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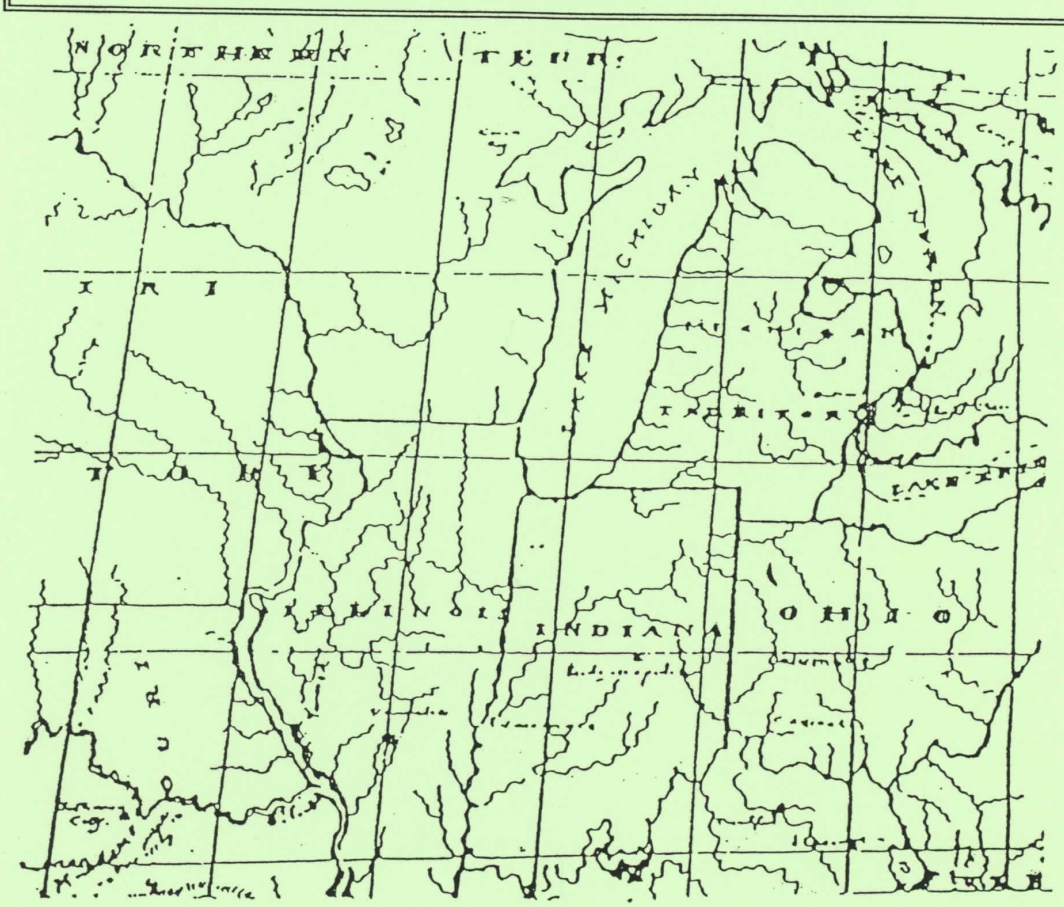

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Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature

Newsletter

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CONTENTS

An Editor's Plea

As the literary executor of the late William Thomas, I can assure you that his literary remains will provide material for the Newsletter for a number of years to come,and my files are almost as voluminous if considerably less colorful. But I do ask—request—plead—that Bill and I not remain alone or almost alone issue after issue after issue. Please send us your brief articles, essays, reviews, bibliographies, reminiscences, as regularly as you can. We especially solicit memoirs, fictionalized or not, of life and living in the Midwest, urban or rural, past or present, perhaps even as poetic narratives,. We'll even consider— and probably use—the racy, as long as it isn't simply Midwestern bragging. Perhaps we'll even start a new feature called "Flamboyant Midwesterners" or "The Flamboyant Midwest," a dimension of the Newsletter that will not be for the little old lady from the Upper West Side.

D.D.A.

Growing Up in Chicago Between the Wars:
The Literary Lives of Saul Bellow and Isaac Rosenfeld
David D. Anderson

In the Fall of 1933, two young men, both of them June graduates of Tuley High School in the Humboldt Park neighborhood on Chicago's North Side, enrolled in the University of Chicago to study philosophy and literature. Both were of Russian-Jewish ancestry. Saul Bellow was born Solomon Bellows in Lachine, Quebec, on June 11, 1915, from whence his family moved to Montreal, and then, in 1924, to Chicago. Isaac Rosenfeld was born in Chicago on March 10, 1918, an only child whose mother died when he was twenty-two months old; when his father later remarried, he became increasingly estranged from his family and origins.

Both boys suffered prolonged illnesses in their elementary school years, periods that made both of them introspective readers; both attended Hebrew school and were proficient in Yiddish, Rosenfeld's first language. At the same time they began to discover and respond to the wonder that was Chicago in the 1920s. Bellow later recalled avidly following the Leopold and Loeb murder trial in the papers shortly after arriving in Chicago, and then, like generations of city kids before and since, he discovered the streets and the poolroom., But he and Rosenfeld also discovered the public library:

> Then I was on the streets of Chicago and playing a gamecalled Piggie-move-up, which was a baseball game played in the street, and hanging upside down by my knees from porch railings, which was my favorite diversion as a kid. Well, I was a street kid, although I played the violin and attended a Hebrew school. But I broke with that--the choice was between the Hebrew school and the pool room and the playground, and the pool room and the playground won out. Together with the public library.

Of his relationship with the public library, he later said, 'I took home Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson.. I didn't bring home the wisdom of Maimonides."

Although Bellow—still Solly Bellows—later became, according to his friend Dave Peltz, a good runner, a fair swimmer, and a middling tennis player, Rosenfeld remained sickly and overweight, and he later wrote in a fictionalized memoir that "I was a serious young man, interested only in philosophy and politics....I had no girl friends, no frivolities...."

