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Note: Illustrations are from etchings by E. W. Kemble, which illustrated Mark Twain's "The Private History of a Campaign That Failed" in Century, December 1885. The maps are drawings by Mark Twain.



FROM JAMES HEARST: THE WORTH OF THE HARVEST: PART TWO

The Country Men Years (1931-1943)\*

DECLARATIVE YOUTH

JEFFERSON SEARS

In early 1934, after his second prostate surgery, James Hearst wrote to his friend, literary critic and fellow Cedar Fallsian Ferner Nuhn:

My convalescence was a long, numb, and very dumb one. It wasn't enough to be at home, sit in a sunny window, smoke my pipe, and read. . . , to be the expert convalescent. No, I must be up and indispensable, and one evening I tripped over a rug and fractured my ankle. I was convinced then that my fate was incredible and that I was the unhappiest, though not the most miserable, man in this township. The ankle heals slowly, . . . and my temper also heals. . .

During the weeks of inactivity I did recopy most of my verses. Some of the revision is as good as I can make it, and some I am not sure of. But I am sending them to you soon, lest I mull them over forever. . . I [also] sent a sample to MacMillan out of curiosity. . . 1-

\*The second part, The Worth of the Harvest, Part I, appeared in SSML Newsletter XVI (Spring, 1986), pp. 8-16.

How thirty-nine of the poems Hearst wrote between 1924 and 1936 finally came together in book form is the story of an unknown writer seeking, with equivocal prospects, to be understood.

MacMillan's opinion of the poems Hearst sent them (or at least Hearst's interpretation of their opinion) was that the verse was good, but too "local." Nuhn, on the other hand, a dedicated advocate of regionalism in rebellion against the "eastern" publishing "establishment,"<sup>2</sup> wrote Hearst that:

... far from being too 'local,' your verse would gain from the inclusion of more special Iowa-farm details. While the spirit of the rural in general runs through them, one does not catch many vignettes which call up the specific Iowa landscape [or] Iowa life.<sup>3</sup>

Hearst was thus caught in one of the main literary battles of the period: to the New York publisher, verse which dealt with the farm, regional details or no, may have seemed too provincial; but to the regionalist, verse about the universal experience of farmers, region notwithstanding, seemed too general. And though Hearst valued the advice of a close friend more than the judgment of a distant editor, he was not particularly concerned about changing to please either one.

Hearst's experiences with other New York publishers he contacted were no more encouraging. In November of 1934, John Farrar, now a partner in the publishing firm of Farrar and Rinehart, wrote asking Hearst for a manuscript; "I'd like very much to ...

see [one]."<sup>4</sup> he said. Hearst obliged, and then Farrar and Rinehart spent months looking it over, finally returning it. Simon and Schuster, to whom Hearst later sent a sample, was non-committal for almost a year before deciding against acceptance.

Well-known poet Horace Gregory, to whom Ferner Nuhn sent some of Hearst's work around this time, had nothing but praise for it:

I think Hearst is a real poet: I can see that from this small section of a manuscript. One would have to be blind not to see genuine originality in this work. I like him most of all for being unpretentious, for never straining beyond his reach, for selecting emotions that are his alone and offering them to the reader in a way that makes them articulate . . .

I think he has already written much that he doesn't show, and that he is fighting for quality as against quantity . . . He should be encouraged to the hilt and made to write one poem a month that brings him satisfaction. Real poets are rare.<sup>5</sup>

But Gregory, it turned out, was not in a position to help Hearst get his volume published.

It must be noted that all this took place during some of the worst years of the Great Depression, which affected publishing no less than any other industry, and perhaps more than most. Moreover, it is well known in the publishing field that books of poetry ususally do not make money, except if written by poets yet to be firmly established



One could not have reasonably expected a large, commercial publisher to accept Hearst's manuscript. Nevertheless, Hearst's experiences in this still early part of his career colored permanently his attitude toward being published in the "right places." Sensitive about his work and about his rural origins, he felt doubly disappointed to be, as he thought, falsely encouraged and then dropped for the wrong reasons. No major commercial publisher would receive a manuscript of his poetry from him again.

Hearst did, however, find a devoted, if limited, audience. In 1935, a small press based in Muscatine, Iowa, named "The Prairie Press" by its founder Carroll Coleman, brought out an anthology called Contemporary Iowa Poets, in which two of Hearst's poems appeared. While collecting material for the book, Coleman found these poems to be his personal favorites, and in late 1934 he wrote to Hearst using the critical terms employed by all real Hearst enthusiasts:

Have you any objections to my keeping both the poems? Your work has a force and vitality. Somehow its connection with the soil has a truer ring than most. Is it merely a skillful rendering or are you a regular dirt farmer?<sup>6</sup>

These comments could not have failed to please Hearst; and ultimately, after a plan to have another local publisher bring out Hearst's first volume fell through, Coleman picked up Hearst's contract. 800 copies of Country Men: A Volume of Poetry came out in the summer of 1937, and promptly sold out. A second edition followed in 1938, and a third in 1943.

Hearst overlooked the regionalist label he picked up by coming out through Coleman's



press; in fact, the version of this episode which he himself told changes certain details, in apparent deference to the Midwesterners who proudly bought out Coleman's inventory:

I guess I have my own perculiar attitude about being published in New York. There were a couple of times there when New York publishers were kind of dickering with me about publishing a volume of my poems. And somehow I found I never quite followed through. I just didn't seem to want to be published in New York. I guess I didn't feel that my kind of stuff . . . really had that much to do with them. It seemed more like work that came out of the Midwest . . . , and somehow belonged there. So when the time came . . . [my first book] was published in the Midwest.<sup>7</sup>

In actuality, it was not Hearst but the publishers who decided where his first book would be published; and if the regional flavor of a work may be measured by its explicit references to place, it cannot truly be said that Country Men is a book that belongs only to the Midwest. Only two explicit references to the Midwest may be found in all 39 of the original Country Men poems--one a reference to the summer sun "run[nin]g wild through the Middle West"<sup>8</sup> in a poem called "Mad Dog," and the other a reference to "a passing [snow] shower over Iowa"<sup>9</sup> in the poem "The Movers." And of these references, the former would be revised out in a later collection.

The critical reception of Country Men also did little to clarify Hearst's special qualities as a poet. Poetry, in which Hearst's work was appearing more and more

frequently, ran a review by C. A. Millspaugh under the doubly misleading title "Iowa Idylls." In a neutral and literal sense, the term "idylls" is accurate: the poems do have a rural setting. But the dominant impression of these poems is far from idyllic; death and man's conflicts with nature, for example, are their two leading themes. Throughout the review, Millspaugh consistently faults or overlooks Hearst's peculiar virtues. Citing the poem "Mad Dog," a typical Hearst exercise in extending a homely metaphor, Millspaugh questions Hearst's taste, presumably for using such a vulgar image as a dog, and a hydrophobic one at that. He also questions Hearst's frequent use of personification, thereby revealing a doctrinaire misunderstanding of Ruskin's theory of the pathetic fallacy. (According to Ruskin, only the best poets can bring off such personification, by insisting, as did Hearst, that their imaginative response to a natural object coincide with their objective understanding of it.) And Millspaugh is apparently looking for philosophical pretensions where they are, perhaps refreshingly, absent:

Mr. Hearst seems an indifferent metaphysician . . . [suffering  
from] a failure to realize meaning beyond surface appearances  
. . . 10

Elsewhere in the review, Millspaugh questions the truth in one of Hearst's images: "And see the sun arch his back like a bee in a rage/As he sparkles the air with clouds of his yellow pollen." <sup>11</sup> Millspaugh must never have stood out in a cornfield on an oppressively hot and humid July afternoon.

