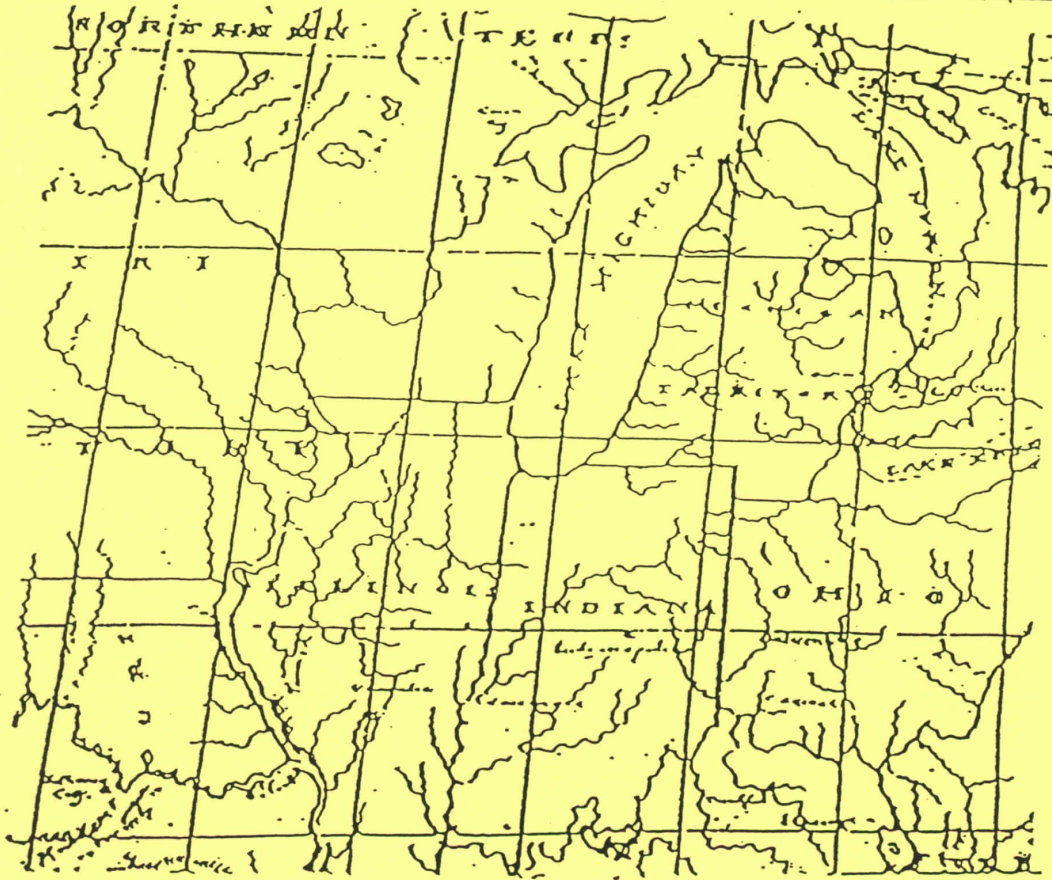


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Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature

Newsletter

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News Notes

Eureka Literary Magazine, under the able editorship of Loren Logsdon, is beginning its sixth year of publication with a wide and effective range of fiction and verse. Volume six, number one (Fall, 1997) is now available. For subscriptions or submissions, write:

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Father Andrew Greeley Honored

Father Andrew Greeley, Roman Catholic priest, sociologist, prolific novelist, and recipient of the Society's Mark Twain Award in 1987 for distinguished contributions to Midwestern literature, was honored in Chicago for his 70th birthday by a series of events, including a symposium on religion and literature, a Mass, the performance of an opera for which he wrote the libretto, and a dinner. The symposium discussed "Religion as Story." Father Greeley ended the symposium with a talk on "Seanachie as Evangelist: Intimacy and Story Telling." In his talk Father Greeley tapped his pre-Midwestern roots--Seanachie is Gaelic for story teller. Father Greeley turned 70 on February 5, 1998. The festivities, held the week before his birthday, were at St. Patrick's Church on the near west side, one of the few structures to survive the Great Fire.

David D. Anderson

Sherwood Anderson Home Dedicated

One of the apartments in New Orleans where Sherwood Anderson and his wife Elizabeth Prall lived in the mid-1920s was marked by a plaque commemorating Anderson's residence at a dedication ceremony on January 9, 1998. The residence, 540-B St. Peter Street, in the Upper Pontalba Building, facing Jackson Square, was one of several of Anderson's residences in New Orleans, including, at various times, an apartment in the Lower Pontalba Building, another on Rue Royal, and a house on Governor Nichols Street. The apartment was open for tours on January 9, and it is expected that tours will be available on future dates.

