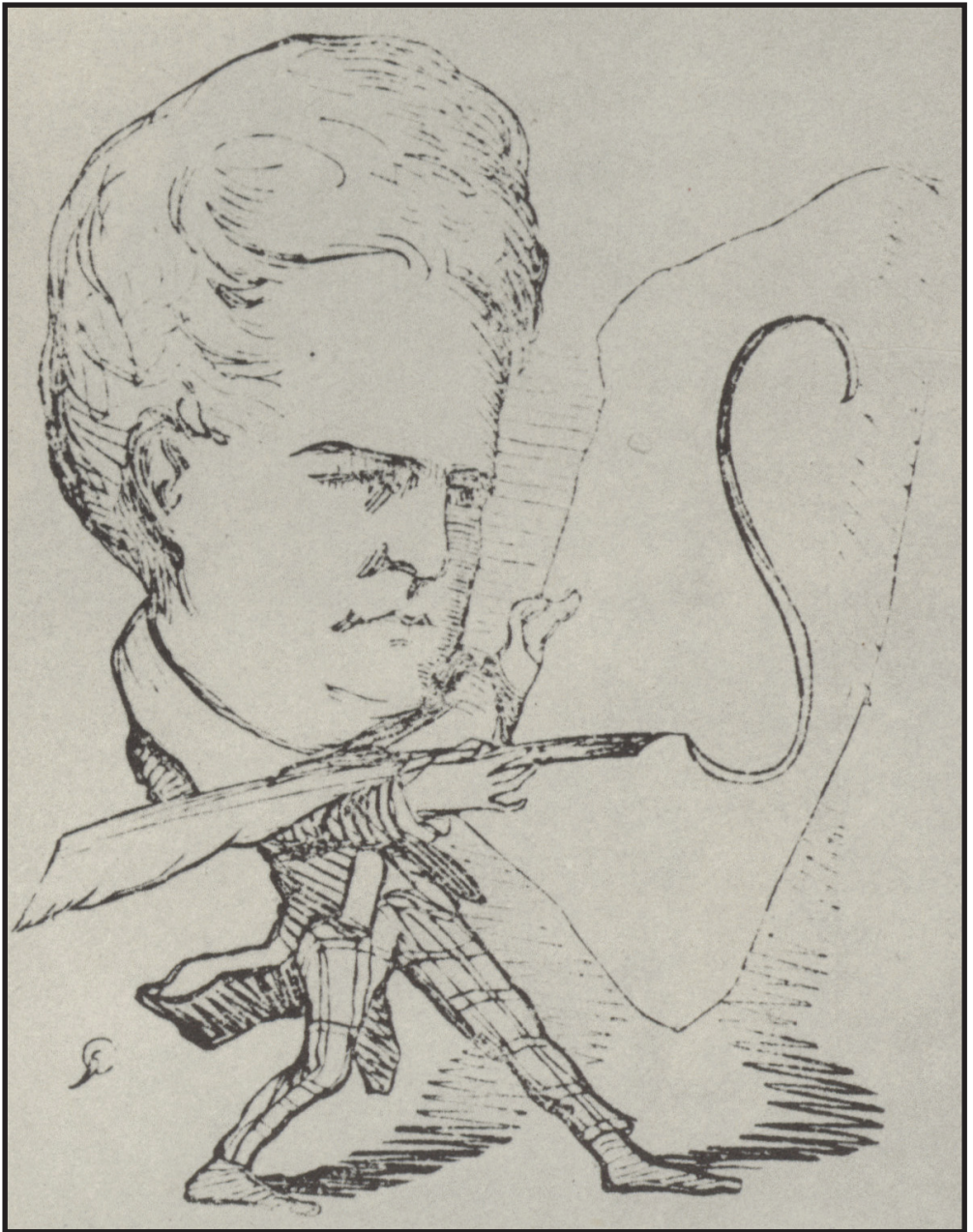


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William Gilmore Simms

THE SIMMS REVIEW

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The Simms Review is published annually by The Simms Society, which is its sponsor, and for which the *Review* serves as a place of record. The *Review* solicits articles, notes, and queries on any subject pertaining to the life, writings, thought, and world of William Gilmore Simms. The suggested length for notes and reflections is 500 - 1,500 words, and for articles is 2,500 - 7,500 words.

The Simms Review is a refereed journal. All notes, reflections, and articles, including those by editorial board members, undergo blind peer review by at least two scholars with relevant expertise. Submissions should be in Microsoft Word and sent via e-mail to tcslimms@mailbox.sc.edu. Please use MLA format for references (in-text citations and a Works Cited list). Include your name and contact information on the first page only.

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Introduction

Welcome to the nineteenth volume of *The Simms Review*, the official scholarly publication of the William Gilmore Simms Society. This is an intriguing issue, with work from some long-time Simms scholars as well as a number of writers new to the pages of this journal. Adding to the experience and expertise of the old guard, this “new blood” brings an infusion of fresh perspectives on Simms and his work. This volume explores writings and aspects of the author’s career that have received little to no critical attention prior to now. In fact, one theme, it could be argued, dominates this issue of *The Simms Review*: the overlooked or the unexamined in Simms — in his biography, in his writing, and in his legacy. Though not specifically designed as a theme issue of the journal, this volume is preternaturally absorbed in the study of this overarching element of Simms studies.

In their quest to discover what has been overlooked or left largely unexamined in our understanding of Simms, the scholars in the following pages consider all manner of Simmsiana. Patrick Scott analyzes a Simms pseudonymous review of obscure author William North, not only casting light on Simms’s criticism of bohemianism in mid-nineteenth-century American literary culture but also offering clues to a lost Simms novel titled *The Slave of the Lamp*. In a revealing exposé of Edgar Allan Poe’s poem “To Miss Louise Olivia Hunter,” Dutch scholar Ton Fafianie demonstrates the debt Poe owes to an earlier work by Simms. In his essay, Kevin Collins discusses the metaphoric concept of volition in forces of nature, adding a twist to Annette Kolodny’s eco-feminist treatment of Simms in *The Lay of the Land*. Benjamin B. Alexander takes a look at the ways in which William Shakespeare’s canon offered Simms a touchstone for processing his own thoughts and feelings about the personal and regional devastation of the Civil War, as in the American Revolution earlier. Brian Fennessy taps into the critical vogue of exploring emotionalism in literature and, in the process, reveals the unpublished, unfinished, and, until very recently, lost Simms short story “Rawlins’ Rookery.” Finally, Sean R. Busick evaluates another dimension in the literary relationship between Simms and Nathaniel Hawthorne, specifically through the lens of their deployment of history in their imaginative writings.

