling and farming. He was one of the founders of the Mitchell County Agricultural Society, a member of the district school board, broke the first road in Newburg Township and built the first bridge across the Cedar River in that area.

A McKinley son, Alden, was the first white child to die in the area; another son, A. B., and Catherine Allen were the first to marry there. Four of the sons served in the Civil War: Squire S., Seymour J., C. W. and D. R. Captain Seymour McKinley was wounded on seven different occasions. Squire S. served Mitchell County as Sheriff for the first two years after his return home.

Still another son, Lyman G., studied at the Cedar Valley Seminary in Osage (where Garland later was a student), and later at Cornell College in Iowa. Eventually he became the largest landowner in Mitchell County, expanding on his father's holdings. When, in 1869, the railroad was built up the east bank of the Cedar, Newburg ceased to be a town and part of the town's original plat became part of McKinley's farm. Lyman G. was well known for his Holstein cattle and Duroc Jersey hogs.

In 1879, Lyman G. married Nellie Eveleth, daughter of a Wisconsin Methodist minister. Their daughter, Ethel, graduated from the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts (now Iowa State University) and married R. K. Bliss, for years prominent in Iowa agriculture as Director of the Extension Division of the college. Two other daughters also were college graduates; one became a teacher, the other a YWCA official.

The McKinley's son, Harold, also an Iowa State College graduate, took over the family's land holdings (there were now four farms, and potato raising was a specialty). He also began an automobile sales agency in nearby St. Ansgar.

In 1950, Harold L. McKinley became nationally famous as a result of his stand against a directive of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. A *Reader's Digest* story reports that the Government branded him and three of his sons "law-breakers." Threatened with huge fines. the McKinleys, two of them World War II veterans, stood their ground against "Washington Tyranny."[15] "Harold McKinley was quite a man," says his son, Keith.

The three sons were Hal, who still operates "Acorn Park Farm," Donald, who runs the H. L. McKinley and Sons automobile agency in St. Ansgar, and Philip who was both a farmer and a poet:

I am a son of the prairie
  Son of the prairie of Ioway,
Brother to the ceaseless wind.

I share its moods:
The cold fury of the blizzard
or turmoli of a summer storm,
the gaiety of the summer breeze
as it dances with the grass and grain,
whispers secrets in the corn,
stops to caress a newborn lamb,
or with a change of mood blows up a rain.[16]

The fourth son is Keith McKinley, a graduate of Drake University Law School. Keith has served Mitchell County as Attorney. He is also President of the Osage Development Corporation which has brought several light industries to the city.

His wife, Adriane, is a native of Woodstock, Ontario, Canada; the two met while both were students at Drake. Although a non-Iowan until the last two decades, she has taken a strong interest in Iowa affairs; she is active in her church, in the North Iowa Council of the Girl Scouts, and in the Mitchell County Concert Association. Through President McKinley her husband can trace his roots back to old England; her own roots go back to English aristocracy. Her father is a Knight of the medieval order of Justice of St. John of Jerusalem. An adventure of another relative (as a ship captain, he saved Lord Nelson's life at sea) is recounted almost word for word in one of C. S. Forester's novels about Captain Horatio Hornblower.

In 1972, Keith and Adriane McKinley and their three children (fifth-generation midwesterners and Iowans) bought the Cyrus Foreman home in Osage, thus bringing together two Mitchell County histories. They have refurbished the house and added an indoor swimming pool. Both the family and the house are now well into their second Iowa century.

The McKinleys are not typical of Iowa settlers, but then neither, as this brief history has shown, are Garland's peasants. For myself, having seen more than just these two sides of the question (I am a native Iowan whose great-grandfather settled about twenty miles northeast of Garland's Dry Run Prairie in 1857), I prefer Allan G. Bogue's 1963 summary of the nineteenth century prairie experience:

> On the prairies of Illinois and Iowa—as in adjacent states—a mobile energetic population made the Corn Belt. Spurred by technological achievements and expanding markets, commercial farmers built one of the most prosperous agricultural economies the world had ever seen in this land, where each year the rains, the summer heat, and productive soils produced the broad-leafed fields of dark green. Here work often brought success; work plus good luck often brought great success. In the biographical sketches of the county histories there are implicit the values that the Corn Belt farmers cherished in the fading years of the nineteenth century. It was good to have pioneered here, to have been an "old settler," and made virgin prairie "productive" by stocking it with animals and raising bountiful crops. He had lived a good life who started with little and added to his acres so that in middle or old age he could start his sons on farms or rent to others. These, of course, were the values of the successful and only part of the reality of farm life in the prairie peninsula. More farmmakers got a head start in the race for success than admitted it in their biographies. There were two sides of unencumbered ownership. Some owners failed miserably. Land was often a lucrative speculation no less than a factor of production. But in sum the achievements had been striking. By the 1890's, the work of the pioneers was done; their successors were moving forward into the golden age of middlewestern agriculture.[17]

University of Iowa

NOTES

Much of the source materal in this paper comes from a lifetime of experience as a native Iowan whose ancestors on both sides were in Iowa before the Civil War. The McKinley family information is drawn from several interviews with Keith and Adriane McKinley, in person, through the mail and over the telephone. Other historcal information is drawn from two histories of Mitchell County, one published in 1883 and one in 1918, and from conversations with William "Bill" Biederman of rural Mitchell County, the acknowledged source of Mitchell County history, and a man known to several Garland scholars.

My comments on Chicago, Boston and Garland are drawn from my extensive reading in Garland, in American literature history, and in Chicago literature, including both primary and secondary materials.

Specific items are footnoted below.

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MICHIGAN'S FORGOTTEN SON— JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD

JOHN HEPLER

Although James Oliver Curwood in the 1920's was one of Michigan's outstanding native sons, he is little known today throughout the State. His novels, then best sellers in France, England, Canada, and the United States, are not often found on library shelves, even in Michigan. Needless to say, his lasting contributions to conservation are virtually unknown. So in the 50 years since his death, he has become almost a forgotten man whose name evokes the response, "James Oliver Who?" He deserves a better fate.

In 1927, the Owosso-born Curwood had a world-wide reputation. It is said he was being paid more per word for his stories than any other contemporary writer, including England's Poet Laureate, Rudyard Kipling, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. His 27 novels, published in 12 different languages, had sold in the U. S. alone 4 million hard-cover copies. At the same time, he had achieved fame for his efforts in the cause of conservation, yesteryear's name for what ultimately developed into the ecology movement.

"Anti-establishment," he lashed out at politics in national and state agencies concerned with conservation and helped lay the groundwork for important changes in laws affecting natural resources. One writer, Jerry Wright of Flint, points out that Curwood was 50 years ahead of his time when "it came to ecology."

In fact, it is possible to argue that Curwood's deep love for nature and his desire to preserve natural resources helped cause his death, a half century ago, on Saturday, August 13, 1927, just at the height of his fame.

The popular myth is that Curwood died from the bite of a poisonous snake. Relatives and friends knew of his unreasoning fear of reptiles and his nightmares that conjured up images of deadly serpents. From this knowledge sprang the popular misconception. But Mrs. Curwood Tate, one of his two daughters, has tried to set the record straight. While her father was alligator hunting and fishing that summer in the swamps near Venice, Florida, an unidentified insect bit him on the thigh. Treated with anti-toxins, the wound nonetheless, festered.

He was flown to Washington, D. C., for medical treatment and finally brought home to Owosso. But carbuncles developed and were lanced. The infection spread, and his throat became sore and he ran a high fever. More desperately ill with blood poisoning than he knew, he insisted, against the judgment of physicians and family, on driving from Owosso to Lansing for legislative hearings dealing with natural resources.

He reasoned that if he were not present to support the regulations affecting game hunting and forest preservation, particularly in view of his dedication to those interests, his absence might contribute to the bill's defeat. When he returned home a dying man, he dictated letters to key people in support of conservation. Had he heeded medical counsel, he might have lived. His sacrifice was the supreme one. But it was like Curwood—and his fictional heroes—to live and believe in a cause, and to be willing to die for it. He was a man of intense convictions.

When a wave of drinking touched Owosso school children in 1925, the "New York Times" reported that the writer threatened to kill bootleggers if they supplied his 12 year-old son with "moonshine." He meant exactly what he said.

He had a passionate belief that he would live to be 100 years old. The reason, explained in the "Cosmopolitan Magazine," in June, 1926, was that he was in love with the breath and pulse of life. He confessed that he understood nature's soul and loved every living manifestation of it, concluding that his love affair was adequate cause to sustain his life for a century. He died at 49!

Curwood coined the phrase "God's country." At first, it referred to the area from northwestern British Columbia to northeastern Quebec. But as the writer matured, the term em-

braced also Alaska and later all of nature itself. Over the same period, he was developing an awareness of the real danger of nature's destruction.

With almost religious fervor, he threw himself into the nationwide crusade for conservation measures. Along with such men as Gifford Pinchot, Governor of Pennsylvania, and President Theodore Roosevelt who were dedicated to preserving the country's forests and wild life, the writer published articles and spoke on the same themes. Even in his fiction, he frequently alluded to the problems of a diminishing wilderness.