But at Tuley High School Bellow and Rosenfeld became friends as they discovered mutual interests and formed remarkably similar ambitions. As Dave Peltz and another friend, Sam Friedfeld, remembered, their literary interests flourished, and they spent much time debating appropriate titles for their unwritten literary works. Bellow's favorite was "Black leaves whirling in the wind," from Oscar Wilde.

At Tuley their political interests also flourished, and, together with Oscar Tarcov, who was later to publish a novel called Bravo My Monster (1950), they came under the influence of Nathan Gould, a Trotskyite youth leader. Committed members of the anti-Stalinst left, dedicated to literature and ideas, they became members of the Trotskyite Spartacus Youth League, and then the Young Peoples Socialist League during a flirtation with the Socialist Party. Finally they joined the Young Peoples Socialist League (Fourth International), the youth arm of the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party.

Although both took their Trotskyite faith to the University of Chicago in 1930, where they joined the Trotskyite Socialist Club and organized "Cell Number Five" of the Trotskyite youth group, their interests became less political and more satirical and they were increasingly seen as clowns rather than politically committed, especially as they took to reciting Swinburne in a variety of accents—Swedish, Polish, Italian, Yiddish—at Party gatherings. In 1935 Bellow, dissatisfied with Chicago's literature program, transferred to Northwestern, while Rosenfeld remained at Chicago to concentrate on philosophy, where he was a favorite student of Eliseo Vivos and Rudolph Carnap.

In their last years as undergraduates their creative literary impulses began to make themselves felt; in February, 1936, Bellow published his first short story, which won third prize in a writing contest at Northwestern, in The Daily Northwestern. Called "The Hell it Can't", an obvious play on Sinclair Lewis's title It Can't Happen Here, it describes the beating of a union organizer by two fascists. Bellow graduated with honors in anthropology in 1937. In same year at Chicago, Rosenfeld won the John Billings Fisk Prize for a group of five related lyrical poems that echoed "The Waste Land." He received his degree in philosophy also in 1937.

Although Bellow married in 1937 and went on to Wisconsin for graduate work in anthropology, he learned that as he later recalled, every time he began to write his thesis, it became a story and that he was not an anthropologist. He returned to Chicago at Christmas time to a series of jobs and the literary apprenticeship that he later described as an "arrogant" determination to become a literary artist. Rosenfeld, however, followed Bellow to Madison where he remained to receive his M.A. in Philosophy in 1941, and he determined to go on to a Ph.D. at N.Y.U. He married in Chicago before he left, and in New York he remained secure from the draft during the

war. He worked for a time on a barge in the harbor, after suddenly giving up his graduate studies in 1942.

Bellow remained in Chicago, his draft status confused by his Canadian birth, working for the Illinois Writers Project of the WPA, the Encyclopedia Brittanica, the "Great Books" Project, and at the Pestalozzi-Froebel Teachers College. This grind was punctuated by a brief trip to Mexico, during which Trotsky was assassinated, in August, 1940. In 1944 Bellow enlisted in the Merchant Marines, and after training at Sheepshead Bay, New York, he was given a shore station in New York City, where he determined to remain after the war.

The decade of the 1940s was to mark the transition of both young men from itinerant graduate student-apprentice intellectuals to practicing writers. Bellow had already published his first short story, "Two Morning Monologues," in the Partisan Review in the May-June 1941, issue, and he followed it with "The Mexican General" two years later. The former used as its basis his experience as an unemployed young intellectual in Chicago, and it marks the first appearance of Solly Bellows as Saul Bellow. The latter story is based on his Mexican experience in 1940. Rosenfeld contributed reviews regularly to the New Republic, where he worked briefly as an editor, as well as to Partisan Review, Commentary, The Nation, and others. Like Bellow, his first successes were in fiction published in the Partisan Review . "The Hand that Fed Me," a story that appeared in the Winter 1944 issue, was that of an isolated and alienated young man not unlike Dostoevski's underground man and Bellow's Joseph in Dangling Man , who had appeared in "Notes of a Dangling Man" in Partisan Review in September-October, 1943. Rosenfeld followed it with "The Colony," part of a never-published novel; "The Empire," set in India. Nevertheless, "The Colony" won the Partisan Review' Novelette Award for 1945.

The decade was marked, too, by the publication of each young writer's first novel, Bellow publishing Dangling Man in 1944 and Rosenfeld published Passage From Home two years later. Not accidentally, both of them turned to their Chicago backgrounds for the setting and much of the substance of their work. Bellow's Dangling Man completes the story of Joseph, the young Chicago intellectual who waits in his Chicago boarding house for a draft notice that never comes, and Rosenfeld's Passage from Home explores a sensitive young adolescent's search for meaning and love and its inevitable failure.

Both novels are set in Chicago, both are loosely autobiographical, and both emphasize the isolation of the protagonist in a situation not of his making and beyond his comprehension, a situation that ultimately forces acceptance of a system and a set

of experiences he can neither tolerate nor identify with. Both are clearly products of the first-generation urban American experience in a nation, a city, and a time marked by distress and uncertainty.

Bellow's novel is set later in time—Joseph is, like the younger protagonist of "Two Morning Monologues," caught between two realities, but unlike the earlier young man, no longer a student and not yet a worker, Joseph is in his mid-twenties; his wife is a librarian at the main Chicago Public Library, but Joseph, a trained historian, is no longer a worker—he has quit his job at a travel agency—and not yet a soldier—his ambiguous nationality has delayed his induction into the army. As he waits, alone in his room in a South-Side rooming house, he broods, he ponders, and he records his thoughts in his journal, the first entry of which is December 15, 1942, at the beginning of a long, drab cold Chicago winter, and the last of which is on April 9, 1943, as spring begins to penetrate the dreary streets.