David D. Anderson

Bromfield Video Premiered

A video biography of Louis Bromfield produced by Brent Greene of WOSU-TV, Ohio State University, had its premiere showing at the Renaissance Theater, Mansfield, Ohio, on Friday, February 28, 1998. The documentary includes comments on Bromfield's life and work by his daughters, Hope Bromfield and Ellen Bromfield Geld, numerous friends, co-workers on Malabar Farms, and Bromfield's biographer, David D. Anderson. The film will be shown on OSU-TV and it is anticipated that it will be shown nationally on PBS. The film focuses on Bromfield's life, his writing, and his creation of Malabar Farm as a working farm and a center for experimental agriculture, and it stresses the remarkable philosophical unity of all three dimensions.

David D. Anderson

In Memoriam: Harlan Hatcher

Harlan H. Hatcher, literary scholar, cultural historian, teacher and administrator at two major Midwestern universities, and fourth recipient of the Society's MidAmerica Award for distinguished contributions to the study of Midwestern literature died on Wednesday, February 25, 1998, at his home in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He was 99.

Born in Ironton, Ohio, on September 9, 1898, to Robert E. and Linda L. Hatcher, he received the AB in 1922, the AM in 1923, and the Ph.D. in 1927, all from Ohio State, where he served as Assistant Professor and Professor of English, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Vice President between 1928 and 1951. He became President of the University of Michigan in 1951. He became President of the University of Michigan in 1951, serving until 1967. He served in the Army in World War I and the Navy in World War II.

Hatcher published his first book, The Versification of Robert Browning, in 1928, a standard study, Creating the Modern Novel (1935, 1965), and a standard anthology, Modern Drama, in 1944, but the bulk of his work, in fiction as well as cultural history, is rooted in his native Midwest. Three novels, Tunnel Hill (1931), Patterns of Wolfpen (1934), and Central Standard Time (1937) are all set in the Ohio Valley and based primarily on his family's experiences in Ironton. The first two explore the development of the Ohio Valley, and the latter explores the industrialization of an Ohio Valley town. He also served as Director of the Federal Writers' Project in Ohio, in 1937-38, and edited The Ohio Guide, produced by the writers' project and published in 1940.

His experience with the Ohio Writers' Project kindled his interest in the Ohio and Great Lakes cultural past, resulting in his permanent contributions to our understanding of the state and the region as they developed. Among his best works are The Buckeye Country: a Pageant of Ohio (1940), The Great Lakes (1949), Lake Erie (1945), A Pictorial History of the Great Lakes (1963), and of most importance, The Western Reserve: The Story of New Connecticut in Ohio (1949, 1966).

Hatcher is survived by his wife, Anne Gregory Vance Hatcher, two children, Robert Hatcher and Anne Berenberg, and four grandchildren. A memorial service

was held at Rackham Amphitheater, University of Michigan on Sunday, March 1.

David D. Anderson

Thank you

Pat and Dave Anderson are grateful for the flowers, cards, notes, and calls they received on the recent death of Pat's mother, Wilma B. Rittenhour (1905-1998).

MY HORSE-AND-BUGGY DAYS

William Thomas

In the wintertime I customarily rode to and from high school with Carl Jacobs in his storm buggy, the horse spending the school day in the village livery stable. A storm buggy was the common vehicle for use after the motor car was blocked up off the barn floor for the winter. Before the early 1920s, when road-building over the whole country made possible what we not take so readily for granted, our great system of transnational highways, it was customary to discontinue use of the motor during the winter, not because the roads were impassable but because that was the condition of most farm lanes. The coming of all-weather roads generally demanded good lanes, and most farmers graveled, cindered, or stoned until they had them.

Previously one of every three or four farmers probably had a sleigh in his barn loft, but it was an heirloom then. Whether it was actually true that we didn't "have winters like they used to have", snow seldom stayed long on the roads, and the sleigh was almost never used. Its disuse was a corollary to the ever-increasing effort of man to secure bodily comfort at all times and under all circumstances—instead of putting on more clothing and wrapping up in blankets for protection against the cold, he would ride in a room on wheels, where no wind could strike him and the cold would be tempered. The answer in the middle west of the early twentieth century was the storm buggy, a box with sliding doors on the sides and a glassed front with a slot below the glass for the lines. One would like to relate it to the coach, of honorable lineage, but it was unlike any form of that vehicle. Over the axles instead of between, it was high, top heavy, and ugly; and if it were other than quite new the doors were bound to rattle and no amount of tinkering with the latches would silence them. It seems to me somehow characteristic of the second decade of this century.

Before motor cars were numerous and used the year round, a road horse, for use with the buggy, was a necessity and was kept for that purpose only. The young men strove to possess fast horses; George Landon had a little black mare that could bet anything else in the neighborhood. Ours was a chestnut called Daisy. But she was bought only a year or two before the motor car, and my horse-and-buggy days were with her predecessor, Queen, when I would be taken with my parents in the open buggy, myself sitting on a little folding seat between their knees. We went thus to Prospect once a week, nearly always Saturday afternoon, with eggs to exchange for groceries, and sometimes my mother and I would drive Queen to Marion. That was only a nine-mile trot each way, but Queen was old and slow, and on a cold day in fall or winter I could not make it home without having to relieve myself, and, when we were well out of town and nobody else was in sight, would stand in the buggy and spatter the road between the wheels.