Also in this volume, we feature a thoughtful forum on the topic of Simms’s presence (or lack thereof) in English, American, and Southern literary anthologies. The foundation of this discussion is David Moltke-Hansen’s think-piece, which takes an historical glance at the ideology and politics that have defined the contents of literary anthologies in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Simms provides the specific focal point for these queries. In thoughtful and penetrating responses to this piece, six scholars offer their own views on the vexed question of anthology inclusion and exclusion, which, today, practically represents a *de facto* canon formation. John Grammer, Peter Schmidt, Kenneth M. Roemer, Bethany Shaffer, Laura Aull, and

Patrick Scott all participate to question, complement, and complicate David Moltke-Hansen's views. As a whole, this forum offers wide-ranging analysis of one of the more problematic features of modern literary studies.

All told, the nineteenth volume of *The Simms Review*, we hope you will agree, continues to enhance the academic study and popular appreciation of one of antebellum America's most important and influential writers. In building on the past and looking to the future, *The Simms Review* has attained a robust and intriguing currency in American historical and literary studies. Thanks are due to the Simms editorial board and the past editors for their unflagging advice and guidance in evolving the *Review* to its current form. Simms deserves greater attention from the academic community at large, and this publication is an important vehicle in furthering that proper notice.

Thanks are due also to the academics and appreciators of Simms who submit their work for publication in this venue and help make *The Simms Review* the landmark journal it always strives to be. In that light, I hope that other Simms scholars and academics of all varieties will view this publication as an invitation to contribute. As the current volume attests, we are always eager to find fresh voices and novel arguments about William Gilmore Simms, his writing and influence, and his world. If you have a submission for a future volume of *The Simms Review*, please contact the editor. I will welcome the chance to meet you and learn of your work. Submission guidelines and contact information are printed on the inside cover. Please get in touch today!

“I Had Never Before ... Heard of Him at All”: William Gilmore Simms, the Elusive William North, and a Lost Simms Novel about American Authorship

Patrick Scott

Any writer with Simms's wide range of interests, long career, and great productivity, in so many genres, poses special problems for the researcher. The importance of Simms's work as essayist, reviewer, and critic across several national literatures has long been recognized (see e.g. Guilds, "Simms"; Kibler), and current research, including that associated with the Simms Initiatives, mining the recently-conserved Simms scrapbooks at the South Caroliniana Library, is opening up for study more of the critical writings that Simms published in periodicals or newspapers but that have not previously been collected in book form.¹ It is especially in such uncollected writings that the scholar will run up against chance allusions and fugitive references that stubbornly resist investigation.

One of Simms's essay-reviews from the *Charleston Mercury* in May 1855 poses special problems because the writer it deals with, William North (1825-1854), has long vanished from any standard reference source.² Simms was reviewing North's final novel, *The Slave of the Lamp* (1855), which had then just appeared. Though North published some ten books in the previous ten years, along with over a hundred articles and poems, he still remains among the most elusive of mid-nineteenth-century writers. The researcher will end up equally empty-handed whether looking for North in major British sources (the *Dictionary of National Biography*, the *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, the *Cambridge History of English Literature*) or in major American ones (*American National Biography*, the *Oxford Companion to American Literature*, the *Literary History of the United States*). Nor was North much more widely known when Simms was writing, at least in America, or at least outside New York. Before he decided to review North's book, Simms himself had never heard of its author, commenting (inaccurately as it turns out) "I had never before seen any of NORTH's writings. In fact, until that moment, had never heard of him at all."

Yet Simms's review essay on North, one of his long series under the pen-name Lorris that appeared in the *Mercury* between December 1854 and May 1856, has special importance, because more than half of it concerns an otherwise unrecorded fiction project of Simms's own. Any light that can now be thrown on the lost author whom the pseudonymous Simms was ostensibly reviewing may cast light also on Simms himself and on a mysterious long-lost Simms novel. At the very least, fuller information on the writer, his books, and his career may perhaps contextualize Simms's comments in his review on the conditions of American authorship in the 1840s and 1850s. Because of

North's life-story, and his connections in New York in the early 1850s with the emergent culture of the New York bohemians, Simms's comments on North also show Simms's conflicted attitude towards the bohemian strand in mid-19th century authorship.

It was a review Simms specially wanted to write. Indeed he had been waiting to write it for eight months or more, primed and ready, ever since he first got wind of the book's impending publication, during his visit to New York in late summer 1854. As he himself later reported:

Strolling last summer, my dear Mercury, in a morning round among the publishers of New York, I stepped into the extensive establishment of LONG and BROTHER in Nassau Street, and was exceedingly taken aback to be told that there was a work in their press, then almost ready for publication, by a young Englishman, entitled "*The Slave of the Lamp*." some months elapsed before it made its appearance. When I could get my hands on it, I did so, and examined it with eager curiosity (Lorris [Simms], on North; unattributed block quotes below are from this essay).

As Simms tried to learn more about the mysterious young author, he found only that North's "rank was obscure in New York; and I was told that he was chiefly known as a writer for the Sunday newspapers." The book itself included a twelve-page memoir, but even with the book in hand, Simms wanted to know more. He wrote to his New York ally Evert Augustus Duyckinck, apparently following up a previous request that Duyckinck had not yet answered:

I wrote to beg you that you would obtain for me any information with regard to William North, author of the *Slave of the Lamp*. Pray do so, as soon as possible & let me know. ... I desire the matter ... for a newspaper letter (*Letters* 3:383).

Two weeks later, on May 21, just a week before the Lorris article appeared, he wrote again to Duyckinck: "thanks for the items touching North. I will use them in a letter" (*Letters* 3:386).

Simms's urge to discover more about North was right, because the sparse information available to him was far from the whole story. But the sources available to Duyckinck were equally sparse. One problem is that most of North's literary career had been spent in Britain, not America: North had only recently moved to New York from London, in March 1852, and of the ensuing nineteen months before his death in November 1854, several were spent not in New York but in Cincinnati. More problematic still was that the early American sources on North's life (chiefly newspaper obituaries) confidently identified North himself with the aristocratic protagonists of his admittedly semi-autobiographical novels, and North seems to have done little to discourage such identification.

By his enquiries to Duyckinck, Simms had perhaps performed due diligence, but he could only write with the information he had. North's earlier writings were almost all unavailable to him, and his review was evidently colored by a very strong moral and professional revulsion against the writer he was reviewing. Such coloring may of course derive from Simms's source, Duyckinck, rather than originating with Simms himself, but the resulting portrait is inevitably both partial and unsympathetic. On North's family origin and turn to literature, Simms describes North as:

a scion of that stout old family, the Guildfords It is said that our young author became alienated from his home, because of some difficulty with his family. He, no doubt, offended it temporarily, by eccentricities or extravagances; while his own reckless and impulsive temper made him resent, in extremes, all attempts to restrain or guide him.