It was he who brought about a government conference in Wisconsin. The result: the great Superior National Forest was saved from the lumberman's axe and the speculator's profits. Along with other members of the Isaac Walton League, he urged—successfully—the U. S. Government to appropriate 320 square miles of the Upper Mississippi River bottom.

In 1924, he addressed more than a thousand sportsmen in Chicago on the need to preserve the wilderness. He charged the Congress with being more concerned with self-interests than conservation. Fearless in his convictions, he helped save vast forests of Alaska from the exploitation that would occur once they were handed over "lock, stock, and barrel" to the politicians. Curwood was a force to be reckoned with.

Yet it was on his own home state that he vented his most bitter anger. His chief complaint was that the members of Michigan's Department of Conservation were political appointees whose knowledge and interests about wildlife were negligible. He accused the members of being "pussy-footers, buck passers, and ignoramuses." The problem of pollution, for example, was scandalous. A national authority in 1924 estimated that 85% of the nation's inland waters were polluted. Vegetation contaminated by the waters expired. Hair on the legs of cattle was dissolved, and livestock which drank from the tainted streams died. Even Curwood's beloved Shiawassee River had thickened with the scum of waste.

He wanted tough laws to stop pollution. He sought a guarantee that Michigan's miles of forests and rivers would not fall into the hands of the self-centered manipulators of modern commerce.

He advocated shorter hunting and fishing seasons, reduced bag limits, and the stocking of streams with game fish.

He believed conservation officers should have the same rigorous, scientific training as a dentist or doctor; that they should be uniformed and be backed by the force of law. He despised "game hogs" who hunted for the thrill of killing. Michigan, he believed, should spend as much money in the development and preservation of forests and wildlife as in the building of roads. Finally, he pestered the legislators to pass laws to stop the deplorable waste of natural resources before "Michigan's treasures" were totally destroyed.

His indomitable, bold campaign got legislative results and led to his appointment as Chairman of the Game, Fish, and Wildlife Commission of the Conservation Department. He took office January 1, 1927. But by August, eight months later, he was dead. His efforts, however, brought untold rewards to successive generations who love the out-of-doors. Michigan today is the richer because "Plain Jim" cared deeply about conservation and fought, literally, to the death for it.

In his earlier years, his attitude was conventional. Like many outdoorsmen of his time, he accepted the traditional point of view—that our natural resources were unlimited. As a kid from the wrong side of the tracks and a high school dropout, he lived in a community about 50 years from pioneer days. Owosso was surrounded by wild country and log cabins. Thus trapping where game was plentiful, he bagged in one season 1,100 muskrats and 40 minks.

Later, Ray Long, a magazine editor who printed Curwood's prose, noted that in the Owosso home, Jim's 27 guns were appropriately notched to record his big game kills, and from "cellar to garret" were countless furs and mounted heads. All testified his prowess as a killer.

The turning point in his life—from hunter to crusader—occurred in British Columbia in 1915 when he was 37 years old. He narrates the incident in "The Grizzly King," certainly one of his finest novels. Jim Langdon, a sensitive hunter, has been tracking a huge bear in a land where no other white hunter has ever been. In an accident, he has ruined his rifle and discarded it.

Now, on a granite ledge, high above a valley, Langdon meets Thor face to face. Defenseless and frightened, he watched the 1,200 pound monster straighten up to his full height of 9 feet. In the crisis, the grizzly appraises Jim, recognizes that the human means him no harm, and lumbers off.

Langdon, alone and unscathed, reflects aloud: "You great big god of a bear, you—you monster with a heart bigger than man. . . . If I'd have cornered you like that, I'd have killed you. And you! You cornered me and let me live!"

Jim Langdon, as "Jim" Curwood explains in one of his rare prefaces, is the author himself. He confesses to having once slaughtered four grizzlies in 120 minutes and having, thereby, destroyed 120 years of life.

Like the "game hogs" he later condemned, he had killed for the excitement of killing. He concluded he was "little less than a murderer." From that moment, "Thou Shalt Not Kill" became a guideline in his life, and he explained the concept in an essay that, after his death, was published in the "American Magazine," December, 1927.

Admitting that some men must kill for food, he raised a vital question about what he called man's instinct to kill: "Where does necessity end and wanton cruelty begin?" He contended that after centuries of slaughtering living things, man could not alienate himself from the lust to kill.

It became necessary, therefore, to spread the gospel of observing wild things and letting them live. The lust of killing not only destroyed the balance of nature but could exterminate the species. He advocated laws which would restrain humans' indwelling killer instinct, and he hoped a conservation program in the public schools would eradicate indiscriminate hunting.

As one reads of "Slip" Curwood's derring-do for the cause of preserving God's creations, he must admire the efforts of this 5′8½″—140 lb. fighter. Early on, he had learned to fend for himself, and in later years he stated that what little success he had achieved had been "pounded out with naked fists through many years of hard work."

Highly individualistic as a youngster, the "Plague of Owosso" earned the name "Slip" or "Slippery" because he always managed

to extricate himself from a variety of scrapes. At 7, for example, he led a gang of toughs on an attack against "rich kids."

In his first week at a new school in Ohio where his father had bought acres of rock in the mistaken notion they were viable farm land, Jim clobbered a teacher with a staunch right to the stomach.

On Lake Erie's shores, he fitted out a small fishing boat with a gaspipe cannon, raised the pirate skull and crossbones, and set sail. He fired at a lake schooner, was "captured," and put ashore at Sandusky, 30 miles from home.

Unable to farm the Ohio quarry, Curwood's father led the family back to Owosso. But young Jim, more concerned with woods and brooks than with words and books, was soon expelled from the 10th grade. One teacher moralized that Jim Curwood's "empty mind" was the "outstanding feature of the public schools." Another academician claimed that Curwood would not have been picked as one to be heard from later on in the world. And the high school principal was willing to award the prize for stupidity to any student who planned to make a living by writing.

These scholarly opinions notwithstanding, Curwood the Trouble-Maker earned two fortunes. The first was lost in the Post World War I depression. The second, at the time of his death, amounted to $889,000, mostly in gilt-edge securities. Certainly, he had done more than merely earn a living.

But his apprenticeship covered 10 years before he earned a cent with his pen. At age 9, he was writing stories which by the time he was 16—one authority guestimated—went to 100 chapters and 200,000 words! Other estimates put the wordage from 500 to 20,000. What is true is that he began early in his life grinding out endless lines of words, sometimes writing 12 hours a day.

As a Detroit journalist for the old "News-Tribune"—on and off for seven years—he continued learning to write, composing sentences, organizing ideas, and expressing himself. Then, somehow he concluded that a college education might help. The University of Michigan would not admit him through regular channels because he had not finished high school. He, therefore, took the entrance examination.

An amusing story demonstrates his brashness. One look at the questions convinced him he was in over his depth. But like his

fictional heroes who met crises head on, Curwood had a will to achieve. One question asked the respondents to select a year and state the tonnage of coal exported that year from the United States. Curwood's answer: 1492. Nil.

Both the gods and the university officials must have smiled, for he was admitted. Immediately trouble developed because he had no money. He decided to raise cash for tuition, fees, and books by going on the road as a drummer.

He invented what he called "a blood purifier," bottled the liquid, and with a horse and buggy set out to peddle his wares. Since the chief ingredient of his elixir was calomel, a laxative, he was purveying almost instant diarrhea. His days as a salesman were numbered; in fact, he narrowly escaped being tarred and feathered by irate customers.

The Ann Arbor experience lasted from 1898 to 1900. In the first year of the twentieth century, he returned to the Detroit newspaper. Then, he got the big break of his life. A friendly Canadian immigration official helped him land a publicity job for the government. His role was to write articles to encourage immigration to Canada. The pay was a pittance. In 1906, his salary and allotment for housing, travel and equipment was $200. In 1907, he got a $4 raise. But by 1908-09, his Canadian income reached $1,552.31.

Yet money was not really the important concern. Opportunity beckoned. A new world—the Canadian wilderness, thousands upon thousands of miles of it—opened up to him. Here was a vast land of adventure with magnificent sweeps of forests, cascading rivers, and tranquil lakes, an out-of-doors more exciting than anything he could imagine.

In 1909, he first visited the virgin land of the Great Northwest. For the next 18 years, his annual six-month odyssey to Canada's remote regions, often with visits to unexplored territory, schooled him. Here, he met an incredible variety of humans—French, Indians, and half breeds; lumber barons, Royal Canadian Mounties, and "gentle" professors; settlers, trappers, and "missioners" and drinkers, gamblers, and murderers. He learned to love as well as know wild life—animals and birds and trees and flowers.

All these he wove into romantic stories that fulfilled the dreams of millions for whom the northern wilderness replaced the lost frontier of 19th century America. They read his books in incredible numbers: "The River's End" (1919) over 100,000 copies; "The Valley of the Silent Man" (1920) 105,000 copies in prepublication subscription alone. "Kazan" (1914), which he wrote to compete with Jack London's "White Fang" and "The Call of the Wild," sold 500,000. In addition, magazines serialized his novels and short stories. His creative work included 33 books, 70 short stories, and 94 submitted movie scenarios. (The cinema industry made 20 of his novels into moving pictures.) Ivan Conger, editor of the "Curwood Collector," believes the Owosso author was the first American to earn over a million dollars.