In preparation for these trips my mother insisted that I wash my feet before putting on clear stockings; for, said she, if I were to meet with an accident and have to go to the hospital, there I would be ashamed to have dirty feet. I felt there was some flaw in this logic but could not apprehend exactly what it was.

Queen died, and Daisy too became decrepit with the years. In her old age she was no longer needed for driving and was demoted to light farm tasks, but she had the heaves and was not much good. Ralph McLead and I sometimes drove her, in summer evenings, two and a half miles west to Centerville, which had once been a village. It was now only a cluster of houses with a schoolhouse and Charley Collins' stores, but Charley Collins' was the only place where we could buy a brand of pipe tobacco called "Bulldog", which we then fancied superior to any other. By that time, however, my horse-and-buggy days were really over.

Late Ohio State University/Marion

NEIGHBORS

William Thomas

Mr. Everett's farm adjoined ours on the north, but his house was on the west side of the road, back a long lane. My father, eminently practical, did not like long lanes, and I too could perceive how it put Mr. Everett at a disadvantage: it was too great a distance from the house to the river. He was a devoted fisherman, and was often to be seen, carrying several cane poles and always wearing rubber boots, following the Bend to a likely spot where perhaps he had for several days baited the carp with bits of dough or grains of corn. He always used dough-balls on the hook and seemed able to catch fish anytime he wished to. This was mysterious to me, whose hook no fish would attach itself to, whether it were baited with dough, worm, or craw-dad. So I gave up fishing early in life, and inclined to the view of a professor of English whom I later met that The Complete Angler is a delightful book but fishing a very overrated sport. Mr. Everett, who probably never heard of Izaak Walton, knew nothing of the sporting angler's scorn of the carp—an unreasonable prejudice, for a carp properly prepared is as savory as the cat—and would bring us sometimes a handsome seven- or eight- pounder, when he had caught more than his family could eat.

Mr. Everett was withal a man of wide and varied experience, for it was hardly possible to mention a subject which he did not hold an opinion on or to speak of a phase of human endeavor that his knowledge or experience did not touch; his personal narratives were interminable, and if you asked him a question as lucid as "What is this shrub that grows along the fence-row?" you might hear about a Texas horse race of 1896 or what Leadville was like in its boom before you got the answer—if the answer came. The subject he was unwilling to discourse on was how to catch fish: that was his secret, and his implied view was that it might remain to the rest of the world a mystery. Being a countryman, he would have no truck with fly-casting or any sort of artificial baits; the Scioto had only carp and catfish in it, anyway, no game fish, and if you had talked of fishing as a "sport", he would scarcely have understood. Yet for many years it was, I dare say, his principal interest in life not second even to his farming. (It is easy to understand why my father did not think highly of Mr. Everett as a farmer.)

Of Mr. Everett's sons, Lawrence and Vernon were grown men in my childhood, and Ray was so much older than I that we were never companions. My earliest associations were with the Riders. Their house, to which belonged fifty acres, was easy to reach—you had only to climb a couple of fences, and there you were. That the house was very old was evident, for in central Ohio a log house was an oddity at the beginning of this century. This was a "settler's cabin", built of big hewn logs and chinked with mortar, and had some time been plastered inside. Its doors scraped on their sills, and its floor rippled, and it was exactly the sort of

house you would expect the Riders to live in, and they were exactly the people you would expect to find living in it.

I was at the Riders' a great deal. Eddie and Arthur were young men, with young man's interests and activities but Perry was not so old as to find me uncompanionable. He seemed to have a special liking for me, and when I wasn't at the Rider house Perry was likely to be at ours, and I know we had happy times together, though I cannot remember anything we did. The Riders were also fishermen, but their fishing was more varied than Mr. Everett's. In summer they kept trot lines set nearly all the time, and used a seine. And every now and then, when I went to their house, one of them would lead me to a barrel and show me a big turtle.

At some time, then or later, I learned that Clyde was not the boy's mother. But I probably knew what a stepmother is, and found nothing odd about her situation. It was many years before I knew she was the housekeeper whom August had never married. Their alliance was so far in the past that her status as common-law wife was no longer a subject for comment, and she went by the name of Rider.

The Rider family moved away in 1911, to a house at Newmans, and, though this was only a mile off, Perry was lost to me as a companion. At the age of five one might permissibly go two hundred yards to make a visit but not a mile.

Late Ohio State University/Marion

LOUIS BROMFIELD, NATURE WRITER AND PRACTICAL ECOLOGIST

David D. Anderson

When Louis Bromfield published his best, most deeply-felt novel, The Farm, in 1934, he had lived largely in France for a decade, the France he had learned to love during his war, and at 36 he had no intention of returning to the States for more than brief visits. The Farm was intended to be his last use of the subject matter he had used in his first four highly successful novels. It was the most personal of his novels as well as the fictionalized biography of four generations of his family in Richland County, Ohio, and in Mansfield, the county seat, "The Town" in his earlier fiction. At the same time, as he commented in a preface in the form of a letter to his three daughters, it was to be an epitaph to a way of life and set of values that, born in the Eighteenth Century, had become casualties of industrialism run rampant in the mass destruction of the Great War of 1914-1918.