And Simms's account of North's literary career is equally dismissive, parading Simms's unavoidable informational lacunae as evidence of North's professional nonentity:

He took up literature as a profession, nay rather perhaps, as a resource from want; and wrote a Novel entitled "Anti-Coningsby."... He wrote besides, "The City of the Jugglers," "The Impostor," and several other fictions, of which I can tell you nothing. I have seen none of them. The inference is that they failed in their effect on the British public—all his literary enterprises seem to have failed there. He wrote for the periodical press besides, and he wrote in vain. He seems to have been a contributor to the small-fry periodicals.... But his labors had no satisfactory results, and in 1852 he came to this country.

Simms gave no greater credit to North's work in America:

Here he plunged head-long into all kinds of hack and literary labor; he wrote verses.... Where these poems appeared, or when, I know not. I have never seen them.... In New York, he derived the pittance of support (enough for this, no doubt) from the periodical press.

Simms was confident that he had diagnosed what had caused North's lack of success in the profession of letters:

He had, by the way, a German education at Bonn—a school particularly objectionable in the case of an ardent temper, associated with a somewhat mystical mind. There North became a republican, a neologist, and what not—all that fish, flesh, fowl sort of metaphysico-politician which makes it scarcely possible to keep down a German brain to anything like a decent rationalism.

Nor does the tragic end of North's life mitigate the severity of Simms's assessment. In November 1854, shortly after completing the novel that Simms was to review, North had committed suicide, by drinking prussic acid. As Simms recounted the story, North's suicide too becomes a sign, not of despair, but of unprofessionalism:

He left letters in his room to DICKENS and other persons... . An open letter contained a ten cent piece and two cents, endorsed "The Remains of my Fortunes and Labors for Ten Years." Certainly, with twelve cents still in his pocket, no man ought to commit suicide. But the subject is not one for jest—however striking its follies. The history is a miserable one, out of which you may make for yourself material for reverie, sermon and possibly nightmare.

Had Simms known more of North's real life and actual achievement, he might perhaps have modified this rather grudging account. Indeed, elsewhere (as for instance in his writing on Poe), Simms shows greater appreciation and sympathy for the literary commitment and social resistance of what would later be tagged bohemianism, and Simms's own attitude to authorship was never merely a matter of commerce. Even on the facts he did have, Simms surely could have spun North's story less negatively.³ Rather

than being, as Simms suggests, a spoiled scion of the aristocracy playing at literature and radical politics, North had supported himself for ten years through his writing, in a way with which, in other circumstances, Simms himself might well have identified. Though North declared himself (in European terms) a radical, a democrat, and a republican, and took his commitment seriously enough to have given away most of his inheritance in the mid-1840s, a lot of the political satire in his novels struck evenhandedly both to left and right.

Recent research by Allen and Page Life has clarified much about North that had previously been murky at best, disentangling life and fiction, and looking fully for the first time at North's activity on both sides of the Atlantic. As Simms reports, North presented himself in his writings as an aristocrat by birth, Eton-educated, from a rich landed and clerical family, and a descendant of the 18th-century prime minister Lord North. However, no such relationship has yet been traced, and if there were one it must have been at best vestigial. North's wish to present himself in this way (what one might label the Shelleyan or Byronic tendency), and the wish of New York bohemianism to believe in his aristocratic origin, are indeed equally suggestive about some of the social complexities in the 1850s counter-cultural self-image of authorship. The reality of North's family background was less glamorous than he had let people believe, or at the least it was more mixed. North's grandfather and father had made their money in trade, as "blue" and starch manufacturers, though the father also owned rental property. North had been educated at a private school, Temple Grove, but at the age of fifteen was dispatched, not to Eton, but to Germany for private tuition in Bonn, with periods attending university lectures in Bonn and perhaps also more briefly in Berlin.

On his return to England in 1844, North initially was set up by his father to study law, but instead embarked almost immediately on a career as a writer. This switch in career was linked to North's final break with his father, which North later depicted as political in origin, an unbridgeable disagreement stemming from the radical political idealism he had adopted while in Germany. In fact, as Allen and Page Life have shown, the break was only the final stage in a more deeply rooted conflict that antedated North's time in Germany. In 1837-1838, North's much-loved mother, rightly suspecting his father of adultery, had gone to the house of his suspected mistress, found North's father there, and been driven off by him with a poker. The *father* then pursued the *mother* through the civil courts with a charge for assault, and through the ecclesiastical court with a plea for divorce on grounds of *her* adultery; during the prolonged suits and counter-suits that followed, North's mother died of typhus, and just six days later, under special license, the father married his mistress. North had good reason to reject both his father and Victorian conventionalities, and to seek for himself a different life.

Nor was North's literary achievement as nugatory as Simms implies. What North accomplished was remarkable, in scale, in variety, and in creativity. His first novel, *Anti-Coningsby* (3 vols. 1844), a political satire on Disraeli and Young England, published when he was barely nineteen, was quite widely reviewed, though North himself later disowned some of its acerbities. That first success was quickly followed by *The Impostor* (3 vols., 1845); a short novel *The Anti-Punch* (1847), a satire on journalism;

two translations, one from German, Pückler-Muskau's *Travels and Adventures in Egypt* (3 vols. 1847), and one from French, Lamartine's *Poetic Meditations* (1848); an edition of Beckford's *Vathek* (1849, but frequently reprinted both in Britain and America); a political fantasy, *The City of the Jugglers, or Free-Trade in Souls* (1850), about a crisis on the stock-market and the revolutions of 1848; a philosophical manifesto, *The Infinite Republic* (1851, with a French translation in 1855); a scathing *History of Napoleon III* (Cincinnati, 1853, illustrated with North's own caricatures); and the 400-page novel that first brought North to Simms's attention, *The Slave of the Lamp* (1855, which would be reprinted under a different title in 1866 and 1877). And that was just North's books. He also wrote regularly for British periodicals in the 1840s. He edited at least two periodicals, one at least briefly successful, *The Puppet Show* (1848-49, a weekly, reported as reaching a peak sale of 50,000 per issue), and one an almost immediate failure, *North's Monthly Magazine* (1852). He traveled to Paris to join the revolution of 1848. He advised the Rossetti brothers when they were establishing their short-lived but ultimately very significant PreRaphaelite little magazine *The Germ* (1850).