With some exceptions, Curwood's stories unfold in a setting of the remote north country—grim, foreboding, relentless, and destructive in its ugly moods but lovely in spring and summer. On this tremendous stage, endless dramas run their course. Sometimes the chief character is a male; sometimes, a woman. Or, occasionally, the "hero" is a dog or a bear.

In "The River's End," Jim Keith, in disguise, returns to civilization to prove his innocence on the charge of murder. In "The Ancient Highways" (1925), Clifford Brant seeks to revenge the death of his father.

Heroines also carry burdens. "Isobel" (1913) protects her murderer husband from the law and her child from *le mort rouge*. In "God's Country—and the Woman" (1915), Josephine deals with blackmailers to protect her mother who had had an illegitimate child.

Like the "human heroes," the animals also are beset by problems. "Kazan"—¾ wolf—faces a recurrent conflict . . . the dog attraction to man and the wild attachment to his blind mate, "Gray Wolf." In the poignant "Nomads of the North" (1919), a bear and a dog develop a father-son relationship.

Literary critics, however, scorned Curwood's fiction. They said his novels were melodramatic, his characters unbelievable, his long explanations tedious, and his portraits of human behavior seldom credible.

Although adverse critical opinion hurt him—for he craved the recognition of literary people—his theory of Creation accounted

for a philosophy of fiction requiring a gripping story rich with suspense and intrigue. He explained in an essay that the "Great Creative Force (God) . . . made everything a pest and menace to something else: it created an earth populated with combative forces; it allowed no pleasure which did not demand its price."

From this thesis he portrayed life as a titanic struggle between good and evil. Incorruptible Paladins in a world peopled by bad guys wander through the wild places to right wrongs, to save forests of jack pine from destruction, to wreak vengeance on evil-doers, or to defend a fair damsel in distress.

These pipe-smoking men in broad-brimmed hats are "straight-arrow" with a will to do the right thing. Almost every time, in the crisis, luck plays a vital role in victory. Unfortunately, the "king-sized" heroes all have the same weakness: they adore women's tresses. In real life, the author had a "thing" about beautiful hair, the longer the better, and that passion is transmitted to all his male heroes who sentimentalize females.

In this good-evil conflict, still popular today in the movies, fiction, and on TV, Curwood idealized the age-old dream of Good Triumphant. His epics treat of faith, courage, purity, and the will to win. Millions of Americans believed these were the virtues of our past, told and retold in the stories of our nation's development. The idealized people and morals were always the same. Only locale changed. That was the major appeal of Curwood's fiction.

Some years before his tragic death, Curwood built a Norman Chateau on the banks of his beloved Shiawassee River. Curwood's Castle, as it is called, is a romantic symbol of a writer who believed in a better world for all of us. To that end, he dedicated his life and work. He needs to be rediscovered.

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SPOON RIVER'S "EPILOGUE"

HERB RUSSELL

For over sixty years now, Edgar Lee Masters' "Epilogue" has presented readers with a perplexing conclusion to *Spoon River Anthology*, and no one has ever done much with it. Poet May Swenson dismissed it in a sentence in her 1962 introduction to *Spoon River*—it "begins like *Faust* and ends a 'mishmash' "—and Midwestern scholar John T. Flanagan did not mention it at all in his 1974 critical overview, *Edgar Lee Masters: The Spoon River Poet and His Critics* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow).[1] A third writer remarked in his book-length study of the *Anthology* that the "Epilogue" was "a very bad poem" and one which "has been generally—and properly—ignored," and so he ignored it too, thereby adding to a throng of commentators who over the years have shunned the "Epilogue" in preference for the "epitaphs."[2]

Unfortunately, *Spoon River's* finale is the book's most troublesome section (it should be a poem but instead is a play), and its continued neglect can only lead to a misunderstanding of *Spoon River* as a whole. Although one of the characters within the "Epilogue" says its action is a "puzzle," we can do something to solve this puzzle if we identify its parts and themes and then review the problems which were troubling Masters when he readied it for publication.[3]

The chief source of confusion, I believe, is that the "Epilogue" is only a tardy afterthought to *Spoon River's* first edition. When the book first appeared in April 1915, it consisted of 212 epitaphs, plus an opening poem ("The Hill") and a final poem ("The Spooniad"). All these had been written between the spring of 1914 and January 1915 (during that surge of creativity which Masters would never again equal), and collectively they make for a remarkable history of life and death in the villages of "court-

house America."[4] But Masters was not satisfied with his book. He wanted more characters, and he wanted a new conclusion, perhaps because he had unwisely ended the first edition with "The Spooniad," that puzzling mock-epic which stops in mid-sentence. In any event, when he published *Spoon River's* "definitive edition" in 1916, he added thirty-one new epitaphs and a new conclusion, the "Epilogue" (which he said he composed in the "summer and fall" of 1915).[5]

Unfortunately, some of the new poems were woefully out of key with the earlier ones, and the new conclusion was even more baffling than the earlier one.[6] Instead of ending his book with a brief, poetic counterpart to "The Hill," Masters added a lengthy play written in verse, and instead of continuing with his familiar villagers, he now introduced some new and entirely unexpected protagonists—the devil, a mismatched French couple, and nature! Because these interact in only the most mechanical ways, the "Epilogue" seems (to me) to be made up of three different works (in conjunction with the fragment of a fourth). Since there is no accurate outline of these parts, and because they must be taken individually to understand the whole, let us briefly examine each.

In the first, God and the devil meet in the dusky graveyard of Spoon River and play a game of checkers. When God is defeated, the devil proclaims a period of atheism and sends for two other mischiefmakers, Loki and Yogarindra. After some preliminary high jinks, these decide to "give a play"; it will be directed by the devil and observed by the dead of Spoon River, and when these are summoned through a blast on a trumpet, the second part (a play within a play) begins.

The devil delivers the prologue, reminding the newly-arisen of the power of evil and of mankind's helplessness. To illustrate, he presents an impressionistic drama set in France in the days of the Old Regime: in this untitled play, a husband "upright and true" discovers that his sex-obsessed wife has been repeatedly unfaithful to him, and, losing control of himself, he kills her. For this he is sentenced to the gallows, and because he is unable to tell his story, the devil steps in to say that he will do so through still another play, "Laocoon."

This, a play for voices, barely gets underway, however, before approaching daybreak forces the devil, his confederates, and the

ghosts of Spoon River back to their usual haunts. The "Laocoon" fragment ends and is replaced by another play for voices.

This unnamed final section dispels the gloom of the preceding when "The Voices of Spring" and "The Sun" and other things and beings associated with light and renewal attest to the divinity of nature and to nature's "Infinite Law" and "Infinite Life." On this pantheistic and optimistic note, the "Epilogue" and the augmented *Spoon River* come to an end.

But what does it all mean?

Well, that is open to interpretation, of course, but it is accurate to say that the ideas of the "Epilogue" are standard to Masters' literary canon: in his autobiography, and poems, and novels, as well as in scattered instances in his histories and biographies, it was his custom to write cynically about the Christian religion (as he does here in the first part), and to regard marriage as a trap (the second part), and to seek comfort from these and other troubling matters by turning to, and sometimes deifying, nature (the final part). Because these same ideas are also sprinkled liberally throughout *Spoon River's* epitaphs, it is esthetically sound that they are touched on again in the conclusion.[7]

Since this is the case, and because these central themes are not in themselves particularly unique or difficult to comprehend, the sixty years' difficulty with the "Epilogue" must rest not so much with what is said but with the vehicle of expression—the drama.

I should pause here to say that while there are already two discussions of Masters as dramatist, neither of these mentions the largely-neglected play which concludes *Spoon River*, and neither addresses the problems which must be highlighted in order to understand it.[8] Therefore, let us briefly review Masters' irregular use of the drama, concentrating first on the circumstances which usually prevailed when he turned to it, and then focusing on 1915 and the factors which seem to have influenced the publication of his "Epilogue."