When The Farm was published in 1934, Bromfield could not foresee the fact that his war was merely the first of a series of wars that have made the Twentieth Century the most destructive in human memory, nor could he predict that events already underway in Europe and the Far East would, within four years, change the direction of his life and the substance of his work in ways that he couldn't imagine. And so he recreated a past long gone, working in his ancient presbytere in Senlis, north of Paris on what had been, in the Great War, the invasion route from Germany to Paris, as it had been in 1870 and was to be again only six years after the publication of The Farm.

In many ways Senlis had been for Bromfield a refuge from the twentieth century, and, with a rich, productive, experimental garden and an equally rich cultural life, it was a near recreation of the life of his intellectual mentor, Thomas Jefferson.

It was a time of a strong dollar and a weak franc, and many others of his generation, unlike Bromfield, wore the badge of "a lost generation" proudly in the cafes at the junction Boulevards Montparnasse and Raspail, as creatures of an everlasting now.

But Bromfield was not an expatriate in the sense that gave Ernest Hemingway his celebrated subject matter, nor does Bromfield appear, thinly disguised, in The Sun Also Rises, or not, in a A Moveable Feast, although he does appear in a brief, laudatory note in The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas. Bromfield's expatriation was a practical and personal working out of the theme of his first four novels, those that he called "panel novels," all four of which, he commented, might be seen as a single novel entitled "Escape." That escape was defined by Julie Shane, the matriarch who had lived beyond her time in "the town", now more rapidly industrializing in Bromfield's first novel, The Green Bay

Tree (1924), published a decade before The Farm. She tells a younger relative in terms that suggest flight more than escape that

...Life is hard for our children....It isn't as simply as it was for us. Their grandfathers were pioneers and the same blood runs in their veins only they haven't a frontier any longer. They stand... these children of ours...with their backs towards this rough-hewn middle west and their faces set towards Europe and they belong to neither. They are lost somewhere between (107).

Like his fictional counterparts in The Green Bay Tree, Possession (1925), Early Autumn (1926), and A Good Woman (1927), Bromfield had found, not expatriation and the self-centered search that went on in the Cafe Dome or Coupola or their counterparts at St. Germain-des-Pres, the cafes Lipp, Flora, and Deux Magots; he had found a refuge, where, if he could not escape the twentieth century, even as the young people in his fiction could not escape it, he could bury his ink-stained hands in a soil that had become richer through the centuries and forget it for the moment.

But Bromfield's own wanderlust, which took him to India, among other places, and which was to provide the subject of a good novel, The Rains Came (1937), and a not-so-good novel, Night in Bombay (1940), and events to the north of Senlis as well as the bloody dress rehearsals in Spain and Ethiopia in 1936, convinced Bromfield that his exile must come to an end. In 1938, as what he knew was a false peace crumbled, he sent his wife and daughters home to Ohio, while he attempted to sort out the debris of the Spanish War as president of the Emergency Committee for American Wounded in Spain, and at year's end he rejoined his family. There he bought the three decaying farms in Richland County that he renamed Malabar Farm after his Indian experience; he determined to restore them to full productivity through the techniques he had learned from the peasants of France and India as well as the best minds devoted to agricultural science, and to recreate a way of life that he had been convinced was destroyed forever by the factories in the Flats below Mansfield as the nineteenth century became the twentieth.

Although by 1940 Bromfield knew that he had come back to Ohio to stay and had determined the course that was to make Malabar Farm a model of what might be done to restore exhausted land, he did not become either the gentleman farmer that some of his friends, fans, and even detractors saw him to be; nor did he become the practical dirt farmer he sometimes convinced himself he was. These years did see the decline of Louis Bromfield, novelist; between 1939 and 1951, although he wrote eight volumes of fiction, both novels and collected short stories, only one--Mrs. Parkington (1943)--ranks with the early panel novels. In the seven volumes of non-fiction he wrote between 1945 and 1955, Louis Bromfield, nature writer, practical ecologist, folklorist, and economic theorist, gained an ascendancy too often ignored or overlooked among younger scholars, critics, and social historians, even as that ascendancy is too often forgotten by those of us who would know better.