Joseph's journal is not unlike Rainer Maria Rilke's Journal of My Other Self in structure and in psychological penetration, its self-pity compensated for by its almost painful honesty. His rooming house echoes Sherwood Anderson's Winesburg, Ohio in its population of grotesques: Mr. Vanoker, whose mannerisms annoy Joseph; Mrs. Piefer, the landlady, dying alone, blind and nearly bald, in her room; Mrs. Briggs, her daughter, the arbiter of a grotesque order in the rooming house; Marie, the silent black maid, disapproving of them all; the others, shadows, come and go in the background.

The people of the rooming house are, as Joseph sees them, unwitting parodies of the city and the world beyond—that of his family, his friends and acquaintances, his mistress, and ultimately his wife, and Joseph moves from the streets to the room and back again, to record, with determination, his own psychological reality. But Joseph is no George Willard; the grotesques of the rooming house and the city exist not to teach Joseph but to annoy him, and with them he seeks not community but confrontation; a devotee of le genre humain, as he describes himself, he is, he insists, "continually trying to find clear signs of their common humanity."

The rooming house is, for Joseph, a metaphor for his time—the early 1940s—and his place, the city of Chicago and the greater world and its war that lie threateningly beyond. Joseph debates in his dairy with himself, with Tu As Raison Aussi, the Spirit of Alternatives, or "But on the other hand" but he comes no closer to finding that common humanity in himself and the others,.

Finally, in the midst of a quarrel with his wife, Joseph is provoked by Vanoker's hacking and by his habit of leaving the bathroom door open, and he confronts the old man, arousing the house and nearly striking him. The situation has become

intolerable, and Joseph writes a letter to his draft board requesting immediate induction. Vanoker moves in the night, and a few days later Joseph no longer dangles as he receives his induction notice. But he knows that it is neither victory nor escape; instead, his freedom is, as he realized, cancelled, and he concludes his journal with a temporary truce with his world and a cry in Dostoevskian terms; 'Hurrah for regular hours! / And for the supervision of the spirit. / Long live regimentation!"

Not only did Dangling Man received wide critical attention, but it was praised by some of the leading critics of the time in some of the leading journals: Edmund Wilson wrote in The New Yorker that it was "One of the most honest pieces of testimony on the psychology of a whole generation;" John Chamberlain wrote in the New York Times that it ". ..ventures into hitherto unexplored territory;" The Saturday Review described it as "...the herald of a fine literary career;" Irving Kristol described it as "Superb in its restraint, dignity, and insight." The novel wears well half a century after its publication, and, although Bellow has commented that he can't bear to re-read it, it ranks high in the Bellow canon.

Dangling Man is Bellow's interpretation of a young man's inability to come to an understanding of the world, the city, and the room of which he is a part, of the people whose lives, for better or worse, have given broader dimensions to his own. Whether Joseph is fleeing his world, whether, like Dopstoevsky's underground man, he is surrendering, whether he is rejoining the world from which he had been alienated, or whether he will continue to dangle in the army as he had in Chicago, Joseph projects a vision of the human predicament in the modern world that continues to dominate his fiction today.

Like Dangling Man Rosenfeld's Passage from Home portrays a young man's attempt to come to terms with his identity and his role in a place and time and milieu that defy his understanding. But unlike Joseph, Rosenfeld's protagonist, Bernard, is at fifteen, in mid-adolescence, and his world beyond is that of the three thousand years of accumulated Jewish culture.

The first-person narrative, is like that in Huckleberry Finn, carefully sustained in the The perspective of the fifteen-year-old boy, but as in most of Sherwood Anderson's adolescent first-person stories, the mask slips once to make evident the fact that the narrator is in reality an adult male looking back on an experience that he had largely contrived but that he still does not understand. That experience is rooted in the complex relationships among two family groups. The first consists of his father, his step-mother, and himself , a reasonably devout Jewish household; the second consists of his dead mother's sister, his stylish and sexy Aunt Minna, whose ties to her

cultural origins are frayed, if not broken; his Cousin Willie, actually the gentile drifter from Tennessee who had been married to his father's dead cousin Martha whom Bernard admires; and Bernard himself.

In the narrative the sensitive adolescent's relationship with his father is strained; with his stepmother it is distant, and he forms an attachment to his Aunt Minna that he deliberately refrains from explaining, perhaps because he's afraid. He brings Minna and Willie together; Willie moves in with Minna, and Bernard leaves home to live with them. But the relationship quickly deteriorates—Willie and Bernard learn that Minna is already married to a North Side bar owner named Fred, a man who is unable to insist upon a relationship with Minna. Freedom is elusive, the stimulating life Bernie had anticipated evaporates, and confusion and disgust prevail. He returns to a critical stepmother, an indifferent father, and the realization that as Bernard tells himself, "I might as well never have left, or never come back." From that point on, he concludes, "Now there would only be life as it came and the excuses one made to himself for accepting it."

The novel is well-written, with a cast of believable if not sympathetic characters, but, like many other novels of the genre, it just doesn't come off. Consequently, reviews were few and comments were ambiguous and less than enthusiastic. Marjorie Farber, in The New Republic wrote that "...novelistic problems are attempted and partially solved, of such formidable difficulty that I shall call this a "failure" only tentatively, in quotes"; Elizabeth Hardwick, in Partisan Review, wrote that "...it lacks vigor and fictional inspiration...;" Only Irving Howe reviewed it extensively in Commentary. He praised it because Rosenfeld did not criticize his Jewish background, and he particularly stressed the importance of the novel's themes: the conflicts between generations, between old-world Jewishness and new-world Americanization; between community and alienation. But he concluded that its execution was muddled and deficient.

In the years that followed Bellow's initial success, he returned to teaching at the University of Minnesota in 1946-47. He published his second novel, The Victim in 1947, and third, The Adventures of Augie March in 1953. The latter, which was written in Europe while on a Guggenheim, won him the National Book Award in 1954. While Bellow's career began to redeem the promise of his early work, Rosenfeld took refuge in writing reviews and short fiction and in keeping a detailed journal. His second novel, "The Enemy," was turned down by a number of publishers and never published; his third, "The Empire," was never finished. He returned to Chicago in 1951, went to Minnesota to teach for two years, and then returned to the University of Chicago. He

died at thirty-eight on July 15, 1956, in a shabby room on Walton Street on Chicago's Near North Side, ironically the setting of Bernard's futile attempt at escape in Passage From Home.