In his short period in New York, North also made much more of an impact than Simms realized. He contributed to significant magazines, including some to which Simms himself had contributed and some that he disliked—*Harper's New Monthly*, the *American Whig Review* (two contributions), *Knickerbocker* (seven contributions), the *United States Review* (sixteen contributions), *Graham's American Monthly* (six contributions), the recently-founded *Putnam's New Monthly Magazine*, the *Illustrated New York Journal*, and *Pen and Pencil* (Cincinnati, eight contributions, one noticed in *Scientific American*). For a period, he was literary editor for *Graham's*, and he started, with himself as sole writer and illustrator, a new though short-lived humor magazine, *The Hint*. His edition of Beckford's *Vathek* was republished in Philadelphia, strangely enough by a publisher with whom Simms was also then trying to set up a project, Henry Carey Baird; Simms had actually reviewed North's Beckford for the *Southern Quarterly Review*, referencing one of the biographical details from North's introduction, though two years later he would not remember having seen any of North's earlier work (Simms, "Vathek").

In New York, also, North pushed himself into new literary genres, not only publishing several poems reflecting his PreRaphaelite connection, but also a play, *The Automaton Man*, which in 1854 had multiple performances at Burton's Theater. Most strikingly, he began in New York to write a new kind of short story, gaining widespread critical attention for his tale "The Living Corpse," in the very first number of *Putnam's*, which Simms dismissed as "somewhat, I believe, in the spasmodic, POE-ish manner." In the late 1850s, after North's death, it was these short stories that briefly revived North's reputation, when a New York editor, Henry Clapp, who had known North in London and Paris, chose to reprint two of them, "The Living Corpse" and "The Magnetic Portraits," as featured attractions in the first three numbers of his new literary weekly, the *Saturday Press* (23, 30 Oct. & 6 Nov. 1858). In the perspective of subsequent literary history, this last was no mean endorsement: Clapp's *Saturday Press* also championed Walt Whitman, publishing eleven Whitman poems in the paper's first year, and the then-unknown Mark Twain, publishing Twain's first successful story "Jim Smiley and the Jumping Frog" (Whitley and Weidman 39-41).

Literary achievement, and even such prodigious literary productivity, does not, of course, necessarily translate into financial success. North was still a minor when he broke from his father, and his inheritance from his grandfather was withheld after the break. In April 1847, following the failure of a new magazine on which he had staked his hopes, North was imprisoned for debt and, almost simultaneously, petitioned for bankruptcy (Life and Life 79). One of the most haunting scenes in North's novel *The City of the Jugglers* (1850) involves a successful writer returning from an evening out to discover, hiding in an empty closet of his chambers, the starving author who had been their previous tenant; his secret guest had kept a key after his eviction, and been living undetected in the closet for several months, coming out only when his luckier successor went out for business or pleasure (North, *City* 215-220). North's move to New York was spurred, if not wholly caused, by the collapse after only two issues of *North's Monthly Magazine*. After each setback, North returned again and again to writing as both career and calling.

Yet Simms's limited or partial knowledge of North's work, and the unavailability to him of most of North's other writing, cannot fully account for the tone of his Lorris essay. The explanation may lie rather in Simms himself, and in the challenge that North's career seemed to present to Simms's own professional identity. Among the accounts offered by scholars of Simms's later development, Miriam Shillingsburg's political explanation, in her essay on his aborted Northern lecture-tour in 1856, has proved particularly influential. But as James West has recently pointed out, in his later career Simms also faced rapid and dramatic changes in American publishing.⁴ Simms had identified strongly with the emergence of an American literary professionalism, arguing for the importance of a national literature (Holman; Guilds, "Simms's Views;" and cf. Guilds, *Simms* 182-183, and Greenspan 179-180). In the early 1840s, through his allies in the Young America movement, Simms had been involved with their (unsuccessful) lobbying for international copyright, which if successfully enacted would have allowed American authors to compete on at least an equal financial basis with Europeans, rather than finding their writings and income undercut by the free availability to American publishers of easily-pirateable European bestsellers (Holman; Charvat; Barnes esp. 77-85; and cf. Guilds, *Simms* 183-184). As his correspondence makes clear, Simms's annual visits to Philadelphia and New York were professionally motivated, as he sought out opportunities, made new contacts with northern publishers and editors, and took care of business as an author whose national recognition, social status, and professional identity were dependent on his pen.

But by the 1850s, the conditions of American authorship had changed significantly from those under which Simms had first established his reputation and career. He faced new professional challenges, not only from hardening political attitudes, but from structural changes in American book production, distribution, and financing. What piqued Simms's interest in North's forthcoming book, during that visit to New York in late summer 1854, was its title, *The Slave of the Lamp*, and its announced subject, the perils of authorship. The Lorris essay reveals just why Simms had been so "taken aback" when North's novel was first mentioned to him:

Ten years ago, I had myself written several chapters, and had elaborated the whole plan of a work, with this very title, the object of which was to follow out the career of a young author of equal genius and misfortune; and, by tracing out all the clues in his progress, elucidate, if possible, the whole of that curious difficulty by which, in all periods, such persons are kept from direct communication with the very people whom they would counsel and inspire.... I had spoken of my plan, and of the title chosen as a fit one for such a work, to many American writers of distinction, and they unanimously encouraged me to carry out my purpose to fulfillment, as one eminently calculated to be of service in the solution of a problem involving many topics of considerable practical importance; for example, the subject of "*Literary Property*," which, generally, is very little understood, and, as a consequent upon this, that of "*International Copyright*." ... [I] was prepared, in fact, to take up the subject and address myself wholly to it, and only waited to rid myself of other tasks to which I was pledged, and which I had already begun. Judge, then, my annoyance and surprise to find my subject anticipated ... and the very title which I had selected for my work actually prefacing the labors of another!

In the following April, however, when Simms eventually got hold of North's book, he found both the book, and its account of an authorial career, quite different from what he himself had projected:

I read the book carefully, and was disappointed—gratefully so, I confess—as I found that the author had ... never trenched upon my plan, ... that he made but little use of the history of authorship; that he never attempted the solution of its difficulties; ... that, so far from developing the career of painful labor which distinguishes literary life—its denials, disappointments, and defeats—his laborers were generally of the order of *chevaliers d'industrie*; —that his work was, in brief, a sort of social romance; the flash portions being most conspicuous, and his chief actors being swindlers, more or less decent and dexterous... . The great swindler and hero of the book, we are told, wrote for the press, and so did another of the parties; but no use whatever was made of their toils as authors, ... we never see him at work. The labors on which we find him usually engaged are drinking-bouts, fashionable parties, etc. His chief employment seems to be love-making, and *pour passer le temps*, seduction and other gentlemanly vices.