In his last years, Bromfield commented several times in conversation on the curious decline in the quality if not the quantity of his fiction during the 1940s and 1950s, even as Malabar Farm absorbed more and more of his energy and the

non-fiction record of that experience absorbed his creative strength. The fact was, he commented on several occasions, that he continued to write fiction by habit long after he lost interest in it. He might have commented as well that his fiction remained high in reader interest, that each in turn took its respectable place on the best-seller lists, and that many works of fiction, both short stories and novels took their place in the ranks of popular films. His reference in conversation to "the MGM barn" "the RKO silo," and other similar improvements to the farm were far from facetious, however. His writing income made possible the productive farm that Malabar became, although he always insisted that what he did at Malabar in the return of exhausted soil to full productivity could be duplicated by any other farmer who was willing to substitute sweat equity for the energy Bromfield was able to buy. A number of other farmers, not only in Ohio and the Midwest but as far as Texas and Brazil, attested that he was right.

However, what Bromfield accomplished at Malabar, essentially creating a farm that was an extension of the natural order as Thomas Jefferson and others of the Enlightenment insisted agriculture must be, belongs properly to the history of biological and agricultural science, and Malabar Farm continues today under the auspices of the State of Ohio as a testament to Bromfield's vision. But Bromfield also remained to the end--to his death in 1956--a writer, and of the seven volumes of non-fiction prose, five--Pleasant Valley (1945), Malabar Farm (1948), Out of the Earth (1950), From My Experience (1955), and Animals and Other People (1955)--are significant contributions to the literature of nature and the reflection of Bromfield's concern with the restoration of the natural order in his life and in Malabar Farm. Two volumes--A Few Brass Tacks (1946) and A New Pattern for a Tired World (1954)--reaffirm his faith in Thomas Jefferson's conviction that if the nation and the world of which it is a part would become a haven for free human beings, they must, as Jefferson insisted, avoid the corruption too often inherent in industrialism, commercialism, and the great cities that they spawn, and return to an order based upon agriculture and the natural order. They must, in other words, return to a way and a philosophy of life that Bromfield had been convinced was destroyed as the nineteenth century became the twentieth and that he had seen as gone forever in The Farm. Now, however, he was determined that it would become a reality at Malabar once again and might become so everywhere. Although both volumes seem dated, even naive, at the end of the twentieth century, they remain eloquent Jeffersonian testimonials, the ideas as compelling as they were to Jefferson and to the Bromfield who had first discovered them.

The other five volumes of non-fiction prose that Bromfield published between 1945 and 1955 are not only personal testaments to the Jeffersonian philosophy that Bromfield saw as becoming reality at Malabar, but they stand in sharp contrast to the perception of twentieth-century life that provides the substance of most of Bromfield's fiction, the best as well as the series of weaker novel that began with Night in Bombay (1940). In most of his fiction, novels and short stories alike, twentieth-century American life is characterized by discontinuity, by the sharp breaks, the abrupt turns and reversals, the acceptances and rejections that mark an age, a people, and a way of life dominated not by stability but by change that is often as arbitrary as it is apparently capricious. In all his novels the permanence that his people seek ultimately, inevitably eludes them.

Escape for them is at best illusive; all too often it results in a newer, harsher, grimmer reality than his people had known before.

However, in the five volumes that began with Pleasant Valley and concluded with Animals and Other People the underlying perception is not the discontinuity that marks the novels but a continuity that is at once conviction and reality. Pleasant Valley is the product of Bromfield's return to Ohio, his determination to recreate what had been destroyed, and his gradual realization that what had once been in the Ohio his grandfathers knew could become reality again. In the sections of the book devoted to the evolution of the farm, Bromfield defines his goal of a miniature society virtually self-sufficient, and he records the successes and failures as well as the necessary modifications during the farm's first five years of existence. It records growth, optimism, steady progress, and the continued conviction that through the discovery, emulation, and acceptance of the natural order of birth, growth, decay, death, rebirth, and regeneration that marks for Bromfield the continuity of nature itself, the farm, rejuvenated, is one with nature. In the course of the book it appears that he and the farm have become one. These sections are at once perception and celebration as well as textbook records of what works and what doesn't, and they record steady, visual, objective progress as failed springs are renewed, fields are revitalized, productivity increases, and life on the farm becomes richer.

But the book is not merely the record of Bromfield's return, his sense of discovery of a way of life he had thought gone, and the record of what he and his staff had accomplished at Malabar; in a very real sense it is Bromfield's Walden and the farm his pond. The best and most deeply-felt essays in the book are those that record his discovery of the countryside, of the landscape, and of the people, living and dead, the animals, wild and domestic, and the legends that give the land life and continuity.

In these sections, in some of Bromfield's finest writing, past and present, life land, change, and rebirth become one as he recreates that is, what was, and what might have been. Thus, in "Up Ferguson Way" he combines beauty, change, and the aura of tragedy that permeates a particularly remote section of the farm in which man and nature had each sought domination over the other; in "Johnny Appleseed and Aunt Mattie" he recreates two of the most durable of Midwestern legends, that of Johnny Appleseed, John Chapman, the mystic who had wandered the frontier as it began its inevitable transformation, and of Eleazer Williams, the half-crazed frontier wanderer who may have been the legendary Lost Dauphin, the rightful king of France; in "On Being Tetched" and "My Ninety Acres" he tells of those who discover and live by a mysterious sense of oneness with the land.