The writer's attitude represents the key to understanding, for he had a long-time habit of equating drama with revenue: that is, he published his plays when he especially wanted or needed money, and he tended to ignore them at other times. When, for instance, he was one of Chicago's top lawyers and in partnership

with Clarence Darrow, from 1903-1911, he was for several years making a good living, but he was not setting much aside and was much troubled by bad investments.[9] In his spare moments he daydreamed of making "enough money on a play to retire," and during these years he published at his own expense a half-dozen plays, none of which was ever produced, as he mentions in his autobiography:

> I wanted to make money on which to write poetry. I longed to escape the life of a pack horse, and I had entered a partnership that I did not relish to do that, and then had written these plays which did not violate my principles of truly portraying life, but did not get produced either, and thus did nothing to emancipate me.[10]

He was to be given financial room to breathe in 1911 when his bank account reached a healthy $12,000, at which time he paused in his publication of plays.[11]

He did not publish another play (except for the "Epilogue") until 1921, when, as a result of protracted and very bitter divorce proceedings, his mind was again on money. (It was in that year that he published a dramatic introduction to a collection of poems, *The Open Sea.*) When his divorce was finalized in May 1923, Masters lost everything—money, townhouse, and farm—as well as what was left of his good name.[12] He realized he could no longer practice law, at least not in Chicago, and so he moved to New York City, where he soon began work on a play.[13] He also began to accumulate debts and by 1925 he owed money to many people.[14] The result was that in the following year when he undertook the responsibility of a new marriage, he also turned actively to drama, releasing his first separately published play in fifteen years, *Lee: A Dramatic Poem.*

During the following year he prepared another drama, *Jack Kelso*, published in 1928 (when his son from his second marriage came along), and in 1930, he released under one title three more plays, *Gettysburg, Manila, Acoma.*[15] A little later, after his iconoclastic biography of Abraham Lincoln did irreversible damage to his literary reputation (and to his pocketbook), he published still another play, *Godbey.*[16] He published additional plays in the heart of The Great Depression and was still submitting

them as late as 1938 when he could barely make ends meet; unfortunately, none of these later plays was much more successful than his early ones (in part because of the mercantile muse which inspired them), and one of his old friends has noted that Masters at last came to hate the drama for he saw that his efforts with it had been misdirected.[17]

For at least thirty-five years, however (between 1903 and 1938), he turned almost automatically to his plays on those occasions when he suffered financial pressures. The significance of this tendency to the present discussion is that in the "summer and fall" of 1915, Masters was poorer than he had been in years, and when he sat down to work on an "Epilogue" for *Spoon River,* he sat, alas, on an empty wallet.

His economic troubles had begun in January 1915, after he had completed the original 212 epitaphs. He had put so much energy into the composition of his poems that his health broke. He suffered a severe bout with pneumonia, nearly died, and when he returned to his law office in May, he was so weak that he could work only a few hours a day.[18] The number of those seeking legal assistance from his office had declined, both because of his enforced absence from his office and because of the notoriety caused by the epitaphs as they had appeared in *Reedy's Mirror*:

> In these days now back in the office I could see at once that clients did not come to me. I heard that the report was about that I had closed my office, that I was in New York, that I had gone to England. . . . I sat in my office waiting for law business, troubled beyond measure about money. Clients did not come in, but people from New York and all over the country called to see me as the man who wrote *Spoon River.*[19]

He was in fact so financially strapped that he had had to borrow $200 at the beginning of his illness in January, and for all the rest of 1915, while his "finances were growing exigent," he had only one profitable law case (heard in August and September). The decision for that case was appealed, however, and he received no great fee from it until much later. In the meantime, "the bills for living went on" for Masters, his wife, and their three children, and he was "making nothing."[20]

Nor did his literary masterpiece at first generate much money. Although *Spoon River* went through seven editions in seven months, these must have been small editions, for the book was not the best-seller of 1915, nor was it runner-up, or even in third place.[21] In fact, Masters and his book are not even mentioned in most best-seller lists of 1915, a fact which suggests *Spoon River's* notoriety far exceeded the size of the royalty checks it brought in.

It was all these circumstances, I believe, which influenced the publication of the "Epilogue": Masters was in deep financial trouble in 1915, and he would have broken a habit of some thirty-five years if he had not prepared to publish something of a dramatic nature.

His problem was that he failed to see (or chose to ignore) the fact that it is artistically impossible to graft on to *Spoon River's* post-Civil War social history this dramatic conclusion which leads up to—and then away from—the pre-nineteenth century domestic tragedy of the Frenchman and his wife. In fact, all Masters accomplished of a positive nature with his "Epilogue" was finally to see in print his first commercially published play. The chief negative result was, unfortunately, somewhat more far-reaching: simply stated, his "Epilogue" is *Spoon River's* terminal and permanent reminder of just how tentative his talent was. The pity of the story is that if Masters could only have prepared his play more skillfully me might have succeeded in drawing favorable attention to his name as a playwright and perhaps have achieved that financial well-being which most of his life eluded him.

NOTES

1. *Spoon River Anthology* (New York: Collier Books), p. 10.
2. Robert D. Narveson, "Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*: Background, Composition, and Reputation," Diss. University of Chicago, 1962, p. 171*n*.
3. *Spoon River Anthology,* p. 310.
4. Edgar Lee Masters, *Across Spoon River* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1936), pp. 339, 353.
5. Ibid., p. 366.
6. While most of the poems are nineteenth century in spirit, the epitaphs of Scholfield Huxley and Jonathan Houghton reference an airplane and an automobile; see Narveson, p. 112.
7. See, respectively, the epitaphs of Deacon Taylor, John Ballard, Godwin James, A. D. Blood; and the epitaphs of Mrs. and Mrs. McGee, Mr. and Mrs. Pantier,

A. D. Blood; and the epitaphs of Mr. and Mrs. McGee, Mr. and Mrs. Pantier, Doc Hill, Amanda Barker; and the epitaphs of Isaiah Beethoven, Washington McNeely and Conrad Siever.

8. See Lois Hartley, "The Early Plays of Edgar Lee Masters," *Ball State University Forum,* 7 (Spring, 1966), 26-38, and Henry W. Wells, "Varieties of American Poetic Drama," *Literary Half-Yearly,* 14, pt. 2 (1973), 14-46.
9. *Across Spoon River,* pp. 290-93.
10. See Frank K. Robinson, *Edgar Lee Masters: An Exhibition in Commemoration of the Centenary of His Birth* (Austin: Universty of Texas, 1970), p. 10, and *Across Spoon River,* p. 372.
11. *Across Spoon River,* pp. 322-23.
12. For an account of Masters' financial troubles and his divorce, see Herb Russell, "Edgar Lee Masters' Final Years in the Midwest," *Essays in Literature,* 4 (Fall 1977), 212-20.
13. Robinson, p. 24.
14. Edgar Lee Masters, Letter to Eunice Tietjens, 8 July 1925. The Masters-Tietjens Papers, The Newberry Library, Chicago.
15. For his work on *Kelso,* see Robinson, p. 25.
16. For the economic and other reverberatons from *Lincoln: The Man,* see Dorothy Dow's "An Introduction to Some Letters," The Masters-Dow Papers, The Newberry Library, Chicago. For the order in which the books were published, see Robinson, p. 60.
17. Dow, "An Introduction to Some Letters."
18. *Across Spoon River,* pp. 358-59.
19. Ibid., p. 362.
20. Ibid., pp. 355-78.
21. "Voices of the Living Poets," *Current Opinion,* 59 (November 1915), 349.

"FROM EAST-SIDE TO SOUTH-SIDE WITH LOVE:" THE FRIENDSHIP OF SHERWOOD ANDERSON AND PAUL ROSENFELD

David D. Anderson

This essay is for Eleanor Copenhaver Anderson, with the promise that more about Sherwood and Paul will follow.

On September 1, 1916, Sherwood Anderson, who was to turn forty twelve days later, published his first novel, *Windy McPherson's Son.* Anderson's path to modest prominence as a published first-novelist had been longer and more devious than most writers of his youthful literary status: from his birth in Camden, Ohio, through a succession of small Ohio towns, culminating in Clyde; an erratic family life and a limited education; common labor and night school in Chicago; corporal status in Clyde's Company "I," Sixth Ohio Infantry, in Georgia and Cuba during the Spanish American War; a high school diploma at twenty-four; writing and selling advertising in Chicago; marriage; business success in Cleveland and Elyria, Ohio; fatherhood; a sudden myth-ridden break with business and a determination to write; a return to advertising in Chicago; membership in a loose literary group; divorce and remarriage.

In spite of slow, minimal sales, the book was a critical success—Ben Hecht, a Chicago friend, wrote in the Chicago *News* that ". . . In its pages lies the promise of a new human comedy and a new, fresh, clean and virile spirit in American literature"—and it appeared to Anderson, who had brought with him to Chicago a trunkful of manuscripts, that he might be able to earn a living as a writer, that, indeed there might be a place for him in the new American literature then unfolding and celebrated by his friends in Chicago.

With this initial success behind him and with favorable reviews of the book in the New York literary journals—Waldo Frank, also author of a first novel shortly to be published, reviewed it as "Emerging Greatness" in the first issue of *Seven Arts* in November, 1916, and Anderson's story "Queer" was accepted for publication in December by that journal—after an initial exchange of letters with the editors of *Seven Arts* he began a correspondence with Frank and late in 1916 he planned his first trip to New York as a published author. His Chicago friend Floyd Dell was already in New York, at work on the *Masses*, which had published Anderson's "Hands" in March, 1916; Margaret Anderson was planning to take *The Little Review* East; and Sherwood looked forward to a new experience in what was for him an entirely new role as a published novelist.

When Anderson arrived in New York he went almost directly to the *Seven Arts* editorial office, where he met Frank, a twenty-seven-year-old Yale B.A. and M.A. who was one of the founders and the associate editor of the magazine, and Van Wyck Brooks, thirty, Harvard Phi Beta Kappa and B.A. Both of them were impressed with the dynamic, flamboyant forty-year-old advertising man who so brashly threatened the same literary traditions they had already begun to challenge. They welcomed him to the City, to *The Seven Arts*, and to the group that surrounded it: the editor and founder, James Oppenheim, at thirty-four the oldest of the group; the brilliant, deformed Randolph Bourne, thirty; and Paul Rosenfeld, twenty-six, Yale, 1912, traveled, independently well-to-do, Jewish, and determined, like the others, on a career that would revolutionize the arts in America.