Local reviews, as might be expected, played up Hearst's Iowa ties. Friend and fellow poet and Iowan Paul Engle wrote, in the University of Iowa journal American Prefaces,

that:

The roots of James Hearst's poetry go as deep into the black earth of Iowa as do the roots of alfalfa on his farm.<sup>12</sup>

Hearst's poetry, Engle concluded, shows "the perfect adjustment of poetry to place." Friend and fellow poet and Iowan Marion Louise Bliss wrote, in the Midwest Literary League's quarterly Hinderland, that "this volume gives us contemporary Iowa."<sup>13</sup> But other close friends--John T. Frederick, novelist Ruth Suckow, and editors Don Murphy and W. Sprague Holden--had already tested and rejected the neat assumptions about Hearst's work, and located its real values. Frederick wrote:

James Hearst's work is not "regional" except in the best, the only true sense . . . In his best work his essential theme of man's relationship to the earth . . . is stated with sureness, in terms of actual experience, in such fashion as to yield the high and true excitement that only real poetry can give.<sup>14</sup>

Suckow, whose novels with Iowa settings enjoyed a national reputation, offered to write a foreword to Country Men, and in it she consistently stressed the misconceptions about Hearst's poetry, striking them down one by one:

. . . these are [not] poems of local color; that would be putting them within limits which they do not deserve. It would not be fair, either, to stick on them that old tag . . . of "poems of the soil." They are . . . not merely descriptive, rural in the lesser sense of the term . . . not narrowly local, either in form or implication . . . [and] not overly dependent upon subject matter [or reliant] upon native ties for their final significance.<sup>15</sup>



Murphy stressed that "if you were raised in farm country, the buttons Hearst presses"<sup>16</sup> will bring sharp responses; while Holden downplayed the issue of subject matter, saying his chief delight was in Hearst's "true ear for the lyric note" and "disciplined mastery of the lyric form."<sup>17</sup>

And finally, one lone major-magazine reviewer gave a fair assessment of Hearst's poetic potential: Theodore Roethke, known to readers now as a major poetic talent of the twentieth century, then a young writer doing reviews for The New Republic, found in Hearst's work the lyric virtues of "genuineness, simplicity, directness"--in short, "all the solid virtues we expect from a true . . . pastoral poet." "What he lacks," Roethke pointed out, "is the ability to trim lines of the commonplace and give authority to his climaxes."<sup>18</sup> This was good advice for Hearst, who was still learning his craft; it was these same weaknesses which Harriet Monroe had already been helping him to correct.

Many of the Country Men poems do indeed show the faults of a poet still finding himself; and some reveal weaknesses that were to crop up in Hearst's work throughout his career. But all these problems, temporary and permanent, were mainly problems of style; Hearst's inspiration in the life of the farm, an inspiration achieved through hard concentration and discipline, stayed, and would stay, true. The poem "Farm on a Summer Night" illustrates the point.

From a clear sky at night the starlight  
flows down to earth



And out from the eaves of the houses  
go prayers motioned skyward . . .

And peace gropes over the valley  
to touch with blundering fingers  
The wrinkled brow of the plowland . . .

The starlight flows down to the earth  
and the prayers ascend skyward,  
The cry of the earth rises up to be  
endlessly answered . . . 20

The mood of the poem, reinforced by rhythm and language, is one of rest and peace, the hard-working farm people, weary at the end of their long day, are refreshed by sheep, and by their apparently justified faith in God. Why then the awkwardness of "peace" groping and blundering? The farmer's tired hands may "grobe and blunder" as he prepares for his rest; but surely not the "Peace" itself which comes to him as he sleeps. And, on a more literal level, why the hand sticking out of the eavespout to "motion" the prayers "skyward"? These failures of imagination and language, failures of a kind not evident in Hearst's later poetry, detract from the total effect of poems such as "Farm on a Summer Night." And so also does another weakness shown in this poem, of the kind perhaps most embarrassing for Hearst, and with which he would have a good deal of trouble now and later—namely, the false poetic elevation, such as his Aunt Mary with her "Victorian sensibility"<sup>21</sup> might have favored, of phrases such as these at the end of "Farm":

... these bright shafts of starlight  
forever down raining

As drowsy folk turn in their beds  
and by sleep are swift-lanced.

Yet, as with all of Hearst's poetry, one never doubts Hearst's authority and sincerity in "Farm on a Summer Night"; one senses that, for all the poem's faults, it is Hearst's own "groping" and "blundering" after a tiring day, and his own "wrinkled brow" and "prayers," of which he writes.

As Hearst ventured away from the forced phrasing of a poem like "Farm on a Summer Night" to the more natural, "flat" tone of the farmer's voice--his growing conviction was to try "to use a flat Midwestern tone, the tone of the language around me"<sup>22</sup>--he also ran up against serious language problems, problems which Hearst's commitment to a plain style would cause to persist also. The common man is, of course, a fit subject for poetry; but the common man's language is not always, and perhaps not often, poetic. It is at best an assortment of ready aphorisms, at worst a collection of ready-made clichés. Thus the unconvincing ending of the very short Country Men poem "Protest":

Now as imperceptibly  
As evening closing into night  
As a young heart growing old,  
Is the wheatfield's sturdy green  
Shading into harvest gold.

The beauty of the color is

Not the thing which I protest,

Gold is good when green is done . . .

But I cannot bear to think

How the time has gone.<sup>23</sup>

A later version shows Hearst fighting this tendency, and rescuing the poem's undoubtedly heartfelt insight:

Gold is good when green is done . . .

But the summer in the sheaves

Marks another season gone.<sup>24</sup>

In almost all of the Country Men poems, as in "Farm on a Summer Night" and "Protest," Hearst presents his experiences in a genuine, yet generalized, way; that is, he focuses on those events and feelings that might be a part of any life on the farm, as well as his own--the weariness after a long day's work, the sense of an ending at harvest time, and so on. He had inherited from his New England forebears a certain down-eastern reserve, and he would always feel that his poetry should not deal too directly with the very "personal." Yet one or two of the poems in Country Men foreshadow a turn toward the more "personal"<sup>25</sup> which Hearst's verse would take in two more decades or so; and these poems also foreshadow the continual difficulty Hearst would have because of his reluctance to make private associations explicit. "The Forest," which appeared in Country Men with the dedication "for C.C.," is a case in point: "C.C." is a reference to Carmelita Calderwood, the orthopedic nurse whom Hearst got to know in Iowa City and whom he would eventually marry, but the poem itself is no more open than its dedication, cloaking their relationship in a foggy allegory:

Within the forest of my heart



You came as lightly as a breeze  
And singled out with simple art  
The one old path among the trees...

... back in the shadows were shadows found  
That muttered and swayed them to and fro,  
But you heard only my faithful hound  
Crying the trail of an ancient foe.

And his bugle note now clear now dim  
Swelled to you out of the forest deep  
But when you would go to follow him  
It was sleep again ... and sleep ... and sleep.<sup>26</sup>

Those who knew Hearst and Calderwood could probably have interpreted these lines with fair success: she comes into his heart "as lightly as a breeze" because her lively personality, famous at hospital parties, charms Hearst. Finding "the one old path ... with simple art," she shows how readily she has penetrated close to Hearst's usually well-concealed private feelings ("Dearest--What do you really think of me"<sup>27</sup> she wrote to him in a letter of 1933). She is able to shun the "shadows" and hear "only my faithful hound" because she is not put off by his physical condition, his "ancient foe." But she is ultimately frustrated in trying to get to know the deepest secrets of his personality--as he preferred everyone to be--thus finding only "sleep" when she tries to follow his "hound" to the very center of his heart's "forest deep." Illustrating Hearst's reserve in both subject and style, this poem would have best been kept, and no



doubt treasured, between C.C. and J.H.

But if many of the poems in Country Men show significant and lasting faults, many more show the special pleasures afforded by Hearst's early verse, and several of them establish some of Hearst's perpetual poetic trademarks. Hearst's first truly original work often has a remarkable lyric "drive,"<sup>28</sup> such as he himself admired in the poetry of Wordsworth. The title poem, for example, opens with a muted fanfare that sets a quick and steady rhythm, matching the quick and steady rhythm of farmers beginning spring work:

The pussy willows show again  
along their boughs the furry rout  
And prove to watchful country men  
The change they sensed has come about.<sup>29</sup>

This rhythm pushes the poem to its conclusion:

As if to snatch the day ahead  
The spring comes on them leap by leap  
They drag the harrow from the shed,  
The plow is roused from rusty sleep . . .

Faster and faster roll the days,  
The weeks slide down their shining tracks . . .  
They move about in country ways  
And hold the year against their backs.

Hearst's youthful faith in nature's vitality is celebrated in poems like "The Grail":

The snow falls like flakes of light . . .  
Wherefore we come, Lord, bearing our promises.

Let the wind-lash curl the drifts and smother  
The world in flying ice . . .

If a tree drains its body of life,  
Shall the root perish? . . .<sup>30</sup>

At the same time, however, Hearst never lost sight of human mortality; one reviewer wrote that in Country Men Hearst, "a young man, deals with life and death . . . as few who have not reached old age are able to do."<sup>31</sup> The following lines are typical of what would be a continuing and important emphasis in Hearst's work:

Do people forget their mortality, saying, the spring is at hand?

--"Inquiry"<sup>32</sup>

Only people stare  
each morning into the mirror  
at their own dying faces.

--"Dead Crows"<sup>33</sup>

My eyes are cloudy with death . . .  
(Only the young men go to war.)

--"Clover Swaths"<sup>34</sup>

Whether or not the man who turned  
These furrows and wondered if in spring  
He would be here with his team and seed  
Still lives, after all, is the major thing.