Like Thoreau's Walden, Bromfield's Pleasant Valley moves from the particulars of human experience in the rolling hills of Richland County, Ohio, to the universal continuity and oneness that, in Bromfield's view as in Thoreau's, govern the universe. His sense of discovery and re-discovery are at once those of one man who had come back to a place, a purpose, and a way of life that he had been convinced no longer existed, and, again like Walden, the book is at once discovery and re-discovery and self-discovery simultaneously for Bromfield along

the banks of Switzer Creek and in the newly-young fields and woods of Malabar Farm. But the sense of oneness with the natural order, of, as Bromfield later phrased it in Albert Schweitzer's words, "a reverence for life" is uniquely Bromfield's own.

Pleasant Valley is at once prefatory to Malabar Farm, published three years later, and clear statement of Bromfield's conviction that understanding and living by the rules of nature will have practical results in applied agriculture even as such a life provides human life with depth and meaning otherwise beyond human perception in a world beset by materialism, violence, and inhumanity. Pleasant Valley is the story of discovery and re-discovery; Malabar Farm is that of learning and accomplishment, with a clear indication of natural and personal fulfillment on the horizon.

Malabar Farm is constructed to cover a year in the life of the farm, from Autumn 1944 through Summer 1945, and chapters from Bromfield's farm journal, one for each season, mark the natural cycle of the year. Prefaced and concluded by letters to a young sergeant in Okinawa who had written to Bromfield expressing interest in farming as a post-war career, its substance consists of a series of essays that contain some of the most eloquent and perceptive nature writing in this century. "The Cycle of a Farm Pond", "Grass, the Great Healer," "Some More Animals," and "The Story of Kemper's Run" are among Bromfield's finest essays, worthy of inclusion in any anthology of great nature writing, and each in its own way defines the search for natural balance and order that will lead to a healed, revitalized earth and a richer, more productive life. Just as grass, time, and organic matter give life and substance to the soil, they give richness, too, to the lives, animal and human, that live on it. In "The Cycle of a Farm Pond" Bromfield shows in microcosm the unfolding of the natural order as richness and fertility replace disorder and decay, and the pond, no longer subject to human depravations, becomes, in miniature, what Bromfield was convinced Malabar Farm would, in time, become, and, by extension, was within reach for all. But at the same time, he ruefully acknowledges, the forces of economics, over which he saw no feasible control, would prevent the farm from becoming a self-sufficient unit and increasingly make it become a specialized unit producing the meat and bone of marketable cattle.

By 1950 Malabar Farm had become what it was to remain: an effective, efficient, naturally and organically sound agricultural enterprise, and for farmers and others from increasingly distant and diverse places it was a model of what a farm might become. Out of the Earth, published that year, is in many respects the agricultural textbook that Bromfield was never to write, reiterating his conviction that sound farming practice is dependent upon the restoration of the natural order in the fields, the streams, the woods, in the relationship among all living things. It is a major if controversial agricultural work, and in his conclusion it becomes a statement of his philosophy as well. Understanding nature he says, is the key not only to good farming practice but to finding a meaningful life as well:

...Nature...is perhaps the greatest of all resources, not only because

its variety and beauty is inexhaustible but because slowly it creates a sense of balance and values, of philosophy and even of wise resignation to man's own insignificance which bring the great rewards of wisdom and understanding and tolerance (298).

From My Experience and Animals and Other People were both published in 1955, the year before Bromfield's death, and each in its own way is among Bromfield's most admittedly personal writing. The first not only sums up the lessons learned in nearly six decades of the most tumultuous century of human history, but it sums up, too, in "A Hymn to Hawgs" and "The Hard-working Spring and the House Nobody Loved," his reverence for nature, for life, for the human experience, whether literal, metaphoric, or mythical. In the first chapter, "After Fifteen Years" and the last, "The White Room," Bromfield comes as close to writing philosophical autobiography as he was ever to come.

Animals and Other People is in many ways a suitable coda to a literary career that, over a period of just over thirty years, had produced thirty volumes of diverse work, ranging from sophisticated fiction to technical documentaries and during which he had known the peaks of critical favor and the depths of disfavor; he had known success and disappointment, and had relished both, even as he had come to know, understand and enjoy nature. The book collects many of his best personal essays dealing with the animals of the farm and fields and woods, because, as he notes in his preface:

In the last analysis we are all animals and the fact of being born a man does not endow us with any special rights or virtues; rather it imposes on us obligations of a high sort indeed, which animals and birds do not share—obligations of intelligence, ethics, decency, loyalty and moral behavior. The sad thing is how frequently those obligations are violated and ignored by man himself (xi).

Animals and Other People is Bromfield's last testament to what he had sought and found. He was ailing when he wrote it; on March 18, 1956, Louis Bromfield, Midwesterner, expatriate, successful novelist, practical farmer, nature writer, pioneer practical ecologist, and agrarian romantic was dead. His ashes were scattered on the farm.

Michigan State University

BILLBOARD

Call for Essays...