Anderson and Rosenfeld met at Waldo Frank's apartment, and they made an engagement for lunch the next day at the Yale Club, of which Rosenfeld was a member. Twenty-five years later, shortly after Anderson's death and five years before his own, Rosenfeld described that lunch in a sketch that reveals much about both men at the time:

> The scene was the dining room of the Yale Club on a spring day in 1917. Unusually at ease I was lingering over lunch there with a broad-breasted kind of individual whose wavy-haired, bullety-cheeked head and warm eyes, color of iodine, by turns resembled those of an actor, a racetrack-sport, a salesman, a Shelleyesque poet and half the population of rural America. . . .
>
> With an elbow on the cloth, one paw supporting his head while the other occasionally and delicately plucked at some grapes, my guest regaled me first with the tale of a female Falstaff up in Michigan, then with a strong recent impression of Randolph Bourne, "the only man whose political talk ever had interested him." I began telling him about another brilliant young fellow, the pianist and composer Leo Ornstein; of his conception of universal sympathy as the possible goal of existence. "Still, how are you going to feel in sympathy with policemen?" suddenly I asked, only half jocose, glancing through the window across coppery rooves at the emerging image of something beefy on a sidewalk, wooden in its blue uniform, harboring readily inflammable brutality. Hatred of these physical brethren, "New York's finest," was one of the apparently irreducible remnants of a childhood.
>
> Anderson leaned back, laughing, "Oh," he drawled, "I see them when they reach home at night. I see them taking off their boots. Their feet hurt them." . . .

The impact of this moment of insightful compassion remained with Rosenfeld as "the heroic good will in Sherwood Anderson"; later, when he read *Windy McPherson's Son*, Rosenfeld described it as a novel dealing with a hero "who seemed intrinsically American as no other since Ragged Dick," and its author became for Rosenfeld one possessed of "an inordinate sensitiveness to rightness and wrongness in things." Rosenfeld never forgot Anderson's first impression on him, and the depth of his compassion was displayed again and again to Rosenfeld over the years.

Upon Anderson's return to Chicago a correspondence began between the two. It was to continue for the rest of Anderson's life, remaining at the level of intimacy and honesty with which it began in 1917. Each sent the other essays and bits of fiction for comment, and each solicited the other's reactions to already published work. Although *The Seven Arts* ceased publication in October 1917, and Rosenfeld served briefly in the army at Fort Humphries, Virginia, in 1918, their correspondence continued, while Anderson put *Winesburg, Ohio* in its final form. After his discharge Rosenfeld returned to writing, contributing

essays on literature and music to *The New Republic*, and, in 1920, when the *Dial* appeared to replace *The Seven Arts*, he became its music critic. That year he also published his first book, *Musical Portraits*.

In his music criticism Rosenfeld deferred to no one, but from the beginning of their acquaintance he believed that Anderson had deeper insights into people and a sharper intuitive sense of the nature of art and the life of the artist than his own; consequently, before his essay on their mutual friend Waldo Frank appeared in the *Dial* in January, 1921, Rosenfeld sent it to Anderson for comment; Anderson's reply was characteristic of their relationship:

> Dear Paul:
>
> I feel more a human being this morning and want to try to add a word about the Waldo article. Do you really feel it essential to write it at all? After reading this article, I have quite sharply the feeling that you are a little too close to the man and his problem to write of it. . . .

Conversely, a few months later, concerning another article, he wrote:

> Really dear Paul—
>
> I wish I had some way of telling you how glad I am that some man is writing constructive stuff. All day I have been thinking of you and tonight I chanced to pick up *Freeman* and saw your thing on "The World's Illusion." It was like a clear stream of wind in a murky town. What things you have done this year. What have you not gained in clear statement, beauty of style, strength of vision. . . .
>
> Why should I not pour out before you a little of what I feel. I am so often humble before your sanity, the clear beauty of things you say and do. It isn't just the thing in *Freeman*—it's the tendency of your mind nowadays, your gripping and regripping the real things.
>
> I'm so damned glad of you, Paul.

Rosenfeld's response was prompt: three days later he wired Anderson, inviting him on a trip to Europe, with his passage paid. They were to leave New York on May 21, 1921. Anderson, to whom such a trip in such company had been little more than

a dream, accepted eagerly, almost humbly. Arrangements were made for Tennessee Mitchell, Anderson's second wife, to accompany them, and Sherwood spent three months of eager anticipation, at the same time finishing his collection of stories, *The Triumph of the Egg*.

During these months Rosenfeld arranged for a New York showing of Anderson's paintings, the crude, vigorous, imaginative watercolors that he had been turning out at irregular intervals since 1918. The exhibit, at the Sunwise Turn book store, was modestly successful, and enough paintings were sold to insure a pleasant trip for Sherwood and Tennessee. Of the showing, Rosenfeld wrote,

> First, as to the pictures. They are hanging in the Sunwise Turn, and look swell, smaller than I even remembered. The new ones are up to the best standard of the old, and all are very sensitive and rich. Indeed, there is very much improvement. . . .

Then, typical of their friendship and indicative of Rosenfeld's nature, the letter turned to other things:

> I wish I might indeed do something to make your life and everybody's life in the U.S.A. more fruitful. I would like to be able to fight for you and for all the rest who are doing good work, and create some sort of atmosphere in which it is easier for such as you to exist. Of course, writing about other people's work isn't altruism on my part—that's the way I get fun. As for the music in life I would like to be able to feel a music everywhere I go, like the lady riding to Banbury Cross. I hope this summer I shall discover that I have adjusted myself to New York, and am able to work here as well as I can anywhere. . . .
>
> We'll get out of it yet, Sherwood, I know. One day something will happen, and after that, there will be ideas at every street corner, and rivers of living water in the street, and the truth between every brick. Anyway, what ever we do and are, we'll make first-rate manure, and the "new people, the young strangers, coming, coming, always coming" will grow straighter and fatter out of us. Somebody's got to be the manure, and it might as well be us. . . .

Anderson's reply, after telling Rosenfeld that "I will be sending you along the passport with my income tax receipt and all the other signatures, pictures, scrolls, etc. need to get out of the country . . ." was also characteristically personal and honest:

> In the matter of form, Paul, I have much to say to you that we shall have an opportunity to say this summer. One thing I would like you to know is this: as far as I am concerned, I can accept no standard I have ever seen as to form. What I want most is to be and remain always an experimenter, an adventurer. If America could have the foolish thing sometimes spoken of as "Artistic Maturity" through me, then America could go to the devil. . . .
>
> The prospect of this summer with the three of us together stirs me deeply every time I think of it. . . .

On May 14, 1921, Anderson, Tennessee, and Rosenfeld sailed on the *Rochambeau,* but it was not as a trio of the expatriates who, singly or in groups, were finding their ways to Paris in increasing numbers; rather it was an opportunity for two friends to talk, and, Sherwood insisted, for Rosenfeld and Tennessee to become friends. For Rosenfeld it was an opportunity to share with Sherwood the culture that he loved; for Sherwood, nearly forty-five, it was his chance to learn not only about European culture, but, in perspective, about his own, about the Mid-America that he knew would remain the foundation of his life and the substance of his work.

In Paris, Anderson, Rosenfeld, and Tennessee wandered the streets; they met and talked with artists, writers, waiters, and cab drivers; Anderson and Gertrude Stein developed the closeness that lasted until Anderson's death and beyond, and Anderson kept a journal, a remarkable work that was not for publication, even in the fragments that he might have used in putting together his *Notebook* a few years later. In his Paris notebook Anderson gives numerous insights into the close relationship between him and Rosenfeld and the intellectual stimulation that Rosenfeld's company gave him. On one occasion he wrote:

> Dined with P on the sidewalk facing the river on the Quai d' Orsay. Working men went past along the sidewalk. He made two comments that have remained in my mind. First he spoke of the French talent for work. Except the niggers on rivers in Alabama, who sing as they work and who do an astonishing amount of hard labor without apparent effort, I have never seen any other people who take work for granted, as do the French. Here in Paris and in spite of the terrific suffering of the war one never sees the tired discouraged faces so characteristic [sic] of American cities.
>
> Paul also spoke of a sense of ownership of France in the French. It is true. It is like an immense stock company with big and little owners. Everyone is settled down here. Men stay in the place to which fate has assigned them. A certain freedom of action and of living is achieved. We at home have all been fed upon the notion that it is our individual duty to rise in the world. No doubt this philosophy has worked out with a certain splendor for a few individuals but on the other hand it may have much to do with our national weariness. . . .
>
> One gets, as P's remark suggests a sense of other standards here. It is perhaps because every Frenchman feels himself as in some way having a share in France. The country goes on. In the past beautiful things have been done. Even though a man is a waiter in a cafe under the shadow of the cathedral of Notre Dame he feels himself in some obscure way a part of the cathedral. Frenchmen built it. . . .