Although he and Bellow had drifted apart, Bellow was shocked at Rosenfeld's death. At the same time he remained loyal, publishing a brief memorial essay, "Isaac Rosenfeld," in Partisan Review in the Fall of 1956. "I loved him, but we were rivals...", he acknowledged, but he knew, too, that his friendship toward Rosenfeld was not always constant, nor was it easy. Bellow described Rosenfeld as a logical man, an honest man, a playful man, but, Bellow concluded, he was, convinced that, like his young protagonist in Passage From Home, "...the struggle for survival...was not worth making...."

Bellow was to return twice more in his writings to his memories of Rosenfeld: in his novel Humboldt's Gift, published in 1976, and in a short story, "Zetland: by a Character Witness," published in Modern Occasions, a collection of stories edited by Philip Rahv in 1974 and reprinted in Bellow's Him With His Foot in his Mouth and Other Stories, published in 1984.

In Humboldt's Gift, Von Humboldt Fleisher, a failed poet, is based largely on Bellow's long-time relationship with Delmore Schwarz, but equally clear are undertones of Isaac Rosenfeld. In "Zetland, by a Character Witness," Zetland is Rosenfeld; Bellow, the character witness, and the story describes the adventures of two boys growing up in Chicago, paradoxically street-kid intellectuals, whose characters and identities ultimately fuse in reaching out, in searching, in making the transition from thought to feeling to art, a transition in which art and faith become one, perhaps attesting to what Bellow if not Rosenfeld ultimately learned.

Bellow's testament to his friend in "Zetland" is not only eloquent, but it is one of Bellow's most deeply-felt creations. But one last, sad foot note to their relationship appears in the testimony of Bellow"s long-time friend, former student, and biographer, Ruth Miller. In the mid-eighties, she recounts, Rosenfeld's journal came to light, and Bellow was given the opportunity to read it. In it, Bellow discovered that Rosenfeld had come to hate him, perhaps for Bellow's success or his own failure Yet, Bellow insists that he still loved Rosenfeld. But that love-hate confrontation was the end of a story and a relationship that had begun in Chicago so many years before.

Michigan State University

THE GREEN MURDER CASE

William Thomas

On the Friday afternoon of 19 September 1947 a football game between the teams of Chesterville and Prospect High Schools in Ohio was played at Chesterville. The team and students from Prospect were taken to Chesterville on school buses. The game, which Chesterville won, was long and ended late, and only at the time of departure it was discovered that a tire on Prospect bus Number 3 was flat. The other buses left, and the students riding in Number 3 waited while the driver changed tires.

The delay made Number 3 fifteen minutes later than the others reaching Prospect. It arrived there at twenty-five minutes after six o'clock.

On Number 3 was a sixteen-year-old sophomore named Roxie Ann Green. Her home was in the country, on a north-south road half a mile north of its intersection with State Route 47 three miles east of town. This was not the route to Chesterville, and it was necessary, therefore, that Roxie Ann return to Prospect before going home.

Friends had agreed to meet her at Sparks' gasoline station and take her to her house. She expected to be back in Prospect about five thirty. They waited till after six o'clock and then went on. Roxie's father and stepmother had commanded her to be home by six, and instead of telephoning and asking that one of them drive to town after her (it was believed she feared their displeasure), she set out to walk the three and a half miles.

She was seen walking east at the edge of town by people who knew her, a little before seven o'clock; and a short time later by a woman who lived on Route 47. Thereupon Roxie Ann Green disappeared.

Her failure to return home was not reported till the arrival of her father, who had been away during the late afternoon and evening, at ten thirty. He telephoned the county sheriff.

The sheriff did not attempt an investigation that night, but next morning--in company with a deputy, the girl's father, and her young brother--found, in the ditch near the entrance to the Green driveway,—Roxie Ann's purse, her hair ribbon, and one of her shoes.

Questioned by the sheriff, other people remembered what they had heard and seen. A family living near the Greens reported that a Model A Ford sedan had turned around at their lane and then stopped in front of the Green place about eight o'clock, and that the driver had got out and either picked up or dropped something. The driver of a bakery truck, coming out of another lane, saw a Model A Ford sedan going south so fast that the back end bounced when it went over a bridge. A Mr. George T. Doddrill, living on Route 47 east of the intersection of the Greens' road, saw a car (it was nearly dark and he could not be sure what make it was) going east and heard a woman's voice screaming "Let me out of here!"

The area surrounding the Green house was searched by ground parties and by airplane. None of the searches discovered a further clue. A statewide hunt for Roxie began. Her description was broadcast by newspaper, radio, and telephone. When last seen she was wearing a navy-blue skirt, a white blouse, a red jacket, red socks, and brown wedgie-type shoes with open toes. She was five feet four inches tall, had dark brown hair and brown eyes, and weighed one hundred and thirty pounds.

Though the articles found by the sheriff seemed clear to point to abduction, various theories as to her disappearance were advanced. It was said she did not get along well with her stepmother, who would not allow her to have dates. The school superintendent said she was a good student, but some of her classmates thought her only mediocre. Mrs. Green said there had not been any misunderstanding that might have led to Roxie's leaving home and that she had no emotional problems.

Roxie was reported having been seen (by people who read about her in the newspapers) at the Cleveland airport, the Dayton bus terminal, and the Cincinnati union station. A gasoline-station attendant in Zanesville was sure Roxie was one of a party of four (two men and two women) in a car which he could describe only as black and whose license number he failed to note. All these reports proved to be unfounded.