Readerly/Writerly Texts

Essays on Literature, Literary/Textual Criticism, and Pedagogy

Refereed Semiannual Journal. Web Site: <http://www.enmu.edu/~oviedoo/Texts/home.htm>

We are now looking for material for Fall/Winter 1998 & Spring/Summer 1999. We invite: 1) essays in MLA style, with Content/Bibliographic [End]Notes (typed as text), printed double-spaced (and on a 3.5-inch HD diskette, Word Perfect or MS Word for Windows for IBM/PC compatibles); 2) book reviews, cartoons, graphic prose; 3) announcements and calls for papers. Send work with SASE and enough unattached postage for the 3 copies that we will send for blind reviewing. Essays should develop an interdisciplinary perspective on topics related to the title of the journal and on hypertext/hypermedia, rhetoric/composition, interrelations of literature and liberal arts and sciences, and related pedagogies.

DEADLINE for submissions: 15 Jan. for Spring/Summer; 15 Oct. for Fall/Winter. *R/W Texts* is listed/indexed in: *The Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature* (ABELL), *Abstracts of English Studies*, *American Humanities Index*, *International Bibliography of Book Reviews* (IBR), *International Bibliography of Periodical Literature* (IBZ), *Modern Language Association of America International Bibliography* (MLA), *Hispanic American Periodicals Index* (HAPI), *Arts and Humanities Citation Index* (A & HCI).

R/W Texts is associated with the Research Network Forum/CCCC/NCTE.

Subscriptions: one year: (U.S.) individuals, \$22.00; students, \$14.00; institutions, \$35.00. Foreign: individuals, \$22.; institutions, \$35. (add U.S. \$8.00 yearly for postage).

Direct inquiries and send submissions to
Ollie O. Oviedo, Editor

Readerly/Writerly Texts

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Preliminary Announcement



The Florida State University Film School and
Comparative Literature Circle announce the
24th Annual Conference on Film and Literature
Violence in Film and Literature
JANUARY 28-30, 1999

TURNBULL CONFERENCE CENTER
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

Possible topics for individual papers and/or seminars:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ▲ War and Revolution | ▲ Genres and Violence |
| ▲ Utopia and Dystopia | ▲ Virtual Violence |
| ▲ Postmodern Violence | ▲ Psychological Violence |
| ▲ Sexual Violence | ▲ Language and Violence |
| ▲ Gender/Race/Class Violence | ▲ Shattering Images |
| ▲ Rebellion and Violence | ▲ Violence of Heroes |
| ▲ Survivors and Victims of Violence | ▲ Violence of Villains |
| ▲ Discipline and Punishment | ▲ Justifiable Violence (?) |
| ▲ Noir Violence | ▲ Savagery and Civilization |
| ▲ Western Violence | ▲ Ethics of Violence |
| ▲ Stylization of Violence | ▲ Storytelling and Violence |

Abstracts of papers (approximately 250 words, with an explicit thesis) and panel proposals (specify panel, title, chair and participants) must be submitted by **October 1, 1998**, to:

Sharon Gray, Program Administrator
Center for Professional Development
Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-1640
sgray@cpd.fsu.edu
Phone (850) 644-2655
Fax (850) 644-2589



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Call for Submissions

Although the Southeast Asian American community has a long history and a rapidly growing population, there are few books that feature the poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction of the established and emerging authors of this community.

We are soliciting fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry created by Southeast Asian Americans, for a literary anthology of previously unpublished work. By Southeast Asian Americans we mean residents of the United States with Burmese (Myanmar), Cambodian, Filipino, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, Malaysian, Singaporean, Thai, or Vietnamese, heritage, including recent immigrants as well as second, third, fourth, etc., generation writers. Subject matter is not limited. The work may, for instance, explore such ideas as community, memory, locations, genders, the subject of the artist and language—and may do so in creative writing that celebrates, records, preserves, explores, questions, problematizes, invents, and defines—and would do so for an audience who may be both familiar and unfamiliar with Southeast Asian Americans.

Guidelines

- All submissions must be typed / wordprocessed, double-spaced, on 8 1/2 x 11" paper, on one side of the sheet.
- Submit three copies (original plus two photocopies) of each piece.
- We will not be able to return your work, so please keep another copy for yourself.
- Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope (SASE) for notification of results.
- Author's name, address, and phone number must appear at the top of the first page, and author's name and page number should appear on each following page.
- Include a brief resume (no more than two pages) with mention of author's Southeast Asian heritage.
- Authors should keep us informed of any address changes.
- Only previously unpublished work will be considered.