--"Winter Field"<sup>34</sup>

What greater praise canst thou have  
than that we seek the grail,  
Not in the heavens, Lord . . .  
But in the furrow, the plowed field, the meadow,  
The places where it blooms for man in his short life.

Hearst's leading theme in Country Men, as in much of his verse--as in any verse written by a real, full-time farmer--is the weather. The weather is life and death to the farmer, so that a farmer-poet's relationship to nature is uniquely sensitive and clear-eyed. A summer rainshower is not a pleasant relief from the heat, but "a miracle bringing/life to the dead."<sup>36</sup> And when there is no rain, as in the often remembered summer of 1934:

Bitterness grows in the yard like weeds,  
bitterness rank and tall  
Covers the bare and beaten ground  
where nothing will grow at all.  
The sprinkler kneels by the sweetpea bed,  
rusty and black and bent,  
Marking the place where the flowers died

after the people went.

After the well went dry they left,  
nobody shed any tears  
But like an oak tree each one bore  
the judgment of the years . . .

. . . Let the rains come when they will  
No one will feel their slandering strokes  
but the dead upon the hill . . .  
. . . let the cicadas' cry  
Be the last prayers to a heaven  
veiled by the metal sky . . . 37

In its importance the weather may indeed come to seem human to the farmer-poet, as can the other things around him--tools, buildings, machinery, animals; and all these may even come to be perceived by him as friends or enemies, helpmates or saboteurs, in his efforts to make the farm go. In Country Men, as in all of Hearst's poetry, this perception takes the form of strikingly apt and original personifications: the poet "shake[s] the pump's protesting arm"<sup>38</sup>; he finds "the morning sun look[ing] in on me" to "get me up and out to plow"<sup>38</sup>; he "watch[es] the barns/Crouched on the hillsides while the morning light . . . fit[s]/Panels to the windows"; he sees "bare and tattered fields" where "weather/Sow[s] his mearure of snow" and "side by side/Fences and stones and furrows sleep together."<sup>40</sup>



Another of Hearst's favorite stylistic devices which was introduced in the Country Men poems was the sharp closing image which, through the contest of the poem, accumulates a rich load of meaning. "Seeding," for example, ends with the farmer-poet making a humble gesture with his plow in defiance of his own mortality:

A sound haunts me I would not hear . . .

"Have you the seed? Then sow it now

Have you a plow? Come, here's the ground." . . .

[But] to oppose the coming dark

That steals upon us one by one . . .

I stand and hold my tiny arc

Against the circle of the sun.

Hearst was particularly proud of the alliterative closing of "Barns in November," a poem which he and Harriet Monroe has discussed in some detail:

Thus shall the heart against a bitter season

Guard countless doors and windows, bring to bin

The crops of its own raising . . .

And stand alone among the vacant meadows

Calmly awaiting the age of winter weather

When through the air, a chill and cloudy heaven

Drops from its mantle of snow the first fine feather.

Country Men was clearly an omen of even better work to come; and on its own terms, it culminated the development of Hearst's early style, one of Romantic declarations

combined in traditional meter with the simple declaratives of the farmer. Thus his three best, and best-known poems of the early '30's, each of which highlights a different facet of his work at this time, sum up Hearst's accomplishment during the Country Men years. The Romantic influence, and particularly that of Shelley, pervades "Fall Ploughing" (later "Fall Plowing"), in the ode form Hearst uses, in the closing apostrophe to Autumn, and in the way the thought of the poem is carried through the rhymes and line ends:

The claim the stubble had no longer defends  
This field, and mice laid bare in shallow burrows  
Dart through the listless grass; a plow extends  
Its shoulders of steel and the field goes back to furrows . . .

Autumn, Autumn, I can feel your harsh beauty  
Closing around me . . .  
I too have death to honor and the passion of death;  
While grief sings in a shaking bush, while fear  
Hunts in the furrow, my monuments arise  
Like sudden shadows under October skies.<sup>41</sup>

By contrast, "When A Neighbor Dies," a masterfully written statement of the farmer's inarticulateness in dealing with death, has the pleasing effect of a simple rural epitaph:

Safe from loneliness, safe from storm,  
Here he lies in his earthly form.  
Here he lies in his last array,

The neighbor who calls us in today . . .  
What can you say to folks he knew  
Of what he had done or hoped to do?  
What can you say that is the truth  
Or a man you have know to age from youth? . . .  
He was our neighbor, we only know  
That his hands were large and his temper slow.  
We simply say as we stand and wait  
That his fields were clean and his fences straight.  
When a neighbor dies, there is nothing to say  
But we leave our fields on a certain day  
And offer our hands to lay him away.<sup>42</sup>

The last of this group, Hearst's first important middle-phase poem "After Chores," contains some of the apostrophic outpouring of "Fall Plowing" and a little of the understated somberness of "When a Neighbor Dies"; but its free verse and gently mock-heroic tone mark the new direction Hearst's work would take:

Close down, Night.  
Henry Jensen has finished his chores . . .  
The worn familiar doorknob reaches out to his hand  
and the house draws him in.  
  
Now is the time to relax under the lamp, to fall asleep  
over the evening paper. Unroll, muscles, and stretch.  
Too soon you will stiffen into the last position . . .



These are the hours that no one count when time  
sneaks past your chair like a cat and the reluctant foot  
has not yet found the stair  
has not yet made  
one quiet footstep further toward the night.<sup>43</sup>

But the last word on Country Men and its place in Hearst's career should go to one of its large grassroots audience who, far more than any literary critic, gave the book its long life in print. The Reverend Harold Bodley, of Mt. Vernon Place Methodist Church in Baltimore, wrote to Hearst after the second edition of Country Men had been issued:

Your book . . . has come to mean much to me . . . With . . . time I  
[have] learned to appreciate the accuracy and depth of its  
insight into the type of life I first knew and have always  
loved . . . <sup>44</sup>

Here was Hearst's ideal reader.

## NOTES

### FROM JAMES HEARST: THE COUNTRY MEN YEARS (1931-1943)

1. in an undated letter, probably February 9, 1934 (courtesy of Ferner Nuhn).
2. Ferner Nuhn, in a letter to the author, dated August 11, 1980.
3. in a letter, dated February 18, 1934.
4. in a letter, dated November 20, 1934.
5. in a letter to Ferner Nuhn, dated March 28, 1934.
6. in a letter, dated November 21, 1934.
7. "Reminiscences," in North American Review, Fall '74, p. 40.
8. in Country Men (Muscatine: Prairie Press, 1937), p. 26.
9. in Country Men, p. 22.
10. in Poetry, Summer '37, pp. 345-346.
11. "Inquiry," in Country Men, p. 38.
12. "James Hearst," in American Prefaces, Summer '37, p. 164.
13. in Hinterland, Fall '37, p. 26.
14. in an untitled, undated review (courtesy of Meryl Norton Hearst).
15. "Forward," in Country Men, p. xi-xii.
16. in the Des Moines Register, date unknown (courtesy MNH).
17. in the Akron Beacon Journal, date unknown (courtesy MNH).
18. in The New Republic, December 29, 1937.
19. in Country Men, p. 21.
20. "Relations," in Time Like a Furrow (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1981), p. 44.

21. "Roots of Poetry," in Voyages to the Inland Sea, II (Lacrosse: Center for Contemporary Poetry, 1972), p. 37.
22. in Country Men, p. 61.
23. in Man and His Field (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1951), p. 71.
24. JH, in a speech at Iowa State University, April 9, 1980.
25. in Country Men, p. 41.
26. in a letter, dated January 10, 1933.
27. in an interview, May 31, 1980.
28. in Country Men, p. 17.
29. in Country Men, p. 30.
30. unsigned review in the Cedar Falls Record, June 26, 1937.
31. in Country Men, p. 28-29.
32. in Country Men, p. 27.
33. in Country Men, p. 37.
34. in Country Men, p. 39.
35. "The Grail," in Country Men, p. 30.
36. "Summer Rain," in Country Men, p. 54.
37. "After the People Go," in Country Men, p. 24-25.
38. "First Snow," in Country Men, p. 42.
39. "Seeding," in Country Men, p. 44.
40. "Barns in November," in Country Men, pp. 46-47.
41. in Poetry, January '34, p. 189.
42. in American Prefaces, October '36, p. 9.
43. in American Prefaces, December '35, p. 44.
44. in a letter, dated April 18, 1940.



Sherwood Anderson: "For the End": A Review Essay

David D. Anderson

Kim Townsend, Sherwood Anderson A Biography, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987. xiii + 323 pp. Notes, selected bibliography, and index.