Shortly after their return from Europe it was announced that Anderson had won the first *Dial* Prize of two thousand dollars, a prestigeous award for a promising young writer. Anderson, at forty-five, accepted gratefully. His marriage to Tennessee was becoming strained, and he began to think that he might make a permanent break with Chicago and advertising. In late October, 1921, he sent Rosenfeld an inscribed copy of the first edition of *Windy McPherson's Son,* and at a low point after the exhileration of Paris, conversation and a glimpse of a culture two thousand years older than his own, he wrote,

> . . . Now, at this time, in America, culture is not a part of our lives out here in Mid-America. We are all, businessmen, workers, farmers, town, city and country dwellers, a little ashamed of trying for beauty. We are imprisoned. There is a wall about us. You will see, as you get into the

> spirit of the *New Testament,* how that wall has become a symbol of life to me. More men than you and I will ever know have become embittered and ugly in America, Paul. . . . Immaturity is the note of the age, and immaturity is a wall too. . . .
>
> I'll probably run away somewhere. There is so much work I want to do. . . .

As Anderson's break with Tennessee and Chicago neared, he and Rosenfeld each began to plan—independently and unknown to each other—to write an essay defining the nature of his understanding of the other, of the other's work, and of his worth as a human being. Rosenfeld's essay, "Sherwood Anderson," appeared in the *Dial* in January, 1922; Anderson's "Paul Rosenfeld" appeared in "Four American Impressions" in the *New Republic* of October 11, 1922. The former later appeared in Rosenfeld's *Port of New York* in 1924; the latter was reprinted in *Sherwood Anderson's Notebook* in 1926.

Rosenfeld's essay is at once a tribute to Anderson and an intelligent critical appraisal of what he had accomplished and tried to accomplish in his work. As a man, Anderson emerges as ". . . the man who looks like a racing tout and a divine poet, like a movie actor and a young priest, like a bartender, a business man, a hayseed, a mama's boy, a satyr, and an old sit-by-the-stove. It is himself as his father and his mother, as the people who moved about him in Clyde, Ohio, in his childhood and moved away from him, the many thousand humble and garish lives he has touched, the men he has done business with, the women he has taken, have made him."

Rosenfeld sees as clearly the relationship between Anderson and his work and between Anderson and the lives he had touched. He sees too Anderson's determination to give his people the voice they had been denied:

> Out of the feeling of life the style arises, the words charged with the blood and essence of the man. For quite as Anderson hears his own inner flux through the persons of other men, through materials and constructions, so, too, he hears it in the language itself. Strange and unusual words do not have to be summoned. He hears the thin vocabulary of his inarticulate fellows not only as concepts of concrete objects, but as poems charged with transcendental significance. Words are bifurcated in this mind; while the one wing rests on the ground, and remains symbol of the common object by which generations of English speakers have managed to make themselves their offspring survive materially, the other points into blue air, becomes symbol of the quality of inner life engendered by the material preoccupations. . . . He knows that when in writing he searches for touch with his fellows, he feels his way blindly in the dark along a thick wall. . . .

Anderson, to whom Rosenfeld sent an advance copy of the essay, reacted promptly and deeply:

> The article is very beautiful, Paul, and in it I feel a hammering on and a breaking-down of walls between us, too. I have always wanted from you . . . just this understanding, not of what is accomplished, but of the thing aimed at. . . .
>
> It is very beautiful and gives me the warmest feeling of living comradeship I've ever had. . . .

Anderson's response in the *New Republic* was briefer but no less pointed. Rosenfeld was, to Anderson, "of all our American writers . . . the one who is most unafraid. . . ." Of Rosenfeld's work, Anderson wrote,

> . . . His vocabulary is immense and he cares very, very much for just the shade of meaning he is striving to convey. Miss Jane Heap recently spoke of him as "our well dressed writer of prose," and I should think Paul Rosenfeld would not too much resent the connotations of that. For, after all, Rosenfeld is our man of distinction, the American, it seems to me, who is unafraid and unashamed to live for things of the spirit as expressed in the arts. I get him as the man walking cleanly and boldly and really accepting, daring to accept, the obligations of the civilized man. To my ears that acceptance has made his prose sound clearly and sweetly across many barren fields. To me it is often like soft bells heard ringing at evening across fields long let go to the weeds of carelessness. . . .

With the break with Chicago and Tennessee final, Anderson went to Reno early in 1923 to establish residency to divorce

Tennessee and Marry Elizabeth Prall, whom he had met in New York. But Tennessee withheld her consent, and his projected six-weeks residency became nearly a year, during which he painted, worked on *Horses* and *Men* and *Straw*, which became *A Story Teller's Story*, as well as a fragment of an impressionistic life of Lincoln, and wrote hundreds of letters, many of them to Paul and most of them indicative of the sense of isolation that he felt in the midst of the alien beauty of the desert and mountains. *Many Marriages*, which was published that Spring, was dedicated to Paul.

On June 12, 1923, from Reno, he wrote to Rosenfeld,

> . . . You must know, Paul, that I am one given to quite terrible fits of depression that at times almost approach insanity. Only in work and in a few people in whom I feel the power to love do I escape. It is that has drawn me to Elizabeth. . . . Among men I get this from you and I do want you to know, Paul, that it entails no demands. I want you to be able to work up to the full power that is in you, not to be unhappy, and I suppose I want you to love me whether I deserve it or not.

Again, on July 4, he wrote:

> . . . O, Paul, do you not wish you were a painter! I can't apparently write and try to paint both, and there is so much yet I want to write. . . .
>
> The West—really, Paul, it is terrible underneath and makes you understand what most of America must have been a hundred years ago. I'll tell you stories of the chief citizens of this town someday that will raise your hair. Truly I fancy most great American families were founded on a basis we never dreamed of. Jim Fisk would be an angel out here.
>
> But there is grandeur in the country itself.

On September 4, he wrote,

> I have been thinking of you steadily all day. Perhaps working on this book makes me realize more and more what I owe you. It is a lot.
>
> I have been thinking, too, of your little house, of the apple orchard on the opposite hillside, of your sitting in the room there, you in the room in New York, at the piano, the soft light in the street outside.
>
> I hope you are working well. I am, I think, pretty well.

And on January 15, 1924,

> Have just read the Bourne article. If the book will hold so high, closely-knit a tone it will be very beautiful. This, dear Paul, is what I meant when I spoke of your aristocracy. No one else in America has it. You write of things of the mind and spirit without blatting. My copy is now wornout. I send it to people, ask them to read it and send it back. Such writing, when it comes to you, makes me more proud and glad that I can call you my friend than I can tell you.

With Anderson's departure from Reno, divorce in hand and married immediately to Elizabeth, a new phase began in his life. Determined not to return to Chicago or advertising nor to return to New York, he began a conscious search for a place with which he might identify and where he might work. Rosenfeld, thoroughly identified with New York, sold his house in Westport and remained in the city. *Port of New York*, which Anderson read with enthusiasm, did not sell well, and, although Anderson wrote Rosenfeld that "Whenever I am in any creative work I go to your work and draw from it something I need," Rosenfeld became discouraged and depressed, especially as journals began to reject his essays because of what they saw as floridity. He put on weight and became irritable. Anderson, himself still undergoing periods of depression, tried to cheer him up:

> As for you, dear Paul, you are terrible, letting me go sometimes for months and then giving me hell suddenly when I have not written for three weeks, but you are also one I have to have. I can't well get on without you, and when I do not write I go about having imaginary conversations with you. I'm a mystic. Your house is my house. I do not think you can shut me out. . . .
>
> For God's sake do not get cheerful before I do.

In 1925 Anderson found the place he had been looking for, in the mountains of western Virginia. There he built his house, Ripshin Farm, outside Troutdale, and later he owned, edited,

and published the weekly papers in Marion. While Anderson's life seemed to take on a measure of equilibrium as he identified himself with the place and its people, Rosenfeld's did not. Although he attempted to concentrate his critical efforts on the discovery of new talent, particularly among American composers, but also among writers and painters as well, his novel, *Boy in the Sun*, published in 1928, was unsuccessful, others were not published, and, as the Depression began to make itself felt, he lost most of his personal financial security and was increasingly dependent upon free-lance writing to maintain himself. At the same time the *Dial* and other journals receptive to his work collapsed under the economic pressures of the times.

As the Depression intensified, two emerging issues tended to alienate the two friends. Movement leftward among intellectuals, including Anderson, frightened Rosenfeld not only because of its potential impact upon what remained of his financial security, but because he saw the demands of the leftists upon artists as infringements upon their intellectual and artistic integrity. As Hitler came to power in Germany, Rosenfeld quickly began a lonely one-man campaign of opposition.

Anderson, meanwhile, had divorced Elizabeth in 1930, and in company with Eleanor Copenhaver, who was to become his wife in 1933, had begun to visit the mill towns of the South, and he traveled extensively through the rural South and Upper Midwest to write a series of articles on the impact of the Depression on the people with whom he identified himself. These were published in *Today* and later made up the substance of *Puzzled America* (1935). Seriously considering a declaration for Communism together with Edmund Wilson, Waldo Frank, and Lewis Mumford—all close friends of Rosenfeld—Anderson signed a manifesto declaring "a crises of human culture" that demanded a new human order. Among other things, it declared that:

> Wherefore in our function as writers:
> We declare ourselves supporters of the socio-economic revolution— . . . We call upon our fellow writers, artists, teachers, . . . to identify their cause with that of the workers, in whose ultimate capacity to rise and to rule rests the destiny of America and mankind.