Instigated by the Methodist minister, a notoriously meddlesome busybody, a committee was organized to solicit contributions to a fund that would be offered as a reward for information leading to discovery of the whereabouts of Roxie Ann. The county commissioners posted an offer of five hundred dollars. Nothing further was learned. People wondered whether the sheriff's officers were doing all that ought to be done. A private detective

expressed willingness to enter the case, but his proposal was rejected by Roxie's father. The sheriff and a party "combed the home area" again. The sheriff said he had not eliminated the possibility of suicide and was "keeping an open mind".

On Sunday, 28 September, the sheriff's officers took into custody a 32-year-old Prospect man whom they had previously questioned inconclusively, Ray Sheppard, the owner of a Model A Ford sedan. He had given a plausible account of his movements from the time he left the place of his employment at three thirty till late at night, saying that after work he had stopped nearly two hours in a bar with some companions, where they had six or seven rounds of beer. This statement was verified. Going home for his evening meal, he had afterward come back uptown, parked the car in front of a grocery store, and sat in it nearly an hour waiting for the proprietor to open the store for the evening's business. This hour covered the time of Roxie Ann's disappearance. The proprietor did not come, and Sheppard, tired of waiting, returned to his house; from there he and his wife went to a dance.

Renewed questioning of Sheppard added little to what the officers had already learned, although this time they used a lie detector. Officials who brought the lie detector said Sheppard's reaction was not of such a nature as to make a positive case against him. They were doubtful, they said, that he was "the right man". Nevertheless, Sheppard was kept overnight in jail. The following morning Sheppard told the sheriff that if he could talk to his wife first he might be ready to "make a statement". She was brought to the jail and left alone with him, and after their brief private conversation Sheppard admitted he had killed Roxie Ann Green. He said that after beating her on the head with a hammer he had dragged her body to a spot along a country road covered by dense shrubbery, several miles south and east of the Greens' house. He was taken to the spot, and the body was located, as also was the hammer.

Sheppard's confession differed from what he had previously said only with regard to the hour during which he had supposedly waited in front of the grocery store. He confessed that he got tired of waiting after a few minutes and decided to drive to Waldo, the village six miles east on Route 47, where he could buy "high-powered" beer. A mile east of town he overtook the girl and offered her a ride. She refused to get into the car but finally got onto the left running board. He turned up the Greens' road, as she asked, but not knowing the exact location of the house he was driving fast when they reached it and

could not stop quickly because the car's brakes were poor. She did not wait for him to bring the car to a stop but jumped off. He went on to the next lane, turned the car around, and come back to the Green driveway, where she was lying unconscious. He got out, lifted her into the front seat, and started on, intending to take her to a doctor. But before he reached Route 47 he decided to go, instead of to Prospect, to Waldo, where he was not so well known. Soon after he turned east on Route 47 she came to consciousness and began screaming "Let me out of here!" Fearing that people on the traveled highway would hear her, he turned south on the next county road. She kept "yapping", he said, and threatened to "get" him for kidnapping. "This made me mad, and I lost my head." Not knowing what to do and fearing she would make trouble for him in any case, he went on to the next east-west road, and decided the only thing to do was to kill her. A few miles farther on he came to a secluded spot, stopped the car, and got out. She was out on the other side, running away (but she couldn't run fast because she had lost one shoe), and he got a hammer off the floor of the car, caught up with her, and hit her with it several times on the left side of her head. She fell unconscious; he thought her dead. He tossed the hammer into the weeds along one side of the road and dragged her body into the shrubbery along the other. He drove on east till he reached a road that led to Waldo; there bought a dozen bottles of beer, returned to his house in Prospect, washed his hands and face, and changed his clothing. Then he and his wife went to the dance.

Asked if he attempted to rape Roxie, Sheppard said he did not "think so". The coroner said that owing to the decomposition of Roxie's body it was impossible to determine whether she had been raped. Though Roxie's skirt was intact, her slip had been torn, and a large piece of it was never found.

The corpse of Roxie Ann was honored with a private funeral service, at which the flower girls were her classmates. Roxie's best girl friend sang "Just for Today", and her two next-best girl friends together sang "That Old Rugged Cross" and "In the Garden". A program of organ selections included the hymns "Lead Kindly Light", "Rock of Ages", and "Have Thine Own Way, Lord". The officiating minister, who took his text from St. Luke 8:52, "And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said Weep not: she is not dead but sleepeth", was the chairman of the reward committee, which turned itself and its treasury into a committee and fund to erect a gravestone.

Ray Sheppard was indicted on a charge of murder in the first degree, was tried by a jury of eight men and four women, and was found guilty with a recommendation for mercy. He was sentenced to imprisonment for the remainder of his natural life.

Roxie Ann Green, born to be murdered, a toy of the inscrutable Will! Roxie Ann Green, a name to be emblazoned in headlines of daily newspapers and Sunday scandal sheets! Roxie Ann Green, a living nonentity turned by a beautiful chain of accident into a famous corpse. Had she lived, she would have put off her virginity on a June night of the following summer in a car parked in a lane off a country road not far from the place where her life ended. Her stepmother would have said she had no emotional problems. The year after her graduation from high school (with a C+ average) she would have married a young man who drove a dry cleaner's truck, and nine months later would have borne her first son. She would have known the delights of love, the pain and the joy of motherhood, and the sorrow of bereavement. Hers was a small life and would ever have been narrowly circumscribed. But who living does not prefer life on any terms and any level to nonexistence?

Ray Sheppard, what of him? Had the men and women who saw him on trial for murder the right to pronounce judgment on him? What right had any man to say else than "There, but for the grace of God, go I"? He was not a criminal, a gangster, a maniac, a tough guy, a killer. He was not even bad. He was a small, blond, balding, ineffectual-looking man, without uncommon intellect but able to get along. What were the circumstances that shaped him, the events in his life that brought him to this crux, the influences that gave him ability to commit so base a crime?

For a while I thought of trying to make an answer to that question in the form of a novel, but I discovered that I wanted more to write other things.