At some time in the mid-1930s, when Sherwood Anderson was working sporadically on what was to become after his death his twice-edited memoirs, he jotted down a note a page long headed "For the End." Later, when he was ready to organize the mass of material that he had written for his memoirs over the years, he knew he would remember that the note would mark the end of the book, the end of what he remembered, the final distillation of the curious relationship between himself, his times, his work, and his experiences. That note remains a remarkable assessment of a remarkable life, and it concludes, as it should, both edited versions, the 1942 version, edited by Paul Rosenfeld, and the 1969 version, edited by Ray Lewis White.

The points Anderson makes in the note--that he has had a "very good life," that he was born "one of the lucky ones," yet has "days and, sometimes, even weeks and months of gloom," that "I enjoy thoroughly my friends, women, food, drink, sleep"--are accurate self-perceptions that Anderson's biographers must recognize and deal with in detail. However, even more important to biographers and critics--and equally accurate--is Anderson's perception of the uneven nature of his own work and the vagaries of critical fashion as they have addressed his works.

I have been a writer now for twenty-five years and on too many days I write badly. I have been panned and praised by critics, have been called a "genius," a "pioneer," a "hazy thinker," a "profound thinker," "clear headed," "muddle headed," a "groper." The last has stuck more persistently than any of the others. If it is meant, by groping, that I do not know the answers, O.K. (Rosenfeld ed., 507; White, ed., 560)

All this, the memorable Sherwood Anderson who contributed a significant chapter to American literary myth and the Sherwood Anderson who contributed direction and form to much American fiction in this century, is the elusive Sherwood Anderson that Kim Townsend attempts to define in this first major Anderson biography. In earlier critical biographies--Irving Howe's (1951), James Schevill's (1951), and my own (1967)--the relationship between the form and substance of Anderson's work and the fact and myth of his life--the elements, in other words, that combined to make Anderson what he was--became the focal points of the studies. Kim Townsend's biography of Anderson is more detailed and more psychologically insightful than the earlier studies; it is more concerned with Anderson the "groper" than the others, and Anderson's works, published and unpublished, are often examined in various drafts and versions as moments of psychological revelation rather than the results of his creative talent and drive.

Certainly Anderson was fascinated with the facts and wonder of his own life--his boyhood in Clyde, the warmth of his mother's hands, his Horatio Alger-like rise, his rejection of business success, the feel and failure of love, the appearance and reality of his life and that of others--and he was certainly his own favorite character, continually groping in each of his works for an elusive reality that, he was convinced, lay somewhere beyond physical appearance.

But to regard Anderson's works--even those that purport to be autobiographical, including the Memoirs--as literally, symbolically, or psychologically true, is dangerous at best. In the Foreward to Tar: A Midwestern Childhood, accepted by Anderson's earlier critics as literally true and by Townsend as psychologically true--Anderson points out that "I am a story teller starting to tell a story and cannot be expected to tell the truth. Truth is impossible to me." (ix) Again, in a letter to his brother Karl in August 1924, just after reading proofs of A Story Teller's Story, allegedly



autobiographical, Anderson wrote, "Don't know about A Story Teller's Story, whether I got what I went after or not. I didn't try to set down obvious facts, only tried to get the spirit of something." (Letters, 129)

Even in letters to people whom he admired or respected, Anderson was not above adopting a sly persona when it fit his purposes. To Van Wyck Brooks, who, like other Easterners, saw Anderson as the countryman he hadn't been since 1900, he wrote in 1918: "I came West with my new book, Poor White, about laid by, as we say out here of the corn crop in early October. It is in shocks and stood up in the fields. The husking is yet to do." (Letters, 43) And in 1936, on the occasion of the death of Maxim Gorkey, he wrote to Tass, in response to a request for a statement, of Anderson the young proletarian, eager for truth: "With what excitement I, as a young factory hand in America, read his tales of defeated people. I lived among them and knew them. . . . (Letters, 355) If Anderson had substituted "advertising" for "factory", he would have been nearer the truth.

Anderson was a mythmaker, dealing not with the surface of lives, but, as he made clear in his dedication of Winesburg, Ohio to his mother, with that which lies beneath the surface; the subjective rather than the objective nature of lives, including his own, what he called the "essence" of life, was the subject of his work. More importantly, of all human life, Anderson's greatest concern was with his own, as he attempted to transmute life into art, and inevitably he became not only his favorite character, but his own experience became his key to understanding all American experience in his time so that he might define it in his works. Thus, Sam McPherson becomes every American who finds business success wanting; Winesburg, Ohio, becomes the innocent but brutal past of all America; George Willard becomes every young American who seeks fulfillment in the West, in the city.

Anderson the mythmaker, Anderson the celebrator, the Anderson who wrote



literally thousands of letters and volumes of purported autobiography, is consequently perhaps the most difficult subject for biographers to recreate in this century and the most tempting for psychoanalysis. For the biographer the task is to sift fact from the fancy that Anderson saw as the chief ingredient of his craft; most importantly, the biographer must avoid the obvious, too-easy answers to questions raised by misreading such fine stories as "The Man Who Became a Woman," or the moments of awakening sexual feeling in his tales of young Midwesterners in a young Midwest. The former has nothing to do, literally or symbolically, with the homosexuality that Freudians were delighted to ascribe to it, and the latter is, as Anderson indignantly pointed out in Winesburg, Ohio and elsewhere, one of the barriers erected by nature and society between human beings, barriers that must be transcended if one is to know and understand the true human reality, the essence of one's own life as it relates to that of another.

In dealing with the mass of contradictory detail that Anderson has given us about the events of his own life and in correlating that material with other sources, Townsend succeeds admirably in recreating the facts and defining the significance of Anderson the man who came out of nineteenth century obscurity to make an indelible mark on the literary history of the twentieth. He slips on occasion, as in accepting too literally Anderson's emphasis on the family's poverty in Clyde and the irresponsibility of his father--the latter later denied by Anderson and disproved by others--but generally he used the sources, including new material, capably. In this section particularly his debt, the debt shared by all Anderson scholars, to William A. Sutton's pioneer work is clear.

Townsend is equally adept in dealing with the Chicago years during which Anderson found his literary voice--although one wishes he had given some insights into his discovery of it--, the twenties and thirties, the years when Anderson initially

found his greatest acceptance, only to fall from literary fashion, and the years during which he found his place in the hills of Western Virginia and his final, lasting love.

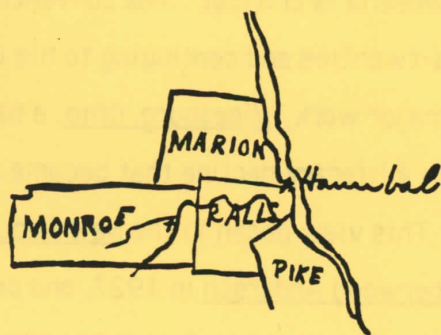
In any such complex and demanding work, it is possible, indeed sometimes necessary, to take exception to its execution. My first objection is the more serious, particularly as it corresponds to early critical appraisals that saw Anderson as, in his own term, "sex-obsessed," both in his own life and also in his works, as he attempted to define his sexuality to himself. Conversely, in his works it becomes evident that his people approach fulfillment not through sexuality but, in terms reminiscent of the American romantics, only when they learn to transcend their sexual natures and needs and meet others not in their sexual--or social--identities but as significant human beings. George Willard does not approach fulfillment in Winesburg, Ohio when something happens, in "Nobody Knows", but when nothing happens except a moment of mutual acceptance, in "Sophistication."

The other quarrel I have with Townsend is critical. The conventional criticism of Anderson's work, beginning in the mid-twenties and continuing to his death and beyond asserts that Anderson had written a major work, Winesburg, Ohio, a handful of significant stories, and then went into a literary decline that became permanent, in the process becoming no longer relevant. This view began in the New Republic in 1923, it was enshrined in Cleveland Chase's Sherwood Anderson in 1927, and perpetuated by Irving Howe in 1951, in a work for which Townsend confesses his admiration. Not only has much later criticism refuted this view, seeing instead the emergence of a new optimism, a new equilibrium, a new sense of affirmation in his work and his life, even with the fits of gloom to which he had always been inclined, but paradoxically, more of Anderson's works--including later works--are in print now than at his death, and he is the subject of more scholarly and critical analysis currently than at any time in the past, all of which contribute to a growing reputation.