In short, in North's novel, Simms had encountered a view and experience of authorship quite different from the kind of literary professionalism he had himself embraced.

Not only to Simms, but more positively to other commentators, North represented the emergence of a new and alternative literary culture, or counter-culture, a bohemianism that rejected almost all the landmarks around which Simms had oriented his professional career. Even before he moved to New York, North's closest connections had been with the far-from-bourgeois young artists of the PreRaphaelite brotherhood. As Allan Life has documented, Dante Gabriel Rossetti had rented a studio in Red Lion Square from North's unsuspecting father. Nor were North's personal morals

conventionally Victorian. When, before embarking for America, North arranged to have his letters forwarded from the Rossetti household, Rossetti's devoutly poetical sister Christina (who thought North a "rabid" Chartist) was much disturbed that "a young lady with a child in a cab left the message" and asked "Is Mr. North married?" Her stronger-minded brother William Michael Rossetti later commented that North was not "to be tied down by church ceremonies" (*Life and Life*, 87-88 and n. 23).

Bohemianism, the idea of the artist as free-spirited gypsy, had first emerged as a cultural phenomenon in the eighteen-forties, in Paris, most notably in Henri Murger's book *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*, first published in collected form in 1848.⁵ By the early 1850s, bohemian ideas began to emerge in New York, identified particularly with a group of young writers and artists that included North's friend the journalist Henry Clapp, the British artist Frank Bellew (who had illustrated North's *City of the Jugglers*), the aristocratic British exile and sports writer "Frank Forester," and the Irish would-be-aristocratic exile Fitz-James O'Brien (caricatured in North's *Slave of the Lamp* as "Fitz-Gammon O'Bouncer"). In part because of his early death, North had a special place in this circle; Albert Parry, the doyen among scholars of New York bohemianism, wrote that "chronologically, North's suicide on 14 November 1854, began the true Bohemia" (Parry 49).

Several of Clapp's circle (the "Ornithoryncus Club")⁶ formed the core of a wider group gathering nightly at the cellar bar run from 1853 on by a German immigrant, Charles Pfaff, and celebrated by one of the attendees, Walt Whitman:

The vault at Pfaff's where drinkers & laughers meet to eat and carouse
While on the walk immediately overhead was the myriad feet of Broadway.

(Whitman, *Notebook*, I: 454-455).

It is, indeed, this tavern culture, if not Pfaff's Tavern itself, that provides the opening image of New York literary life in North's novel:

NOT far from the celebrated *Tombs*—a modern Egyptian temple devoted to the custody of New York law-breakers—down a street chiefly remarkable for the irregularity of its pavement and the poverty of its inhabitants, three men were eating oysters in a cellar.

In the city alluded to—a city of which, probably, many of my readers have heard—oyster eating is mostly a subterranean process (North, *Slave* 17).

And the attitude to literary life and conventional culture offered by North's hero Dudley Mondel, in conversation with "Peregrine Cope" (i.e. Henry Clapp) is also recognizably bohemian:

... a deep-seated and gloomy discontent pervades the minds of most persons of culture in the present age. In America this feeling is as rife as in Europe. There is no affectation about it. Every day I hear men—aye, and women—even fair and lovely girls, express an indifference to life, a disgust for the world, a vague, objectless dissatisfaction that is utterly depressing and discouraging."

"You associate, probably," said Cope, "with the literary class more than any other, and since the calamities of authors are proverbial and universal, as we ourselves know from dire experience in many cities, it is no wonder that

they utter cries of pain, and even groans of despair in their sufferings. Authors love pleasure,—they are poor. Superior in education and refinement to all other classes, they are proud and in debt. The popular taste is in its infancy, and naturally is captivated by books written most down to the level of the vulgar apprehension. Hence the success of female writers, and commonplace trivialities. The poet and the student is perhaps out of his element amongst us.”

“Not so !” said Mondel, brightening up and speaking with decided animation. “You, Cope, are a New England Yankee, and, with all your travelled lore, can scarcely see things *here*, with the clearness of view given to me, a cosmopolite and a stranger. I have neither patriotism nor prejudices. I see that in England literature has exhausted itself. It is only here in America that new circumstances and a new life can bring forth a new poet. For my part I have long abandoned the idea of playing the part of a mere literary man. If I can originate a thought, I care little for the mode of its realization. At this moment I am ruined—as usual—to all appearances.”

“You are not prospering then in a pecuniary line?” said Cope.

“Not in the slightest degree,” replied Mondel, coolly (North, *Slave*, 62-63).

It would be hard to find anything further from Simms’s own deep-seated sense of cultural identity and hard-won literary professionalism. In Simms’s essay, it sometimes seems as if North’s chief moral shortcoming is his lack of commercial success. From that perspective, literary bohemianism was perhaps merely the solipsistic and self-flattering ideology of unsuccessful writers. For the young bohemians themselves, it represented commitment and artistic liberation. Many of the most talented from the younger generation, and some older ones who had faced and rejected more conventional careers, found in bohemianism, and later in an elitist aestheticism, a convincing alternative to the mainstream literary market-place in which Simms had established his reputation but which was already changing (as Wimsatt and West point out) in ways Simms himself found difficult.

Even Simms, appalled as he was by the life depicted in North’s novel, recognized that North had a literary gift, but he judged North morally defective and ill-trained, both as a man and as a writer:

You are not to understand that the author [i.e. North] was a mere pretender or a fraud, or that his book is worthless. On the contrary, he was unquestionably a man of talents, bold, insolent talents: erratic, impulsive, dashing ... His book is full of fine bits, such as you linger over with a melancholy sort of pleasure.... Since reading his book I have been enquiring of him, and ... his painful history ... the cruel fortunes which attend the career of so many men of letters — men who misconceive the public — who neglect the ordinary precautions of enterprise — who obey impulses rather than laws — and who really do not so much work as play in literature — fancying that they may do, at a mere dash, what can only be rightly and successfully achieved by a life-long labor of devotion and unceasing care.

This is of course a judgment that sheds as much light on Simms as on North. In the eighteen-fifties, Simms himself faced an increasingly difficult professional climate. In

reviewing, and condemning, North and his novel, Simms was perhaps also trying to persuade himself that his own idea of professional authorship remained valid. Even as he recognized North's literary gifts, however, Simms saw North's work as linked with a lowering of literary standards that was in turn linked with a new publication format he also detested:

So far as the mere literary history was employed, it was wholly subordinated to a complicated tale of social strifes, miseries, humors, and vices, very little differing in tenor and tone, however superior in merit, to the general run of slang performances which rejoice in yellow facings.