Ohio State University/Marion

Charles Dickens on Ohio Roads

William Thomas

Writing about his tour of the United States in 1842, Charles Dickens is vague about local geography, and commentators have done little to clarify his ambiguities. In American Notes and his letters to Forster his route, by water and by land, can be followed readily to Columbus, the coach journey from Cincinnati being on "a macadamized road (rare blessing!) the whole way". We know he stopped in Lebanon, where the conversation between Straw Hat and Brown Hat in Chapter 14 of American Notes (though clearly meant as a composite) might well have taken place . The road is the present U.S. Route 42.

The journey from Columbus to Tiffin was less agreeable. In Columbus Dickens and Kate stayed at the Neil House, and early the next morning (22 April) set out in a hired coach on the Columbus and Sandusky Turnpike, a notoriously bad road. (From the beginnings of the present numbering system in the third decade of this century till 1958 it was U.S. 23 to Waldo, North High Street out of Columbus.) After hours of jolting through the wild forest, "At two o'clock at night: . . . we reached a place called Lower Sandusky, sixty-two miles from our starting point."

The place referred to is Upper Sandusky. Dickens names it properly in American Notes. It is not surprising that he was confused by the Sanduskys, as there were four of them: Sandusky on Lake Erie, Lower Sandusky (the present city of Fremont, renamed in 1849), Upper Sandusky, and Little Sandusky. Between Columbus and Upper Sandusky Dickens names no towns, and commentators generally have been content to observe that he went on the Columbus and Sandusky Turnpike, allowing a reader to infer that this road ran to Tiffin, which it did not. From Waldo, eleven miles north of Delaware, it went in a north-northeasterly direction through Bucyrus straight to Sandusky. It is readily identifiable as the present Ohio State Routes 98 and 4.

The question is then, what road did Dickens and his party take from Waldo, assuming they reached that point on the Columbus and Sandusky Turnpike? They may have continued on what was called the Columbus and Lower Sandusky Road. This was General William Henry Harrison's route in his Northwest Campaign, and was also known as "the old Military road". Its course from Waldo through Marion, Upper

Sandusky, and Tiffin to Lower Sandusky was that of the road so long numbered U.S. 23 and that (from Upper Sandusky) which is still Ohio State Route 53. (U.S. 23 has been relocated and made a limited-access highway.)

The facts that Dickens makes no mention of Marion, where he might have lodged, that rain threatened, and that it took till after ten o'clock to reach Upper Sandusky leave one reluctant, however, to accept this road as Dickens' probably route. Examination of the large-scale maps of contemporary date possessed by the Ohio Historical Society leads me to think that from Delaware the Dickens party may have followed the "Radnor road", which is now State Route 203. "The first road that became well established by considerable travel was called the 'Radnor road', running from Delaware to Upper Sandusky, by the way of Radnor, Green Camp and Big Island."

This road did not and does not go through the village of Green Camp; it went through Prospect (then Middletown) and thence two miles along the east bank of the Scioto river. Thereupon road and river diverge. After crossing the Little Scioto river the road continues to a junction with U.S. 30S at the point where once existed the village of Big Island. This is the end of State Route 203, but the road goes on through Morral to Little Sandusky, where it rejoins the road that later was so long designated U.S. 23.

The difference in distance between these two possible routes is negligible. Dickens' figure of sixty-two miles is, however, more nearly correct for the latter.

The Columbus and Sandusky Turnpike has maintained its status as an important highway. It has been subjected to many relocations along its original course (particularly that part that became U.S. 23) and great portions of the 19th century roadbed have been wholly obliterated. The Columbus and Lower Sandusky Road remains the most direct route from Columbus to Tiffin and Fremont. The "Radnor road" has lost the importance it had a century and a half ago.

Dickens may have traveled either the second or the third. Obviously he did not travel all the way to Tiffin on the first, and scholars should take care not to allow the inference that he did.

Ohio State Univerisity/Marion

Sherwood Anderson, Henry Blake Fuller, James T. Farrell, and The Midwestern City as Metaphor and Reality*

David D. Anderson

As a point of departure for discussing the Midwestern city in the works of Sherwood Anderson, Henry Blake Fuller, James T. Farrell I want to combine and paraphrase two quite different quotations. The first is from William Butler Yeats's essay on William Carleton, the 19th century Irish novelist. In describing Carleton's accomplishment, Yeats wrote,

> The history of a nation is not in parliaments and battlefields but in what people say to each other on fair days and high days and in how they farm and quarrel and go on pilgrimage.

The second quotation is from the late John T. Frederick's introduction to his anthology of Midwestern literature, Out of the Midwest. In it Frederick wrote,

> A good regional writer is a good writer who uses regional materials. His regionalism is a condition, not a purpose or motive. It means simply that he uses the literary substance which he knows best, the life of his own neighborhood, of his own city or state--the materials about which he is most likely to be able to write with meaning. His work has literary importance only in so far as it meets the standards of good writing. . . . the regional writer gives special service to the nation . . . by revealing and interpreting the

*Adapted from a presentation at the European Association for American Studies Conference for 1995 in Luxembourg.

> people of his own region to those of other regions. He serves most significantly if he can interpret the people of his region to themselves.

Carleton's stories and novels were set in rural and small-town Ireland in the early nineteenth century, in many ways contemporaneous with the rise of modern Irish nationalism, and much of the literary work we consider most typically Midwestern--much of Mark Twain's, Sherwood Anderson's, E.W. Howe's, Willa Cather's, and that of dozens of other--is set in the towns and on the farms in the late nineteenth century, when the Old Northwest and its adjunct states had most clearly become Midwestern. Other Midwestern works, ranging from those of Henry Blake Fuller through James T. Farrell to Herbert Gold, Richard Yates, and Saul Bellow are more frequently thought of as "city" novels or Chicago novels or "ethnic" novels rather than Midwestern novels. When we think of the Midwestern city in a literary context, we usually think of Chicago. And now we are addressing not "Midwestern City Literature" but The Midwestern City in the Works of three Midwestern writers.