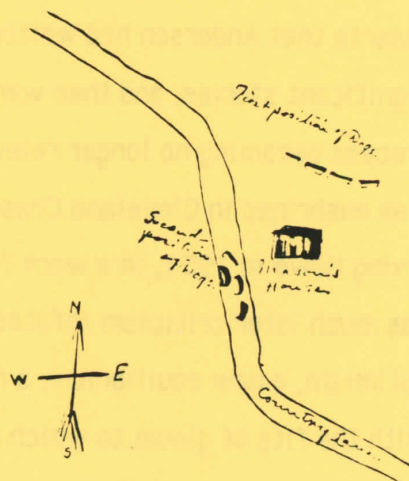


Although for some reason he persists in referring to Sherwood Anderson and Other Famous Creoles as Sherwood Anderson and Other Creoles, Kim Townsend has written an important study of Sherwood Anderson but not the definitive biography that is yet to come; his lapses are interpretive rather than factual; and his sensitivity to any sympathy for the long artistic journey that was Anderson's life are clear. Fittingly, for his last words Townsend turned to the self-appraisal Anderson had written for his Memoirs, just as had Eleanor Anderson in searching for the words for his monument. In that self-appraisal Anderson had given the words for his epitaph: they appear on the massive monolith above his grave on a Virginia hilltop, and Townsend uses them here: "Life not death is the great adventure."

Michigan State University



*The Seat of War.*



*Engagement at Mason's Farm*



George Ade, American Original: A Review Essay

David D. Anderson

The Best of George Ade, selected and edited by A. L. Lazarus, illustrated by John T. McCutcheon. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1985. xxii + 254 pp. Notes. \$17.50.

Almost from the beginning of American settlement in the Territories North and West of the Ohio River in the last decade of the eighteenth century, literature and journalism, hand in hand and often from the same pen, have attempted to define a unique experience and to create a culture. In 1860, as the Old Northwest had become an identifiable Midwest, 152 poets appeared in William T. Coggeshall's The Poets and Poetry of the West. Almost all of the male practitioners, ranging from Cincinnati's respected William Dana Gallagher (1806-1894) to twenty-three-year-old William Dean Howells of Columbus, had learned their craft and found their voices in the printshop of the weekly newspapers that appeared--and often disappeared--with almost predictable regularity in the towns, especially the county seats, of a rapidly-disappearing frontier.

That relationship between journalism and literature flourished in the Civil War and post-Civil War era as David Ross Locke and others began to turn opinion and experience into an increasingly realistic prose fiction. As the end of the nineteenth century approached, not only had Chicago emerged as the financial and trading capital of the region, but, in the hands of Joseph Medill, Joseph Patterson, Melville E. Stone, and others, it was to become a great newspaper town, dominated by the Tribune and the Daily News and the hard-hitting, personal, partisan, opinionated journalism that made every day a surprise that often ended in a donnybrook. It was this lively journalistic

milieu that brought innumerable writers, including Eugene Field, Finley Peter Dunne, and George Ade, each of whose byline had contributed to that highly personal, idiomatic and idiosyncratic journalism, to fin-de-siecle Chicago. Field found his voice in his column "Sharps and Flats" and in verse that commented on proper Chicago and its pretensions in the Daily News, but he was dead in 1895 at 45, ironically best remembered today for his sentimental "Little Boy Blue." Dunne, at first in the Post, created an alter ego, the Irish saloon keeper Mr. Dooley, who permitted him to comment to his friend Hennessy, caustically and comically, in a rich brogue, upon everything and everyone from war elections to the Spanish-American War, and from Mr. Rockefeller to Mr. Roosevelt. But early in the new century Dunne became an editor, finally of Collier's Weekly.

More than either of the others, George Ade bridged the shallow gap between journalism and literature, and, more than either Field or Dunne, largely because he wrote so much more over a longer period of time, he makes clear in his work and his life the dangers, the temptations, and the potential for profit in the creation of literary journalism.

Unlike Field and Dunne, each of whom depended upon a persona and a style for his effectiveness, Ade, who came to the Morning News, later the Record, as a general reporter, began his own column, "Stories of the Streets and Town" in 1893, with the intention of portraying the life of the city in subject and style that were clear and realistic. His "stories" were in a variety of forms--story, fable, dialogue, verse--and his language was often that of the streets. The stories led to a series of successful books: Artie: A Story of the Streets and Town (1896), Pink Marsh: A Story of the Streets and Town (1897), and Doc Horne: A Story of the Streets and Town (1899), they led to a new preoccupation with the language of the streets and to a new series, "Fables in Slang," in 1897. They led, too, to a measure of literary celebrity. Howells, Mark Twain, Mencken, and William Allen White admired his achievements, and he went



on to a popular and financial success in prose and drama. At one time in 1904 three of his plays were running on Broadway. "The College Widow" (1904), and "The Sultan of Sulu" (1902) added characters to American folklore, and even FDR is reported to have lectured his cabinet through the use of Ade's fables. Ade left Chicago for his estate at Hazelden Farm, Brooks, Indiana, in 1915.

Yet, as an American Midwestern original, Ade is too little known today, and with the publication of The Best of George Ade, admirably selected and edited by the Society's A. L. Lazarus, Professor Emeritus of English at Purdue, now living in California, Ade is for the first time in years readily available in an attractive format for those, scholars or general readers, who can profit by--and enjoy--an introduction to Ade's works.

Professor Lazarus's principles of selection in The Best of George Ade are clear; he presents a cross-section of Ade's work--"Fables in Slang," short stories, plays, essays, and verses and songs, as well as a selection of letters--and he has chosen the best of Ade's work in each category.

In almost all of his works, perhaps most effectively in the "Fables," Ade used the Indiana-Chicago vernacular of his time, the language and rhythms that had come into Midwestern literature through the works of Mark Twain and that entered the mainstream of modern American literature by way of Ade's contemporary, Sherwood Anderson. Ade's use of capitalization of nouns for emphasis is almost Germanic, but in the "Fables" it conveys rather the serious effort of an unlettered but wise observer to emphasize what needs to be emphasized, a usage reiterated in the ironic moral with which he ended each fable.

Professor Lazarus's introduction is the best brief discussion of Ade, including his origins, his life, and his accomplishments, that appears in print anywhere; it defines what Ade did and the techniques and attitudes he employed; and it prepares the reader



for a genuinely pleasant, amusing, and often thought-provoking excursion into the literary and journalistic world of our grandparents.

Near the end of his life Ade defined what he had attempted and intended in the "Fables" and stories. "My early stuff was intended to be 'realistic', and I firmly believed in short words and sentences. By a queer twist of circumstances I have been known to the general public as a humorist and a writer of slang..." In this anthology, admirable supported by John T. McCutcheon's illustrations from Ade's books, Professor Lazarus gives us the opportunity to see Ade in all his dimensions: as realist, as humorist, as gentle satirist, as caustic commentor on the contemporary scene, ours as well as Ade's. He wears well, as Krazy Kat wears well, as Huckleberry Finn wears well, and this collection is to be treasured.

Michigan State University



"IT WAS A  
... IN EVERY WAY."



SERGEANT BOWERS RECEIVING ORDERS.

## Announcements

### C. Merton Babcock

C. Merton Babcock, 80, best known as "Mert," died on Sunday, November 27, 1988, at his home in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Professor-emeritus of American Thought and Language, Founding Member of the Society, and recipient of MSU's Distinguished Faculty Award, Mert published extensively on Melville, Mark Twain, the American language, and the American frontier.

### Gianfranco Pagnucci

Newly published is New Roads Old Towns, an anthology of the works of four Southern Wisconsin poets--David Steingass, Angela Peckinpugh, Edna Meudt, and Gianfranco Pagnucci. Edited by Pagnucci, Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and poetry editor of Adorn, in an attractive format illustrated by photos, it is available for \$4.95 plus \$1.20 from the Department of English, University of Wisconsin, Platteville, WI 53818.

Amy Jo Schoonover

Amy Jo Schoonover of Mechanicsburg, Ohio, a regular at the Midwest Poetry Festival, has been named Poet of the Year for 1988 by the Ohio Poetry Day Association. Her award-winning book is New and Used Poems, published by Lake Shore Publishing, 373 Ramsay Road, Deerfield, Illinois 60015.

Janis L. Pallister

Janis L. Pallister, Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of Bowling Green State University and Poetry Festival participant, has edited Sister to Sister, letters written by Fannie Reed to her twin sister Eliza Crawford, 1894-1904. The edition, reprinted from Turn-of-the-Century Women, includes a general introductory essay by Marilyn Motz, a biographical essay by Jan Pallister, and an interpretive essay by Suzanne L. Bunkers. Jan is the granddaughter of Fannie Reed.

Scott Donaldson

Scott Donaldson, Louise G. T. Cooley Professor of English at William and Mary, has published John Cheever: A Biography, Random House, 1988, the first major biography of Cheever and a fascinating portrayal of American literary relationships in our time.