Rosenfeld, horrified, responded in "Authors and Politics" in *Scribner's* in May, 1933. He wrote,

> From every angle one must regret the want of a body of American writers who truly believe in the artist in themselves and his particular feeling and object; and remain constant to it and unwilling utterly to abandon it for the interests and objects of the world, no matter how legitimate these may appear to him. That the stand of the author loyal to that which his experience has made him feel: the insufficiency of material comfort divorced from spiritual satisfactions; the sterility of work that does not satisfy some immaterial need very deep in the human being;—that his stand, particularly in these panicky years, will be a lonely and difficult one, is not to be denied.

Anderson whose flirtation with Communism had been brief, tried to avoid personal alienation. After the manifesto had been made public, he wrote to Rosenfeld:

> For a week now I have been constantly conscious of you—as though a voice in me were saying, "Write to Paul," and so I do. . . .
>
> I keep thinking of the time when we felt warm, real friendliness toward each other and each toward the work of the other and wonder sometimes what happened to us. I get bits of you—the *New Republic*, etc., and feel that same fine dignity in your attitude toward life.
>
> Perhaps you are disgusted with me that I seem to have gone over to the Communists. I haven't really, Paul, but my backround is different. . . .

After the appearance of Rosenfeld's article in *Scribner's* and a letter from him again objecting to the implications of the manifesto, Anderson wrote,

> Your letter and the article in *Scribner's*, oddly enough, perhaps, give me much more pleasure than pain. In particular the letter seems to me a coming toward the rest of us, at least I give myself the pleasure of thinking of it as a coming toward me. After all, Paul, we are all human. I do not think I have ever wavered in my respect for you. Particularly in the last year I have felt very much the need of the thing about which you are speaking. Something went

> very wrong with me four or five years ago. I felt myself approaching what was perhaps my own ivory tower. A curious desire for separation—a desire to draw myself away. I think that, for a time, my prose got very much attenuated. I give to the woman I just married the credit for taking me out of that, for awakening in me the desire to participate. I think I knew that mistakes would be made in such things as manifestoes signed, etc. . . . declarations made that might be at the bottom nonsense. . . .

As the New Deal began to promise the nation a measure of stability and a program of action, tensions eased between the friends, and they began again to exchange confidences and visits, Anderson and Eleanor to New York, where Sherwood felt increasingly eager to return to Marion and Ripshin Farm, and Rosenfeld to Ripshin, where he found the mountain quiet both disconcerting and vaguely frightening. The golden years of the early twenties, of both men's spiritual youth, could not come again, but they found stimulation and satisfaction in each other's company. In 1939 Anderson and Eleanor took Rosenfeld to a folk music festival in Virginia, an occasion on which he felt decidedly uncomfortable, but which resulted in a moving essay in *Modern Music,* which he inscribed touchingly to Sherwood and Eleanor as "from East Side to South Side, with love." And as the nation moved toward war they united in their opposition to fascism and aggression. Rosenfeld regretted his lack of outstanding success, and Anderson, too, perhaps had his regrets but their friendship had become calm and secure as each moved into middle age.

Three footnotes remain: perhaps the most revealing is a curious letter in the Anderson papers in the Newberry Library. From Anderson to Rosenfeld, it is dated August 14, 1936. In it Anderson takes Rosenfeld to task for his expressed lack of sympathy with the workers during a visit in Virginia. On the letter, in Anderson's hand, is the notation "Not sent. Too smug."

The other footnotes are in a sense posthumous. After Anderson's unexpected death in March, 1941, Rosenfeld contributed his moving assessment of Anderson to the special Fall issue of *Story* devoted to Anderson; this was his essay "The Man of Good Will," which concludes that ". . . what one now hears him saying

most clearly is the substance of a song, to the effect that glory belongs alone to God in the highest, and what belongs on earth is peace, good will to Men." And as his last tributes to his friend and labors of love, Rosenfeld edited Anderson's *Memoirs,* which were incomplete at his death, and *The Sherwood Anderson Reader,* which appeared in 1947, after Rosenfeld's own death on July 21, 1946.

Rosenfeld's last years were unhappy and unfulfilled; he died of a heart attack, alone on a New York street. However, a year later, *Paul Rosenfeld: Voyager in the Arts* was published, edited as a memorial by two friends. In it, among the tributes and memoirs by friends who had survived him, is a group of letters from Anderson to Rosenfeld, together with the essay that Sherwood had published in the *New Republic* a quarter century before. They are there because they are tributes to Paul and Eleanor knew that Sherwood would have wanted them there.

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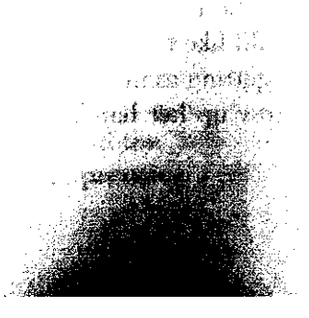

SIOUXLAND PANORAMA: FREDERICK MANFRED'S *GREEN EARTH*

JOSEPH M. FLORA

In *Green Earth* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1977) Frederick Manfred is as expansive as he has ever been. *Wanderlus* (1961; his revised Thurs trilogy) and *Morning Red* (1956; two counterpointing stories) are also thick books. Of course, Manfred can be lean and compact—as witness his recent *The Manly-Hearted Woman* (1975) and several works all the way back to his first novel, *The Golden Bowl* (1944).

Green Earth is at an opposite pole not only from many of Manfred's own novels, but also from the novels of another plains writer that he admired—Willa Cather. Cather came to be increasingly dedicated to what she called the novel *démeublé*, an "unfinished" novel, a novel that would proceed through a select number of brief but revealing scenes, a novel that would suggest as much as portray. The differences between a work like *O Pioneers!* (1913) and *Green Earth* are vast despite the similar rural settings and some similar themes. Book Three of *Green Earth* spends a great deal of time on the schools years of Free Alfredson, the oldest child of Ada and Alfred Alfredson. Free is much taken with books, and as he proceeds in his reading from the likes of Zane Grey to the purchase of the complete works of Shakespeare through Sears, Roebuck, we find him developing a critical theory much like that which informs *Green Earth*. Free explains that although he may find getting into a book difficult, once he is into one he never wants it to end. The best books he would like to continue forever. In *Green Earth* Manfred is intent on getting as much into his novel as possible. Willa Cather would throw up her hands in alarm!

Free's bent is clearly towards realism. He finds *The Arabian Nights* interesting, but the tales don't satisfy him. It isn't a "true book." Free explains to a school friend:

> "Yeh. Like it never really happened. Like something that happened in a dream at night, not in one in the daytime. . . . Now, if I was to write it, I'd put in more smells, and stickers like roses have, and real mud from the field. That way the flowers and the slave girls would look even prettier."

Shortly Free is to find the likes of Thomas Hardy, Mark Twain, and Jack London much more to his liking.

Long or short, Manfred's novels have been marked by plenty of smells and stickers—but never more than in *Green Earth*. Partly this trait of *Green Earth* can be accounted for by the more liberal publishing policies now than existed when Manfred began publishing. At the same time, Manfred's material dealing with farm life in the early years of the century dictates that there be a good dose of the elemental—if the work is to be realistic. A city boy himself, I can still recall times when my parents would take us to visit friends in the country. It might become necessary in an afternoon to visit the privy, and I never made such a journey without being mindful of my city blessings. Now my oldest sons are teenagers, and I do not believe that they or any of my children has ever been to a privy nor has a very precise idea of what one is. They've been to camp, but even most camps in the woods are vastly different in their facilities from what farm life used to be. If my sons ever become curious about this lack in their experience, I shall recommend that they read *Green Earth*. I have never read a novel that gave more attention to privies. This feature of the novel is partly a result of the fact that Free's parents were renters and moved several times—and each time they moved Free's mother insisted upon a new privy as well as upon redecorating the house.

Common to the way of life of these rural characters of *Green Earth* is the chamber pot—or "white owl" as Manfred's characters call it. Although a great deal of attention is given to this item in *Green Earth*, my children would also find the "white owl" a curious thing—though I can remember its presence when we

visited my grandparents. It would be expected that Manfred's characters would have any number of jokes about these items and about flatulence. They certainly do.

I call attention to this aspect of Manfred's earthiness not only to underscore the realism, but what I see as one of Manfred's goals in writing so expansive a novel. Manfred has always been a great explorer of the past—his own and his country's. A Manfred novel is inevitably set in the past—seldom in the immediate present. Perhaps he finds the past more comfortable than the present. Thus it is with *Green Earth*—which goes from 1909 to 1929. Manfred is intent on rendering in novel form—as realistically as he can—what it was like to live in the upper midlands at that particular time. And the very young readers coming to *Green Earth* will especially find how very distant that time is—though it sees some remarkable changes as the horse gives way to the automobile, and the airplane disrupts the basically pioneer note. The telephone and the drama of the rural party line also appear. Manfred's motivation is, indeed, to get it all in.