What I am suggesting, to tie these remarks together and at the same time to paraphrase both Yeats and Frederick, is that I shall not be talking about buildings and boulevards and bridges, the bricks and mortar of the city, but about the people in the Midwestern city in American literature, people whose experience is both urban and Midwestern, and what we are concerned with is, then, the experience of people whose reality is the Midwestern city, in what they do to it and to others and what the city does to them. I am concerned with, as both Yeats and Frederick make clear, human experience that happens to occur in and often is shaped by the city in which it takes place and which often gives it both its unique and its universal characteristics.

There are countless works of fiction set in Midwestern cities; for example, the recent bibliography Illinois! cites more than a thousand works of fiction set in whole or in part in Chicago alone, and that list excludes foreign language, soft porn, and other categories that perhaps should have been included. Out of this wide range of available works, there are three novels that I'd like to comment on briefly, works that deal not only with the city, with its rise and fall, its construction, decay, and reconstruction, but with the human experience that gives the city its life, that makes the impersonal personal, and that in turn is shaped by the city's rise and fall and perhaps resurrection., The novels are, in the order in which I shall comment on them,

Sherwood Anderson's Poor White, Henry Blake Fuller's The Cliff-Dwellers, and James T. Farrell's Studs Lonigan trilogy.

Anderson's Poor White, published in 1920, is, in the date published, the second of the three, but in terms of what Anderson did in the novel, chronologically the first; Fuller's The Cliff-Dwellers, one of the first novels set in Chicago, published in 1893, is the first in date of publication but in terms of Fuller's intent, the second and Farrell's trilogy, published from 1932-1935, is in both date of publication and Farrell's purpose, the last. In the three combined, we have, Farrell's objection to the use of the term in reference to Chicago notwithstanding, a massive metaphor of the Midwestern city as it comes into being, as it reaches its peak of development, and as it rushes into inevitable decline. But the three combine, too, to produce a massive metaphor of money--the search for it, the accumulation of it, its loss. To each of these writers--and countless others--money and the city are one. In each of the three novels, just as money and the city fuse, the latter a monument, building, in being, or decaying to the former, the costs of money and its monument are clear: money and the city exist not for human beings, but at their expense, and the city's reality is not its buildings, streets, and public and private places, but the human lives that each novel defines, whether on Main Street in Bidwell, Ohio, in the corridors of the Clifton, or in the parks and poolrooms of the 58th Street Alky Squad.

In Poor White Sherwood Anderson records the growth of a fictional Midwestern industrial city from its small-town origins, the story, as Anderson commented, of Winesburg, Ohio, as it became another Akron. We have no better record of that process as Hugh McVey, the Midwestern tinkerer, a Huckleberry Finn turned Henry Ford, comes to town, his imagination and genius find mechanical solutions to human problems, men of affairs transmute those mechanical dreams into factories, farm hands become factory hands, foreigners--real foreigners, not just those from the next town or the next state--appear on the streets and in the shops, the tinkerer and the men of affairs become wealthy while the farm hands and the foreigners become extensions of the machines they serve.

But if Poor White is the story of the growth of a Midwestern industrial city and the establishment of great Midwestern fortunes, it is also the story of destruction, of the cost of that city and its factories and fortunes in human and ideological terms. Bidwell, as the novel opens, is a nineteenth century Midwestern farming and trading center at the close of the Civil War, its people craftsmen and shopkeepers, housewives and school children, apprentices and teachers, preachers and retired farmers, bankers, and housekeepers, all of their lives attuned to the natural cycle of which farming is an

extension. The town itself, Main Street the principle artery of its circulation, and the countryside of which Bidwell is the heart, are the living manifestation of Jefferson's eighteenth century dream become nineteen century Midwestern reality, a harmonious, open society in which each can find a meaningful place, commensurate with his or her talents and the town's needs and values. Progress is slow but sure, and a person's word and work are trustworthy,. It is, as Anderson describes it, a time of waiting, when it appears that the human race is about to take time to understand itself.

But the town, caught up in the glittering promise of post-Civil War industrialism, chooses that path to fulfillment laid out by Hamilton in the eighteenth century and followed by the New Englanders who had not only tamed their wild rivers to power looms and shoe factories but who had come across the mountains to civilize—in the sense meant by the Widow Douglas—the Old Northwest.

In portraying this clash of ideologies, Anderson raises the story of the industrialization of Bidwell and the Midwest to high art, but in the defeat of the old ways, the destruction of the Jeffersonial agrarian society, Anderson creates a new myth of human values destroyed by materialism, of human beings dehumanized by the loss of their crafts and their livelihoods to the machines and their identities to the urban mass.

Consequently, while Poor White is the story of the industrialization of the town and the urbanization of the Midwest, it is also the story of the cost of that change in human terms as Joe Wainsworth, journeyman harnessmaker, is, in turn, embittered by the introduction of machine-made harness and then driven to murder and madness by insensitive ridicule; as Smoky Peter, journeyman blacksmith, becomes the town's conscience and is dismissed as crazy; as the French boys leave the farm for a more intense factory enslavement; as other young men—Harley Parsons, formerly an apprentice blacksmith, now determined to bed a women of every race and nationality, and Ed Hall, former apprentice carpenter become a foreman and eventually a superintendent—become corrupted by money and the standards of the new age. Poor White is, Anderson makes clear, not only the story of the rise of the city, but it is also the story of the fall of the common people from dignity to madness, murder, greed, and corruption. In the background of the final scenes the factory whistles shriek a harsh obligatto to their impersonal victory.