North and the bohemians, it would seem, were caught between the "yellow-back" format of mid-century popular fiction, the yellow paper wrappers of the morally-suspect contemporary French novel, and the aesthetic ambitions of the late Victorian *Yellow Book*.

There are two tailpieces to this story. First, when North's novel was reprinted, in 1866, the title that had set Simms aback, that he had wanted for his own novel, was changed. Instead of appearing as *The Slave of the Lamp*, the book was now retitled *The Man of the World*. One wonders whether Simms, or perhaps one of his publisher-friends, had had a role in making this change.

Second, and more significantly, one must ask what happened to the other *Slave of the Lamp*, Simms's own unfinished novel about the misfortunes of a literary career. In the Lorris essay, Simms indicated, not only that he had settled on a topic, selected a title, and mapped out a plan, but that he had written "several chapters." Later in the essay, even more tantalizingly, he revealed that "a beginning was made in the composition, and an introductory chapter actually printed, though under a different title, in a Southern magazine." Moreover, he promised Lorris's Charleston readers that his *Slave of the Lamp* was to be specifically, though not exclusively, a literary novel with a Charleston setting:

The scene was made to open in your city, and it was my purpose to make your society furnish, to a certain degree, a portion of the work ... but as I contemplated the solution of a problem which is felt to be of universal difficulty, I was unwilling to generalize from any small or single circle. Of course the large cities were necessary to be studied.

We can date Simms's *Slave of the Lamp* with some confidence as a work of the eighteen-forties, not only from Simms's reference in the Lorris essay to "ten years ago," but also from the sole earlier book mentioned there as discussing the perils of authorship, and the later books Simms does not mention. In the Lorris essay, he cited as precursor only Richard Hengist Horne's novel *The False Medium ... excluding Men of Genius from the Public*, first published in 1833. What Simms did not mention, however, are two much more powerful rivals in the fictional treatment of authorship, Thackeray's *Pendennis* (1848-1850) and Dickens's *David Copperfield* (1849-50). While in the mid-1840s, in the years when he wrote his series of articles on copyright, Simms might reasonably have embarked with confidence on a novel about authorship, by the mid-1850s, when he was confronted by North's insouciant bohemianism, he might have hesitated, though he had by no means given up on his own commitment to authorial professionalism. Simms's own *Slave of the Lamp* must therefore date from the mid-1840s.

So far, earnest enquiry among a range of Simms scholars has failed to turn up Simms's lost novel, to provide any hint as to the unnamed periodical in which Simms might have published that "introductory chapter," or to elicit any suggestion as to the substitute title that was later given to it. For the present, too, no Simms scholar recalls seeing any unpublished plans or drafts that might relate to the novel Simms himself had projected. Perhaps in due season the work of the Simms Initiatives, and other large-scale digital projects, will provide the means by which what is clearly a lost Simms work of wide significance might be identified and rescued. Till then, the only clues to what Simms might have written lie in what he wrote about his mysterious and unfortunate younger contemporary and the novel that he feared had preempted his own. We can be sure at least that the account of literary life in Simms's lost novel, *The Slave of the Lamp*, would have differed dramatically from that of the elusive William North.

Notes

¹ This essay, written at the suggestion of James E. Kibler, grew from conversations with him and David Moltke-Hansen about one of their current editorial projects, *Literature and Civilization: Selected Reviews of [by] William Gilmore Simms* (U of South Carolina P, in preparation). I am indebted to both of them, to Todd Hagstette, editor of *The Simms Review*, to James West, and to the Review's anonymous readers, for encouragement, shared expertise, and advice.

² "From Our Literary Correspondent," *Charleston Mercury* (28 May 1855). Quotations from Simms below, unless otherwise attributed, come from this review. Very brief excerpts were included in the annotation to *Letters* 3: 383, note 120. For Simms's Lorris articles, see Kibler, *Pseudonymous Publications*, 61-64.

³ This paragraph and those that follow draw on recent research by Allen and Page Life (Life and Life), on my own shorter essay about North's achievement (Scott, "Introducing"), and on our collaborative bibliography (Life, Scott, and Life).

⁴ West offers a broader-based and more positive account of Simms's later career than that given in Wimsatt's essay, but both agree on the challenges presented by mid-century publishing developments.

⁵ The account below draws on Parry's long-standard account of the New York bohemians, on recent books by Joanna Levin and Mark A. Lause, and on the excellent essay on North's New York circle by Whitley and Weidman.

⁶ Named for *Ornithorhynchus Paradoxus*, the Duck-Billed Platypus, which had been depicted on the street sign for a New York German restaurant by one of North's Pfaffian friends, the artist Frank Bellew, as smoking a large pipe and drinking German beer (Wolle 73).

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To Miss Louise Olivia Hunter.

Though I turn, I fly not—
I cannot depart;
I would try, but try not
To release my heart.
And my hopes are dying
While, on dreams relying,
I am called by art.

Thus the bright snake coils;
Nears the forest tree
Wins the bird, beguiling,
To come down and see:
Like that bird the lover
Dreads his fate will hover
Till the blow is over
And he sinks—like me.

February 14 1847.

Poe's Purloined Poem: "To Miss Louise Olivia Hunter"¹

Ton Fafianie

"These and other imitations, however, are but the inevitable sins of the youth of genius — which invariably begins its career by imitation — an imitation, nevertheless, interspersed with vivid originality. I think I have before observed that, in letters, a copyist is, as a general rule, by no means necessarily unoriginal, except at the exact points of the copy. Mr. Simms is, beyond doubt, one of our most original writers."

- Poe, *Marginalia*, July 1846.

Edgar Allan Poe's minor poem "To Miss Louise Olivia Hunter" still inspires the young, romantic-hearted in the modernized Gothic mode to effusions on the internet of being "wonderstruck" and to a pouring out of musical lyricism.² The reason per se for this awe and inspiration is probably the assumption that it was composed by Poe, the acknowledged master of Dark Romanticism. Appearances, however, can deceive. A more thorough reader's approach to the poem reveals a wonderful play of mistaken identities and texts, not unlike the deeper plots of Poe's earlier and much studied work "The Purloined Letter." In that short story we might say the protagonist is a document: the letter is pushed around by the characters, who each attribute different values to it, incriminating one another in changing contexts of identity, while the text itself refuses to be read: it remains obscurely hidden behind appearances.

The one-page valentine was first collected among Poe's poems in the edition that was the life-long project of Poe scholar Thomas Ollive Mabbott (*Collected Works* 396-99). As a poem, it is a slight thing, of two stanzas, presented in manuscript, in Poe's best, most flowing hand, but lacking even a signature. The full text has been available to the public since 1932, when it first appeared, in facsimile, in the *New York Times*. Still, it has received very little attention, perhaps in part because there have been questions concerning its attribution and authenticity.