Kenny J. Williams

Kenny J. Williams, Professor of English at Duke University, winner of the MidAmerica Award for 1986, and exile from Chicago, has published A Storyteller and a City: Sherwood Anderson's Chicago (Northern Illinois University Press, 1988.)

William McCann

Ambrose Bierce's Civil War, edited with an introduction by Founding Member William McCann in 1958 has been re-issued by Regnery Gateway.



FIGURE 1. A. BIERCE, CIVIL WAR, THE PRINCIPLES OF WAR.

## The Society's Programs at MMLA

The Society sponsored two programs at the Midwest Modern Language Association meeting in St. Louis on November 4, 1988. The topic of both programs was "Missouri Writers and Writing." The first panel, "In Honor of Jack Conroy," included "Jack Conroy and the Rebel Poet," by Bernard F. Engel, Michigan State, "Jack Conroy and Proletarian Fiction" by David D. Anderson, and "The Significance of Jack Conroy" by Douglas Wixson, University of Missouri/Rolla. Jack, recipient of the Society's first Mark Twain Award in 1980, is 89, and has been hospitalized in Moberly, Missouri. Cards and letters may be sent to him, care of Doug Wixson, who will see that he gets them.

The second panel consisted of three papers, "William Marion Reedy: the Literary Boss of The Middle West," by Philip A. Greasley, University of Kentucky/Fort Knox; "The Awakening and the Literary Canon," by Marilyn J. Atlas, Ohio University, and "If T. S. Eliot Had Read Huck Finn . . .," by Roger Bresnahan.

The Society is planning two panels, "In Honor of Frederick Manfred" and "The Literature of the North Country," for the MMLA meeting in Minneapolis on November 2-4, 1989. If you're interested in participating (you must be a member of MMLA as well as the Society), write **Dave Anderson** by February 15.





THE VENERABLE BLACKSMITH WITH HIS WEAPON.  
(SEE PAGE 203.)



PETERSON D'UN LAP.



THE SWORD OF BLENA VISTA AND MOLINO DEL REY.



## PROPOSAL FOR A COALITION OF AMERICAN AUTHOR SOCIETIES

Several of us who have worked for literary societies believe that it is time to form our own co-ordinating council. Literary societies can benefit by sharing information and ideas, talent and energy. Moreover, it makes sense for us to seek ways to supplement the limited opportunities provided by the MLA.

I am proposing a coalition of the literary societies devoted to the study of American authors, such as the Edith Wharton Society, the Mark Twain Circle, the Nathaniel Hawthorne Society, etc.

Furthermore, I am suggesting that we arrange our own annual American literature conference, at which each society would be responsible for setting up several panels. Smaller conferences on related subjects (modern writers, New England writers, New York Writers, women writers, etc.) could also be arranged.

I have already begun contacting representatives of the various societies, and the initial response has been enthusiastic support for this proposal. I hope that the officers of any American author society that have not yet responded or that I have failed to reach will contact me as soon as possible. I would also appreciate any suggestions or comments that other scholars might have, particularly regarding the most desirable location and time of year for the first conference.

Alfred Bendixen  
Dept. of English  
California State Univ., L.A.  
5151 State Univ. Drive  
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THE WEED KING AND OTHER STORIES

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Introduction by Douglas Wixson

Perhaps more than any other American novel of the 30's, Jack Conroy's The Disinherited has stood the test of time. Originally re-

garded as the best example of proletarian fiction, it has now earned a permanent place as a landmark of American literature. In this volume, Douglas Wixson and Jack Conroy have selected over thirty stories based on Jack's youthful memories of Monkey Nest, the coal mining camp near Moberly, Missouri where he still lives today. these stories provide glimpses into the lives of the working men and women that Jack came to know so well during the Depression, but best of all this collection provides the reader with an opportunity to experience the warmth, joy, sensitivity, and humor of Jack Conroy's writing at its best.

Publication Date August 8, 1985

0-88208-185-3/Cloth/17.95

0-88208-185-1/Paper/9.95

300 Pages



DARSHAN SINGH MAINI  
Visiting Professor at  
New York University  
1988-89 academic year

# THE SPIRIT OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

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Darshan Singh Maini, formerly Professor of English, Punjabi University, has contributed scores of learned papers, essays, articles, critiques and poems to leading journals, magazines and newspapers in India and abroad. His critical work includes *Henry James: The Indirect Vision* (UMI Research Press, Ann Arbor/London, 1988), *The Portrait of a Lady: An Assessment* (O.U.P., 1977) and *Studies in Punjabi Poetry* (1979). A volume of his political essays and commentaries entitled *Cry, the Beloved Punjab* appeared in 1987, as also a volume of verse, *A Reluctant Flame*. Dr Maini is a permanent member of the *Henry James Review* (John Hopkins University) editorial board, and writes for India in the *Bulletin* published by the International Association of University Professors of English (Lausanne). He was a Fulbright Visiting Professor at Harvard University in 1969-70, and the UGC National Lecturer in 1979-80.

Till the middle of the 19th century, American literature had hardly any name, address or signature. Where it did exist, it was more an echo of its European forbears than a distinctive voice. However, since then, it has acquired such energies of theme, form and style out of its own unique dreams, distempers and compulsions as to have established itself as a leading literature in the world. This expanding imperium of letters thus testifies to an abiding faith in the vigour, authenticity and opulence of the American Experience with all its tragic contradictions, ambiguities and complexities. And the strains that go to make up this

experience—settler-Puritan, ethnic, cultural and socio-political, etc.—are structured in song and story in a manner that is as typically American as apple-pie or coca-cola or blue jeans. To render, then, the spirit of this literature which retains its folk character in the midst of so much *avant-gardism* and modernity is to bring out the poetries of the American imagination at its richest. In these 16 essays, written in a critical idiom of penetration and power, Dr. D.S. Maini, an internationally-known scholar, seeks to open many a new window on this fascinating sprawl of life and literature.

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## A Storyteller and a City

### Sherwood Anderson's Chicago

Kenny J. Williams . . . . .



**T**his incisive new study articulates an approach to modernist literature that mediates between such schools as the Marxists, with their emphasis on social and political influences, and the strict formalists. Foster sees modernist literature as part of a "total historical process . . . movement within and through history, society, and culture."

Analyzing classics of modernism by T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, William Faulkner, and W. B. Yeats, Foster makes a new and compelling case for reader involvement. Both form and content are viewed as intrinsic elements of the dialectic encounter of the artist with the world—in the words of Wallace Stevens, "the poem of the mind in the act of finding/What will suffice." This approach challenges readers to participate in a dynamic exchange, recognizing and responding to each work as part of the process of creation.

As society changes, so must the form and content of literary responses to it. The task of the critic is to recognize the symbiotic nature of these changes and to examine literature in relation to its full historical and cultural context. Within the sphere of inquiry Foster has defined, modernism is an expression of the exchange between an individual and the world.

Thomas C. Foster teaches English at the University of Michigan—Flint.

215 pages \$27.50

**S**herwood Anderson, known for his masterful portraits of small-town America, began his literary career in the quintessential midwestern big city, Chicago. Attracted and repelled by the city's powerful magnetism, he incorporated this mecca of commercialism into his literary imagination, and he wrote his first fiction in the tradition of the Chicago novel.

*A Storyteller and a City* traces Anderson's stormy relationship with Chicago through his two earliest novels and *Midwestern Chants*. Williams analyzes these works in the context of the thriving "Chicago School" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Seen in this light, Anderson's portrayals of the great midwestern city emerge as cogent responses to the pessimistic determinism of the strict realists. In Anderson's Chicago, intelligent, talented men and women are free to strive against the forces that alienate and corrupt.

Williams's provocative study of Anderson and his city includes a map of Chicago's literary heritage.

Kenny J. Williams is Professor of English at Duke University.