To a great extent Henry Blake Fuller's The Cliff-Dwellers begins on that note of urban triumph as the Clifton, a Chicago Main Street eighteen stories tall, houses not Anderson's blacksmiths and milliners and grocers and tobacconists and harness-makers but, as Fuller enumerates them "bankers, capitalists, lawyers, 'promoters';

brokers in bonds, stocks, pork, oil, mortgages; real-estate people and railroad people and insurance people—life, fire, marine, accident; a host of principals, agents, middlemen, clerks, cashiers, stenographers, and errand boys; and the necessary force of engineers, janitors, scrub-women, and elevator hands." The people of the Clifton are those of Bidwell in maturity: manipulators of money and manual workers, an impenetrable class barrier between them, each on his or her side of the barrier an interchangeable party undistinguishable from the others. While Anderson dramatizes the town becoming a city, Fuller's central image is the static eighteen-story organism, neither growing nor contracting, that is the Clifton.

Just as the industrialization of Bidwell is not reality but the metaphor out of which Anderson constructs his Midwestern American myth, the Clifton is the symbol of the new age as well as the substance of the new American myth that is, at the end of the nineteenth century, emerging from the great American cities, particularly from Chicago, the most rapidly growing, the most Midwestern, perhaps the most American of them all.

Like the Clifton itself, the reality out of which the new city, the new age, and the new myth are constructed, is money, and the cliff-dwellers in the Clifton worship at its shine: Erasmus Brainerd, the banker, who "had never lived for anything but business;" George McDowell, the real estate agent, who believed that "you've got to have snap, go," to get ahead; the conservative banker Fairchild who proclaimed, "Chicago is Chicago. . . It is inevitable; nothing can stop us;" the business wives, who not only worship with their husbands but who often lead them to the temple; the novel's hero, George Ogden, who works for Brainerd's bank, and only by chance learns that there are values other than material—although he continues to pursue them,. There is neither time nor room for humane values in the Clifton or in Fuller's Chicago.

Fuller's Chicago is Anderson's Bidwell at maturity, its social stratification complete, its only fulfillment material. But James T. Farrell's Chicago, two generations later, is the city not merely in decline but rapidly decaying, physically and spiritually, the economic system on which it is based and which continues to promise fulfillment, providing the ultimate betrayal.

Farrell's Chicago is thus the mirror image of its people, spiritually, emotionally, and finally economically bankrupt, their only defense against dehumanization in the cities, the neighborhoods that reduce the city to human scale and provide the foundation of their identity, crumbling around them. The Studs Lonigan trilogy is indeed the story of Stud's degeneration and death in the years between the end of World War I and the early years of the depression; but, Farrell makes clear, although Studs stands in the foreground, behind him are his family, his neighborhood, his culture, his city, all of

them empty, bankrupt, meaningless, hopeless: Farrell's Chicago, his city, is the city that gave Studs life and then destroyed him as impersonally as it had allowed him to live.

These three writers define, metaphorically, mythically, even organically, the birth, growth, decline, and death of the city, but they suggest, too, that, as Yeats and Frederick insist, the reality of the urban Midwestern experience is the human experience, that its truth is the human truth, its fulfillment—and their accomplishment as writers—the human life that is the substance of their works. And as they define these lives, they suggest clearly, in terms reminiscent of the 18th century, of Jefferson and Franklin, that the city is incompatible with the search for human happiness, that it is incompatible with a free people or a free society, that by its very nature it degrades, dehumanizes, and ultimately destroys indiscriminately those who serve it and those who defy it.

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THEODORE DREISER

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Edited by Miriam Gogol

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September 1995 / 320 pages
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MARK TWAIN: AN AMERICAN VOICE TO THE WORLD

Kennesaw State College, 1000 Chastain Rd., Kennesaw, GA 30144-5591

June 1 through August 15, 1996

The diversity of Mark Twain as a writer and as a personality has long appealed to academic and non-academic audiences worldwide. This interest is evidenced by a vast body of literature about him, by the many foreign language editions of his books, and by the many adaptations of his works in film and on stage. He was a Southern author whose work was universally recognized and who quickly came to represent American literature to the world. Today, his works often appear at the epicenter of important social controversies.

To celebrate his contributions and to examine the universal interest in Mark Twain, an exhibit of his letters, manuscripts, first and foreign editions, artifacts, and Twain memorabilia will be offered by the Sturgis Library. This exhibit is scheduled to coincide with the Olympic events of those weeks in recognition of Twain as an internationalist and world traveler and in the hopes of welcoming Olympic visitors, as well as our own academic and Atlanta community, to KSC to share in his vision of the world.

The exhibit will feature first editions of his major works on display with their corresponding original manuscripts. Photographs and his personal artifacts will illustrate his life as he encountered a quickly expanding world of technology and culture in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. His letters reveal his astute and humorous observations of the old and new centuries.

This event will be free of charge to all patrons. It will be designed to appeal both in content and visual display to an audience of diverse age and levels of interest. A catalog will be produced to inventory the exhibition and to document the event with essays by Twain scholars on contemporary issues in the study of Twain and his works.

The exhibit will run from June 1 to August 15, 1996. We are planning on a series of gallery talks to run for several weeks along with a Twain look-alike performer; other programs, such as symposia, *Big River* (May 16-19 and May 23-26), a film festival, story-telling, etc., will come about as they are arranged by other departments.

Items in the exhibit will include a portrait from the National Portrait Gallery, Twain's bicycle, his company's corporate seal, more than 45 vintage movie posters, many first and foreign editions, book art, etc. We are negotiating the loan of other manuscripts and memorabilia from lenders such as Pierpont Morgan Library, UC Berkeley, New York Public Library, MT Memorial (Hartford), Georgetown University, Emory University, and others.

The KSC English Department has planned three spring quarter courses in relation to the Twain exhibit: **ENGL 490-02: 19th-Century African American Literature** (TT 3:35-5:50 p.m.--Visiting Professor Geneva Baxter, Spelman College:); **ENGL 491-01: Mark Twain** TT 6-8:15 p.m.--Professor Michael Tierce, KSC); and **ENGL 701-01: Mark Twain and His Times** (Th 4:45-9:05 p.m.--Professor Sarah Robbins, KSC).

[November 3, 1995]