In this essay I will show that the text of the poem to Miss Hunter was purloined by Poe from the poetical work of William Gilmore Simms. The discovery leads to several questions about the context in which Poe wrote the poem and Louise O. Hunter received it. My approach is, first, to establish the history and authenticity of the manuscript. Next, we need to uncover the identity of Miss Hunter and her connection with the milieu of the New York literati. Also, some remarks about the intertextual connection between Poe and Simms are appropriate. We need to take a look at the character of the relation between these two brother bards. Did they ever meet? The question of plagiarism (especially in its expanded, modern academic sense) always looms large in the case of Poe: are we to

mark, then, this text as plagiarism? In this respect, the poem itself shall be scrutinized in its contexts, as a romantic “early lay” from Simms and as a valentine from Poe.

One way to look at the text is to consider it as a metatext for Poe: he must have had a reason to select this particular text from Simms and to present it as a valentine. Or was it just a suitable crib, purloined for the occasion? Our wording of this form of doubling, which is important in explaining it, may be weighed against Poe’s own vision of the secondary use of poetical texts and ideas. Further, the 1840s proved, in America, to be a germinal decade for the valentine as a socio-literary genre, which after 1850 started a decided commercial boom with an enduring character. Poe also played a part in this process. We do not pretend to have all the answers. The deeper connotations explored in this essay may lead to some digressions, even educated guesses, but I beg indulgence as they are meant to be an impetus for further study.

The History and Authenticity of the Manuscript

After receiving the valentine in 1847, Louise Olivia Hunter kept it all her life, until her childless death in 1898. The son of a neighbor across the street remembered that he saw the valentine often in the 1890s, that it was kept with other literary memorabilia in a room of the old lady’s house, which she called Castle Tiny. We know nothing of the whereabouts of the Poe document after the probate of Louise Hunter’s estate in October 1898 and before the first mention of it in February 1932. Her will could not be examined within the scope of this essay. Perhaps the manuscript was put up for auction, perhaps it remained in the family. We know that Elizabeth Marston, who was related to Louise’s long deceased mother, kept some printed items from Louise in her possession (but not this original manuscript). Surviving members of the Hunter family were Louise’s nephews George Henry (d. 1901) and Jacob Bennett (d. 1916), who left a wife, Jane Ann Mount (d. 1922 in Hempstead, Long Island). None evinced a taste for American literature, but the memorabilia of Aunt Louise could have been kept as remembrances of her.

About three decades after Hunter’s death, the manuscript, with the poem, was discovered by the famous collector of Americana, Philadelphian Dr. A.S.W. Rosenbach (1876-1952), but the circumstances are unrecorded and beg historical investigation. The news of the discovery was appropriately announced on Valentine’s Day 1932 in an item in the *New York Times*, followed a week later by two commentary letters to the Editor of the same newspaper, headed “Louise Olivia Hunter Identified.”³ By March 29 the news had spread as far as New Zealand, where it was noticed in a Wellington newspaper.⁴

Some time after 1933 Rosenbach sold it to prominent lawyer Frank J. Hogan, in whose collection it remained until his death in 1944. Hogan most likely purchased the manuscript directly from Rosenbach, in a private sale. The manuscript is not listed in Rosenbach’s catalog, although it is quoted in full in the introduction to his “Exhibition of Historic Love Letters.” Rosenbach’s rather melodramatic description is as follows:

It is truly a wonderful coincidence that the above magnificent letter of Poe [to his Maine fan George W. Eveleth, TF] and the beautiful Valentine that he wrote sixteen days after Virginia’s death to Louise Olivia Hunter can be seen and read as they lie side by side. This lovely manuscript, on special Valentine

paper, is one of the most pathetic and at the same time prophetic poems that Poe has ever written. The morbid state of his mind is more than evident when one reads the following lines and realizes that his thoughts were steadfastly on his only Valentine, Virginia, and not on Miss Hunter to whom it is addressed. (Rosenbach xvi)

As we shall see later, Rosenbach here omits a valentine Poe wrote to Mrs. Marie Louise Shew on or near the same day in 1847.⁵ In 1973, some years after the poem was first collected by Thomas Ollive Mabbott in his edition of Poe's *Poems*, Joseph Moldenhauer published his meticulous descriptive catalog of Poe manuscripts in the Ransom Research Centre, in which "To Miss Louise Olivia Hunter" is described.⁶ On the original, which is written in ink, the date of 1847 appears to have been written in pencil, perhaps by another hand. Despite this added date, believed to be correct by Mabbott, Moldenhauer suggests the year 1846, following the 1935 article by McLean, "Poeana: A Valentine." This year, with a question mark, was also used in the 1987 *Poe Log* (625). The poem itself seems to have been written in Poe's neat handwriting of which several specimens from the period have been preserved. His signature is not added because of the playful purpose of the valentine as a genre, which leaves the addressee guessing who the sender is. It consists of two stanza's totaling fifteen lines, respectively seven and eight lines with rhyming words in a sequence of six and five syllables. There is a stressed monosyllable in the middle of each line, which makes it song-like and easy for recitation. The first stanza breaks up the pattern of the second, as if one line (the sixth) is missing.

The Whatman-paper, identified by Moldenhauer, although varying in quality, was an expensive kind, which at the time could hardly have been used by a poverty-stricken author like Poe. Reputedly, it was Queen Victoria's favorite; she used it for her own correspondence.⁷ The chance that Poe, uniquely it seems from the extant Poe-material, used a sheet of embossed and perforated paper lace for a lady friend or acquaintance is extremely small, but of course not impossible. In view of the dire circumstances of the little Poe family at precisely this period; the odds are that Poe received the sheet from someone who wanted him to write the poem to Louise Hunter. Before 1850 these expensive sheets were imported from England, after mid-century paper lace was also fabricated in the United States, but not the kind Poe used. Yet, there is evidence that this kind of paper was used, in the right period, for valentines, but in an overseas context. Exactly the same doily-like sheet is known from an Irishman to his sweetheart Susanna, written in Cork, on Valentine's Day 1850 (see illustration, page 44).