Please send submissions to

New Rivers Press
Jim Cihlar, Managing Editor
420 North Fifth Street, Suite 910
Minneapolis, MN 55401

The co-editors for this anthology are

Shirley Lim
Department of English
University of California—Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara, CA 93106

Cheng Lok Chua
English Department, M.S. #98
California State University, Fresno
5245 North Backer Avenue
Fresno, CA 93740-8001

Call for Essays:

Essays are now being solicited for a volume on new approaches to passing as a cultural phenomenon. While "passing for white" dominates most discussions of passing, this figuration is proving itself to be increasingly narrow and inadequate to discussions of identity formation. Hence the essays in this volume will question and expand traditional historical constructions of passing in twentieth-century North America. Essays exploring the dynamics of passing that expand the traditional black/white construction are invited. Possible topics include but are not limited to: passing as straight or gay, passing as a non-white, passing as a citizen or foreigner, and so on.

Essays with a theoretical bent or framework are particularly welcome. Approaches may range from the literary to the sociological, political, historical, and/or anthropological. Submissions should be approximately 15-25 pages in length (MLA format) and should be made in triplicate (no electronic submissions please) to Dr. E. Barnsley Brown, Department of English, Box 7387 Reynolda Station, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC 27109-7387.

The deadline for submissions is February 8th, 1998; however, earlier submissions are encouraged. Queries may be directed to E. Barnsley Brown at browneb@wfu.edu or Adam McKible at adamckib@email.unc.edu. Scholars from a variety of disciplines will be represented in this project.

CALL FOR PAPERS/POETRY/FICTION

SSML Symposium on the Cultural Heritage of the Midwest
& the Midwest Poetry Festival
East Lansing, Michigan State Union
May 13-16, 1998

The Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature announces its twenty-eighth annual conference, "The Symposium: The Cultural Heritage of the Midwest," and the concurrent seventeenth annual "Midwest Poetry Festival," May 13-16, 1998, at the Michigan State University Student Union. This year the juried East Lansing Art Fair (in downtown East Lansing-- just outside the Marriott) and the Craft Fair (on the MSU campus) will be held on May 16 and 17, giving some the chance to join in the many festivities.

The Society invites scholars, writers, and interested members of the public to participate in the conference by giving papers and readings and by moderating and taking part in formal and informal discussions. Presenters must be members of the Society or include dues for the one year in their registration fee.

Papers on all aspects of Midwestern literature, life, history, and culture, popular or elite, are solicited for presentation in the Symposium. They could be comparative in nature, breaking new ground wherever possible. For 1998, the centennial of Hemingway's birth, we especially welcome papers on him and on other Midwestern writers whose work, in one way or another, might be viewed in relation to his. Thus, we welcome papers on writers like Hemingway who, having left the Midwest to live elsewhere, continued to write from a sense of this place informed by memory, imagination, or invention.

Selected Festival poems will be published in a commemorative booklet. Participants are invited to submit poems for publication in the collection and papers for consideration for publication in the Society's journals: *The SSML Newsletter*, *The Midwestern Miscellany*, and *MidAmerica*.

The Society is pleased to announce the continuation of its Midwestern Heritage Prize, the Midwest Poetry Prize, and the Midwest Fiction Prize. Founded by Gwendolyn Brooks, these cash prizes of one-hundred dollars are awarded annually to the best critical paper presented in the Symposium, and to the best poem and the best work of fiction read at the Poetry Festival.

The MidAmerica Award will be presented to a scholar for distinguished contributions to the study of Midwestern literature and the Mark Twain Award will be presented to a contemporary writer for distinguished contributions to Midwestern literature.

Papers, poetry, and fiction readings should not exceed twenty minutes in length. Proposals for papers and reading should include titles and brief descriptions and should be forwarded by **February 16** to the 1998 SSML president and program chair:

Guy Szuberla
Department of English
University of Toledo
Toledo, Ohio 43606

Phone: 419-530-2085
email: gszuber@uoft02.utoledo.edu
Fax: 530-4440

--Please Post--

Guy Szuberla
Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature
Department of English
University of Toledo
Toledo, OH 43606

Check or write in as many responses as apply:

I wish to participate in the 28th Annual Conference of the Society (May 13-16, 1998) by:

☐ Presenting a paper in the "Symposium: The Cultural Heritage of the Midwest"

Proposed title: _____
(If presenting at SSML for the first time, please attach a 100-word description.)

☐ Chairing a panel

Proposed title: _____
(Please attach titles and contact information about participants.)

☐ Giving a reading in the "Midwest Poetry Festival" ☐ Poetry ☐ Prose
(If reading at SSML for the first time, please attach a sample of your work.)

☐ Serving as a session moderator or discussant.

My interest areas: _____

Days I am not available (May 13-16): _____

Because the Society as well as the Symposium and the Poetry Festival are self-supporting from fee income, all those participating and attending are asked to pay the fee of \$60.00 (\$35.00 for students). In addition, membership in the organization is required of all participants. Membership fees are \$35.00 for regular members, \$22.00 for students, and \$45.00 for patrons.

☐ I understand that I am expected to be a member of the Society and to register at the participant rate, if I am accepted on the program. (Do not include payment with this form; if your proposal is accepted, you will be billed subsequently.)

Name _____

Title or Affiliation _____

Best Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone number where I am most easily reached: () _____

E-Mail: _____