322 pages, photos \$28.50

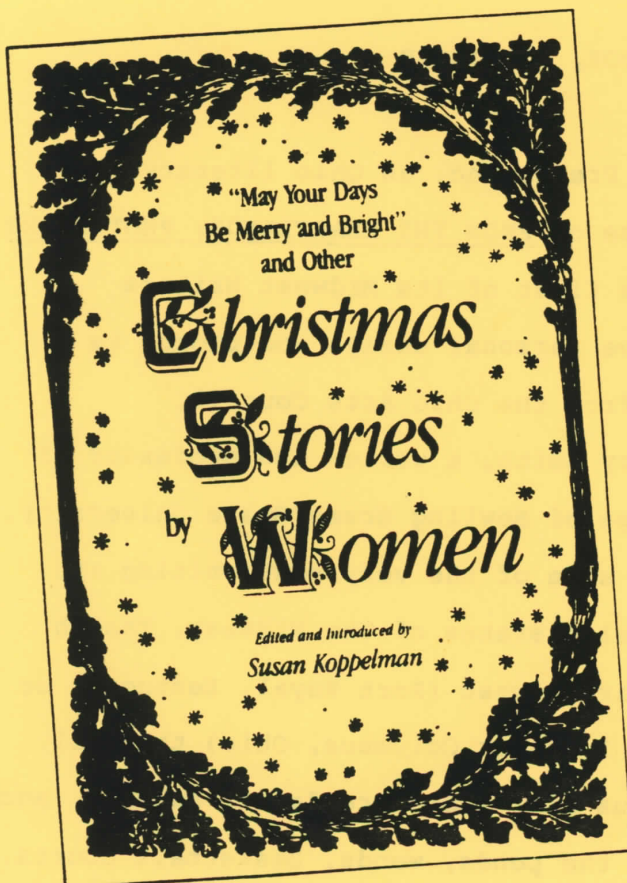
## Form and Society in Modern Literature

. . . . . Thomas C. Foster





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to come— treasures from the past



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TITLE: HEARTLANDS, MIDWEST BOOK, PUBLISHED

(Huron, Ohio) Bottom Dog Press, Inc. an Ohio literary publisher has announced release of FROM THE HEARTLANDS: PHOTOS AND ESSAYS FROM THE MIDWEST as the first of its Midwest Writers Series. The book of twenty-five personal essays and photos is supported in part by a grant from the Ohio Arts Council.

The book's editor is Larry Smith, a writer and professor of humanities at Firelands College of Bowling Green State University. He explains, "We've collected some of the very best writing and photos from throughout the twelve states of the Midwest. Though they each are from a particular Midwest (Port Royal, Kentucky, or St. Paul, Minnesota, or Ames, Iowa, or Columbus, Ohio) they all speak to a Midwest common to us all. There are farms, suburbs, and cities represented along with the ponds, woods, basketball courts, swimming pools, windmills--the hills and valleys of our lives."

The authors represented in the book by an essay of person and place are listed by state: Jim Barnes (Oklahoma), Wendell Berry (Kentucky), Martha Bergland and Kay Murphy (Illinois), Conger Beasley, Jr. (South Dakota), John Calderazzo, Nancy Dunham, Robert Fox, Jeff Gundy, Diane Kendig, Mark Masse, Joe Napora, and Michael Rosen (Ohio), Christian Davis, Mark Vinz and Craig



Hergert (Minnesota), Michael Delp (Michigan), Annie Dillard (Pennsylvania), Robert Richter and Susan Strayer Deal (Nebraska), David Shields, Susan Allen Toth, and Tony Tommasi (Iowa), and Scott R. Sanders (Indiana).

Smith added that almost invariably the essay writers are also poets, and often fiction writers as well. Most have published widely, including poet and essayist Wendell Berry, Pulitzer Prize winning essayist Annie Dillard, and best selling novelists such as Scott R. Sanders, David Shields. "In some cases, such as Susan Allen Toth," added the editor, "we went to her fine book BLOOMING: A SMALL-TOWN GIRLHOOD, and she generously arranged for reprint of the classic 'Swimming Pools' chapter. All the authors were generous with their work." About half of the articles are appearing for the first time in HEARTLANDS.

The photographers represented in the volume were selected by photo editor, Zita Sodeika. "The photos represent many areas and aspects of life in the Midwest," she stated. "But, above all, they are fine, clear photos of our collective lives." The photographers and their respective states were listed as: John Ameling and Roger Pfingston (Indiana), D. James Galbraith (Michigan), Carolyn Berry (Illinois), and Gary Ainley, Charles Corbeil, Sr., Julie Koba, Tom Koba, Dennis Horan, Edith Lehman, Bill Schnell, and Joel Rudinger (Ohio).

The book's editor, Smith, provides an overall introduction as well as individual introductions to each author. The book is 232 pages and is perfect bound; it includes 26 photos, and sells for \$8.95 in bookstores or can be ordered for \$9.95 from Bottom Dog Press, c/o Firelands College, Huron, Ohio 44839.

Please post



**POETRY, SONGS, AND TALES OF THE AMERICAN COWBOY**  
**A National Symposium and Celebration**

Texas Tech University  
Lubbock, Texas  
June 2-4, 1989

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**CALL FOR PAPERS**

This conference will blend authentic poetry, literature, music, art, and crafts of the American cowboy with the academic perspective on the recent revival of interest in the culture of the cowboy. Papers may concern any aspect of the above. In addition to scholarly presentations, the program will include practicing cowboy poets, musicians, storytellers, and craftsmen.

The conference will seek publication of selected papers from the proceedings of the symposium. Papers should be limited to 12 to 18 minutes. Please send title, one-page abstract, and estimated reading time by January 20, 1989, to:

**Dr. Kenneth Davis, Co-Chair**  
**National Cowboy Symposium**  
**Dept. of English**  
**Texas Tech University**  
**Lubbock, TX 79409**

# Visiting Research Fellowships

1989-90

at the American Antiquarian Society



Visiting Research Fellowships of from one to three and six to twelve months' duration will be available at the American Antiquarian Society for tenure during the period June 1, 1989 – May 31, 1990. All awards are for research in American history and culture through 1876. Special support is available for scholars working in American literary studies and the American eighteenth century and for doctoral candidates writing dissertations. Application may be made jointly for short-term fellowships at both AAS and The Newberry Library. The long-term fellowships at AAS are funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the short-term awards by a variety of sources. *The application deadline is January 31, 1989.* For detailed information, see inside.

American Antiquarian Society

185 Salisbury Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts  
(508) 752-5813 or 755-5221

[ Please Post or Circulate ]



for Papers Call for Papers Call for Papers Call for P

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## **Reconstructing Cultural Criticism in America: Intellectuals/Discourses/Institutions**

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a conference at the  
**Center for Twentieth Century Studies**  
**University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**

**APRIL 19-21, 1989**

**FEATURED SPEAKERS:**

**Lois Banner**, History, Univ. of Southern  
California

**Hazel Carby**, English, Wesleyan Univ.

**James Clifford**, History of Consciousness,  
Univ. of California, Santa Cruz

**Mark Krupnick**, English, Univ. of Illinois,  
Chicago

**Stanley Tigerman**, Architecture, Univ. of  
Illinois, Chicago

The focus of the conference is both retrospective and projective: to look back with revisionary eyes at the figures, movements, institutions, and ideas of American cultural criticism in the twentieth century, and to look forward to the kinds of cultural criticism that this historical understanding might enable. Twenty-minute papers are invited which offer:

- rereadings of particular intellectual figures or texts;
- analyses of institutions (such as magazines, museums, libraries, universities, publishing houses, etc.) and their effects;
- considerations of the role of race, class, and gender in the discourse of American cultural studies;

- investigations of the politics of criticism;
- examinations of how specific disciplines (philosophy, art history, sociology, history, etc.) contribute to the production of cultural criticism;
- reassessments of particular movements or historical periods;
- or theoretical treatments of ideas of the intellectual, of culture, and of criticism.

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS:**  
**January 15, 1989**

Send a two-page abstract to.

**Gregory Jay**, Conference Organizer  
Center for Twentieth Century Studies  
P.O. Box 413

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
Milwaukee WI 53201

Telephone: 414-229-4141

The Center for Twentieth Century Studies is a postdoctoral research institute at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee whose aim is to foster interdisciplinary research in the humanities. Supported by the College of Letters and Science and The Graduate School, the Center is devoted to the study of contemporary culture, with an emphasis on critical theory, literature, film and media, and the experimental arts. The Center is home to *Discourse*, a journal for theoretical studies in media and culture, and a book series entitled *Theories of Contemporary Culture*, both of which are published by Indiana Univ. Press. The Center's research also appears in its *Working Papers*.

**Call for Papers Call for Pape**

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Winterthur Museum

solicits papers for a conference

"THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF GENDER/THE GENDER OF MATERIAL CULTURE"

Scheduled for Friday and Saturday, November 10th and 11th, 1989.

The conference organizers seek a wide-ranging examination of links between sexuality and material culture. Papers may address any North American subject from the seventeenth century to the twentieth. Potential topics include, but are not limited to: gender and value; roles and identities; the construction of gender; concepts of maleness and femaleness; power and domination; beauty; taboos and fetishes; homosexuality and the arts; domesticity; symbolism; gender in things; and ways material culture informs men's studies and women's studies. Cross-cultural perspectives are welcome, as are contributions from any discipline. Papers describing works in progress and tentative conclusions are invited.

Speakers receive an honorarium plus expenses. Papers will be published.

Written proposals are due March 1, 1989; acceptances will be announced April 1. Contact Co-Chairs Kenneth Ames or Katharine Martinez, Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, DE 19735.