The setting of *Green Earth* is, of course, Manfred's Siouxland—known to us in almost every novel he has written. To the characters of the novel it is virtually the earth. They have little sense of a different world beyond it other than through stories of the old country world which gave it its settlers—as we especially feel in the one journey that the main characters take from Siouxland (the basin of the Big Sioux River) to Iowa City for the graduation of an uncle. Virtually everyone in Siouxland makes his living from the earth—and hard work characterizes the community concept of what life is and what it should be.

To give us a window into Siouxland, Manfred follows the fortunes of the Alfred Alfredson marriage, whose length gives us the time span of the novel. Alfred Alfredson? Frederick Manfred? Feike Feikema? To be sure *Green Earth* is a highly autobiographical work—though that is not all of the point. The point is to allow us to participate as fully as possible in a time and place. We see the family at work—and at church. And in that sentence we have the large frame of their lives. Family devotions—what were they like? You get many of them in *Green Earth*. And what of sex in a pre-birth control period? Its only acclaimed purpose is procreation—at least in many households.

What were the schools like? What were the students taught and how? It's all in *The Green Earth*. Recreation? There is a vivid rendering of a community Fourth of July celebration—church service and baseball game. We get detail on essentially all aspects of life. We know what these people ate, for Manfred records many menus—even preserving the recipe for balkebrea (see page 412). Many of the episodes—like the Fourth of July celebration—could be anthologized as examples of what much of the novel is—genre painting.

It is true that in the second half of the novel as Free begins to mature and we follow his questing spirit more constantly the sense of genre paintings tends to give way to the apprenticeship motif—to the theme of the writer as a young boy. But it is to the novel's credit that Free is not allowed to displace completely the family picture. And finally Free is not the most impressive character in the novel. Looking back over Manfred's long novel, I am most struck by the portrayal of the strong marriage of Ada and Alfred. Free is important, but it is what he came from that is most impressive. Free's independent spirit is a product of the strengths of a man and woman who together made a marriage as strong as a rock.

More than a history of a place and its customs, *Green Earth* is a celebration. The novel's title sets the tone. The earth is green, alive, miraculous—even as Manfred in the portrait of Free (his nickname from Alfred) attempts to recapture his green days and to celebrate his roots. Free is an explorer, an adventurer—though it is not necessary in the novel for him to leave Siouxland for us to sense these qualities in him. As Thoreau taught us, it is possible to travel a great deal in Concord—or in Siouxland.

The sense of innocent wonder in *Green Earth* is one that is present throughout the body of Manfred's work. No one has yet, I think, tried to present Manfred as basically a tragic writer. He is not. In only a couple of novels do we get more dark than light. Elof Lofblon, the protagonist of the early *The Chokecherry Tree* (1948), ponders "Why live in pain? For what? For whom?" and decides that there is reason to live. Man may get only a fraction of contentment and pleasure over pain in his life—but that way Manfred's conviction lies. Certainly it is so in *Green*

Earth. Here is no disillusioned Mark Twain of *The Mysterious Stranger.*

The final scene of *Green Earth*—and among the most powerful of the novel—is the death of Ada, Free's mother. Here would have been opportunity for a dark blast at "whatever gods there be"—though such a blast would have been jarring to the essential note of the whole. Free's mother is a woman who knows how to die—as she lived. We do not expect Free to follow Ada's more orthodox way in life, but not from a sense that his mother's way has been wrong for her. Free writes the obituary for the church paper, and his words carry the essential affirmative vibrations of Ada's life and of the novel's: "We do not weep as those who have no hope."

Green Earth is a pivotal novel of Manfred's twentieth-century Siouxland novels. In it we find the beginnings of the twentieth-century Siouxlanders who most engage Manfred. For a chronological understanding of these characters, *Green Earth* becomes the right starting point. For example, Karen Alfredson and Kon Harmer make a somewhat bizarre alliance in *Eden Prairie* (1968). Karen is the sister of Free's father, and we get to know her in *Green Earth,* though less sensationally, as a sexually maladjusted person. Her problem, Manfred is careful to hint, goes back to a darkly incestuous memory with a brother, and Karen tries to reject all that is sexual in an environment where such rejection is especially difficult. What we get in *Green Earth* that we do not get in *Eden Prairie* is the solid sense of Karen's family.

In *Green Earth* we find characters who appear in other Manfred novels—such as *The Chokecherry Tree* and *The Man Who Looked Like the Prince of Wales.* It would hardly be necessary for Manfred to give us now another novel following Free's life after Ada's death. He has already given us a full *Bildungsroman* of the developing artist who leaves Siouxland for Christian College at the age Free did and finally becomes a musician. That protagonist is the Thurs of the *World's Wanderer* trilogy and its revision as *Wanderlust.* There are many similarities between Free and Thurs. Certainly the Siouxland background is crucial. Free does appear by name in *The Man Who Looked Like the Prince of Wales* as an observer character—as well as in the title story of the collection *Apples of Paradise* (1968), a short story

set in Zion, Michigan, home of Christian College—to which there are several references in *Green Earth.* Christian is, of course, the alma mater of Thurs and the setting of most of *The Primitive,* the first volume of the Thurs trilogy. Manfred wrote "Apples of Paradise" in June through November of 1963. Free and the Alfredsons have been in his mind for many years.

The matter as well as the manner of Manfred's writing has come in for criticism. And the matter of *Green Earth* will bother some sensibilities—as it has in the region on which it is based according to a recent report on Manfred in *People* magazine (April 10, 1978, pp. 78-82). As I have indicated, Manfred has never been plainer about very basic biological matters. Manfred's Preface to *Green Earth* deals precisely with this aspect, and there he gives his own anecdotal defense of his realism.

The epigraphs that he selected for *The Chokecherry Tree* provide an early and another kind of defense. There he quotes from Chaucer's Prologue to *The Canterbery Tales*:

> But first I pray you, of your curteisye,
> That ye n'arrette it nat my vileinye,
> Though that I pleynly speke in this matere,
> To tel yow hir wordes and hir chere;
> Ne though I speke hir wordes properly.
> For this ye known al-so wel as I,
> Who-so shall telle a tale after a man,
> He moot reherce, as ny as ever he can,
> Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
> Al speke he never so ruleliche and large;
> Or elles he moot tell his tale untrewe. . . .

His second epigraph comes from E. J. Simmons *Leo Tolstoy: The Later Years:*

> Embracing Gorky, Tolstoy said, "You are a real muzhik! You will have a hard time among the writers, but fear nothing, and speak always as you feel no matter if it comes out coarsely. Wise people will understand."

The quotation from Chaucer has to do with the manner in which the fictional character speaks. Tolstoy's words to Gorky put the emphasis on the writer—and his manner. The right of Manfred's characters to speak as they would is quickly granted.

They are certainly not a foul-mouthed bunch anyway. They may be earthy, but they have their own euphemisms, and Manfred because he has tried to render dialogue faithfully has not gone in for shocking words—or the words that used to be shocking. Furthermore, Manfred's characters by-and-large know the commandments and take them seriously.

More worthy of comment here is the narrator's own voice. We would not expect a realistic farm novel, certainly of that time and place, to be in a Jamesian manner. Manfred's narrator is as plain, as homely as he can be. The narrative voice is at one with that of the people—or attempts to be. It is slangy, filled with some homely but considered cliches, and sometimes deliberately ungrammatical. The narrator is not an intellectual removed from his story. And never has Manfred's narrative been more informal.

In *The Chokecherry Tree* Manfred separated his narrator more obviously from the story—allowing him to speak in his own voice in brief interludes at the beginnings of chapters. At the beginning of Chapter XI the narrator espouses what we may take as a Manfred tenet (it's debateable of course): "It is much easier to record the lives of the literates. There is a flux of material to be found on them, tons and tons of it. Just listen to the chant of the choir rising from Psyche's couch." In *Green Earth* we have no such intellectual voice—only the "mushik" narrator and his material.

There may be more disagreement about the success of this narrator than criticism of the earthy speech of Manfred's characters. From Manfred's point of view, he is writing in a language that is "in the American grain." Manfred has always liked to discover or invent words—and he likes to go at words instinctively. For example, I think that he has been trying for some time to change the meaning of the word *fulsome*. Early in *Green Earth* a chum of Ada is trying to get Ada's father to agree to having his daughter get her picture taken. Mr. Engleking surprises himself by agreeing. "'Can she really?' Minnie cried. Then Minnie flourished over in her glancing purple dress and kissed Pa fulsomely on the cheek, a good loud smack. 'Oh, thank you, Mr. Engleking. I didn't know what you'd say.'" I don't believe that it was a fulsome kiss. It was not a peck, to be sure. But I hold out for the old meaning of *fulsome*.

Manfred is not intent on inventing new words in *Green Earth* as he has sometimes been, though he retains some Manfred coinages. Occasionally he gives a character a name that makes one question the prevailing realism—but he has greatly reduced his propensity for the exaggerated name. He disciplined himself on this excess when he rewrote the Thurs trilogy.

But in the main, Manfred's narrator in *Green Earth* tries to stay in the background. He lets his material and his people speak for themselves. Whatever truths there are in *Green Earth*, Manfred is content for his reader to find them. It is enough for Manfred that these common, ordinary lives contain the essence of life and meaning. In the larger context of the Siouxland panorama, *Green Earth* is a welcome—even a necessary—part.

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