# The Santa Fe Conference on **WILLA CATHER**

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*A Critical Reappraisal*  
**August 9-12, 1989**

*La Fonda Hotel*  
*Santa Fe, New Mexico*

## **Featured Speakers**

Elizabeth Ammons, Tufts University  
Judith Fetterley, SUNY, Albany  
Leo Marx, Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Walter Benn Michaels, University of California, Berkeley  
Jean Schwind, Earlham College

## **Call for Papers**

The Santa Fe Conference on Willa Cather encourages scholars and theorists to consider Willa Cather's life and fiction in light of recent feminist criticism and recent critical theories generally. We suggest that papers avoid the established or traditional views of Cather, which tend to be consciously laudatory rather than objectively analytical. We are purposefully not citing specific topics for papers because we wish to encourage non-prescriptive, original approaches to Cather and her work.

The reading time for papers should be no more than twenty minutes. A collection of essays will include revised and expanded papers selected from those presented at the conference.

**Deadline for Papers: March 1, 1989**

Please submit two copies of the completed paper and a 100-word abstract to:

Patrick W. Shaw and Lady Falls Brown  
Department of English  
Texas Tech University  
Lubbock, Texas 79409-3091

The name of the author or authors should appear only on the cover letter to implement our policy of "blind submissions." Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish the papers returned.

**Funding for the conference is provided by Texas Tech University:**

College of Arts and Sciences  
Department of English

International Center for Arid and  
Semi-Arid Land Studies (ICASALS)

Graduate School  
Southwest Collection

**Supporting funds have also been applied for from the National Endowment for the Humanities**

Department of English / Texas Tech University / Lubbock, Texas 79409-3091  
(806) 742-2541 or (806) 742-2531



ENJOY OHIO CULTURE ALONG THE LAKE



**THE SHERWOOD ANDERSON  
AMERICAN FICTION FESTIVAL**

**MARCH 11-12, 1989**

**SATURDAY**

**- OPENING LUNCHEON -**

**WALTER RIDEOUT**

Anderson, Biographer

1:00 p.m.

Shooters Restaurant

**- "JUPUS REDEYE" -**

Robert Flanagan's Play

8:00 p.m.

Firelands College Theatre

**SUNDAY**

**- HERBERT GOLD -**

**Author**

Reads and Discusses

His Fiction

1:15 p.m.

Firelands College

**- "OHIO TOWN" -**

Gallery Theatre Adaptation  
of Helen Hooven Santmyer's

2:30 p.m.

Firelands College

**COST:** \$80.00 for all events with accommodations\*; \$25.00 without accommodations.

Contact: Jeff Welsh or Kathy Emond, Lake Erie Regional Studies Program at Firelands College of Bowling Green State University, Huron, OH 44839. (419) 433-5560.

\* Accommodations at the new Radisson Harbor Inn in Sandusky, OH.



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**FICTION**

FROM THE  
**HEARTLANDS**  
photos and essays from  
the midwest



**ESSAYS &  
PHOTOGRAPHY**

**THE BEST IN**

**THE DISCOVERY OF FIRE**



Poems by  
**DAVID SHEVIN**

**POETRY**

∞ **FROM OHIO & THE MIDWEST** ∞

## A Sense of Place/ A Place of Sense

# Writers Explore the Midwest

A Public Conference  
Sponsored by the



January 27 — 28, 1989

State Historical Building  
Capitol Complex  
600 East Locust Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

This conference, a part of the Iowa Humanities Board two-year Exemplary Award project on "A Sense of Place", brings together a group of distinguished writers to help us understand that elusive place—and idea—we call the midwest.

The purpose of this gathering is to hear and discuss the insights of writers—past and present—on the midwest as a place that shapes the lives we all lead. The conference will attempt to explore the salient characteristics of midwestern literature, history, culture, landscape, and social patterns.

The speakers and panel members have written on the midwest, taught about this region, and three of them are currently farming in addition to their writing.

Since this is a public conference open to all, ample time will be allocated to discussion with the speakers and among those in attendance.

Participants are encouraged to attend both Friday evening and all day Saturday to benefit fully from the conference. The Friday evening reception provides an ideal opportunity for all conference participants to get acquainted.

### Who Should Attend?

- General public
- Scholars
- Librarians
- History buffs
- Journalists
- All those interested in learning more about the midwest
- Teachers
- Students
- Environmentalists
- Writers
- Media people

### Cost

There is no cost for attending the sessions, which are being paid for by the National Endowment for the Humanities grant. However, those who will be attending the Friday evening reception, the Saturday luncheon, or partaking of the refreshments available at the breaks will be expected to pay \$15 to cover IHB costs for food and drink.

### How to Register

To register, please fill out the form on the last panel in this brochure and mail it to Iowa Humanities Board, Oakdale Campus, Iowa City, IA 52242. Be sure to send us a check for \$15 if you are planning to take advantage of any of the food and drink options. Although we will accept walk-ins on Friday or Saturday, please send us your registration forms and checks by January 20.

### Related Exhibit

Conference attendees will also be able to view the David Plowden photography exhibit on "A Sense of Place", currently showing in the State Historical Building through February 19. The one hundred photos of rural Iowa are the result of a joint project by the Iowa Humanities Board and the State Historical Society. The IHB participation was made possible by an Exemplary Award from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The fifty IHB photos have been touring rural Iowa since March, 1988, and they will be going back on the road in March. Those wishing to book the IHB traveling exhibit should call the IHB at (319) 335-4153.

### Related Publications

As a part of this project, the University of Iowa Press has published for the Iowa Humanities Board *A Place of Sense: Essays in Search of the Midwest*. Five of the eight essayists are participating in the conference.

The 1987 Iowa Humanities Lecture by Carol Bly has been reprinted by the IHB for free distribution and will be available at the conference. The 1988 Lecture, by Wendell Berry, is in the process of being reprinted. Copies may be ordered at the conference for distribution in early February.

W.W. Norton has also published for the State Historical Society *A Sense of Place* by David Plowden, which contains all of the photos in the exhibit.



# **CALL FOR PAPERS AND SESSIONS**

**Great Lakes American Studies Association Meeting**

**at**

**Kent State University**

**Kent, Ohio**

**SEPTEMBER 22-23, 1989**

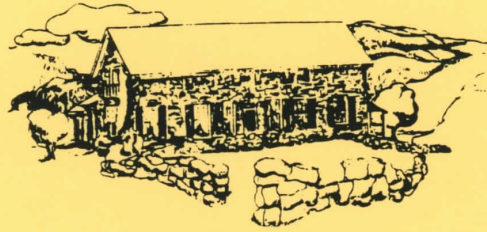
## **"AMERICA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE: THE ARTS IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT"**

**The topic should be understood to include both "fine" and vernacular arts and their relationships to the social and cultural milieux into which they were introduced. Various forms of popular and "classic" literature (and their interrelations) painting, music, architecture, and mass communications are important to this issue.**

**Please submit paper or session proposals to William Howland Kenney, III, Coordinator, American Studies Program, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242 by May 25th. Please address further questions to Professor Kenney: (216)672-2882.**

# The Sherwood Anderson Foundation

Post Office Box 266  
Madison, North Carolina 27025



*Anderson's Ripshin Farm*

30 November 1988

Dear Friend,

## *Trustees*

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Ray Lewis White

The Sherwood Anderson Foundation is launching its second funds campaign to increase its capacity to help young writers.

Thanks to your generous support, the Foundation now has \$36,000 as a result of the first campaign and good investments. This enabled the Foundation to award its first \$1,000 scholarship last April.

This year, the Foundation is offering a \$1,500 scholarship, open to competition among fiction and non-fiction writers who are sophomores and juniors in college this school year. The competition will close in March and the scholarship will be awarded in late spring.

The Foundation, a non-profit, tax-exempt trust, seeks as its main goal to continue a legacy of helping young writers as Anderson did during his writing career.

This year the Foundation offers Carl Sandburg's book *Rootabaga Stories* to the person who makes the largest contribution. In case of a tie, there will be a drawing. This edition, published November 1922, 4th printing, by Harcourt Brace, contains this inscription on the flyleaf:

"Sherwood --  
Go to it, old horse thief --  
Yourn zigzag, Carl S."

Also included with the book is Anderson's handwritten reply, which states:

"Dear Carl,  
I love the book. But I'm not going to keep it. I have a little girl nine. It goes to her as a Christmas remembrance from yourself and me. Am damn sorry I didn't see you when I was in New York.

Sincerely,

Sherwood"

We hope, with your generous help, we may be able to offer more than one scholarship per year in the near future.

Sincerely,

Michael M. Spear, Chairman