The only reason to be at all suspicious of the manuscript is that it first appears in the early 1930s, when the notorious forger Joseph Cosey was active. From the historian's perspective a more precise provenance would be desirable, but apart from accounting for the missing years there seems to be no reason for suspicion. Analysis of the handwriting by Mr. Jeffrey Savoye of the Poe Society in Baltimore, indicates that it is authentic, and bears none of the usual problems apparent in Cosey's forgeries.⁸ Among other details, the ink looks authentic, while Cosey's inks tend to look homemade, and lack the richness of tone of actual inks of the period. A forger would hardly fabricate an unsigned, thus

unmarketable manuscript with a text that was not Poe's composition. The long stroke in ink beneath the date, with the penciled year "1847," seems to underscore an afterthought, but it is a common stroke, known from other Poe manuscripts. The year is the right one, which I will show later. One might be suspicious because the poem was never published in Poe's lifetime, but clearly there was a tradition of a Poe connection that seems to have accompanied the document; there is historical evidence that does connect Poe and Miss Hunter and allows for the possibility of such a poem, and the handwriting is strongly suggestive of Poe's own.

Louise Olivia Hunter and the New York Literati

What does connect Poe with Louise Hunter? Louise, or Louisa, Olivia Hunter⁹ enrolled at the first institution of higher education for women in New York City, probably in 1840, and graduated in 1845, the daughter of moneyed parents.¹⁰ The Annual Commencement Exercises of Rutgers Female Institute were held every year in July, and the sixth was celebrated on Friday, 11 July 1845. All the girls were seated in church in their best dresses and bonnets; the galleries were filled with interested and fashionable ladies and gentlemen. Poe, as chairman of a committee of two,¹¹ and surrounded by college professors on the platform, read aloud Hunter's prize-winning poem in the packed Rutgers Street Presbyterian Church, and it may be that she was awarded a gold medal from Poe's hands.¹² The evening before the event, July 10th, Poe and Tuckerman were comfortably lodged, reading the contributions of the teenage girls in the department of belles-lettres. Editor and poet C.F. Hoffman briefed his friend Rufus Griswold rather enigmatically about the (mental?) picture of Poe and Tuckerman as jurors in a church full of adolescent girls: "Let me tell you a good joke. Poe and Tuckerman met for the first time last night, —and how? They each, upon invitation, repaired to the Rutgers Institute, where they sat alone together as a Committee upon young ladies' compositions. Odd, isn't it, that the women, who divide so many, should bring these two together!" (Griswold, *Passages* 186).

Poe must have received the invitation to appear sometime around June 20th. The last week of June, however, turned out a very nasty one for him: he had yielded to drink and become so desperate about the financial problems of the *Broadway Journal* and his own bleak prospects that it scared his friend Anne Lynch enough to send him a comforting, inviting letter on June 27th. But the worries kept tormenting him throughout July. We may suppose that Poe recited the long poem, filled with clichés, with a heavy heart, only quelled by thoughts of the honor of the task and the remuneration. The girl in front of him, Louise Hunter, was not to live up to her literary ambitions and, as a consequence, she has been completely forgotten.¹³

Very little is known about Hunter. She must be the Louise O. Hunter mentioned in the *New York Times* obituaries, dying at 47 West 94th Street, Upper Manhattan, at the age of seventy on 29 July 1898.¹⁴ Her year of birth would have been circa 1828, despite an earlier estimation of circa 1829.¹⁵ As a graduate, Hunter would have been sixteen or seventeen in July of 1845. Because of the lack of historical data available to me, it is not

possible to pursue her scant literary biography beyond speculation. I have read her known works and they are invariably of the mediocre kind, in the sentimental vein of the lesser poems and commonplace stories of deft women poets like Frances Osgood and Elizabeth Oakes Smith.¹⁶ The last time we hear from her, barring other pseudonyms than the one known, is late in 1856, when a story appeared on the pages of *Godey's Magazine*, vol. 53, titled "The Exclusives. A Sketch from Life." Her work, with its extended Osgood quotations, suggests more than a little help from the poet in the early years. Osgood contributed many poems herself to these magazines and was acquainted with their editors in Philadelphia and New York.¹⁷ In Hunter's minor poems and sketches there is not the slightest hint at a personal acquaintance with Poe, although she had at some point been influenced by his poetical work.

In the *Poems* volume of the *Collected Works* Mabbott (333) did not make the connection between Louise and "Lilla Herbert," the pseudonym she sometimes used from her initials "L.H." The fact that Lilla's story "The Withered Heart" (published December 1845) was prefaced by a motto from Poe's "Lenore" is telling. In July 1846 she published a morbid poem (all her works are morbid to an extent), "The Chamber of Death. Dedicated to a Mourner," which was also clearly inspired by Poe. Her most prolific year was perhaps 1848 when several poems and stories appeared in *The Columbian Magazine* (New York) and the *Union Magazine* (New York and Philadelphia), in which Simms and Osgood also published.

Like so many female poets of the time, Louise Hunter also became spellbound by Poe's clever commercial master poem "The Raven."¹⁸ In her poem "Voices Heard Last New Year's Eve. Inscribed to a Friend"¹⁹ the speaker puts away her book and muses on the heavy toll of death during the year 1847, copying Poe's trochaic octameter and gloomy atmosphere: "So awhile I sat there thinking, when before my startled eyes/ Suddenly there grew a mist that filled my sad soul with surprise." Compare also, "First I mused upon the forms that once had entered through this door,/ And yearned to hear each footfall that must come, alas! No more;/ They had gone, in all their beauty, to the darkness of the tomb,/ And their flight had left the pathway of my future strewn with gloom." Typically, Louise did not use an evil-omened bird, but a radiant woman spirit. This spirit brings hope, asks "Do you love me?" and addresses the female speaker as "darling," much like the only extant letter she wrote to Frances Osgood. Even considering the accepted romantic overtones of the time, the language here and elsewhere does underscore the love between two women emphatically. Although there is, of course, no definite proof in such matters, Louise did not seem to have been romantically interested in men and never married. Whether the men in her surrounds were aware of this is unknown.

To say that Louise was infatuated with Frances Osgood, is probably an understatement. She was dead in love with her and remained so until she herself died.²⁰ A break between Louise and Mrs. Osgood must have occurred sometime in 1849, which fact we can deduce from a letter Louise wrote to Frances in March of 1850, two months before the latter's early demise. This letter was published by Rufus Griswold in the *International Monthly Magazine* (New York) of 1 December 1850, the same magazine in

which he had published his infamous “Memoir of Poe.” The former publication was meant as a tribute to the late Frances Osgood by her friend and was soon to be collected with other tributes in a memorial volume in her honor, edited by Mary Hewitt. There, too, was another contribution by Louise Hunter, the unexceptional short story “Eleanor Wilmot, or the Ideal.” But the letter has a special Griswold ring to it; it is in fact a very private letter full of worship, reproaches, and self-blame, sometimes resulting in speechlessness, that ought not to have been published. Griswold found it among Osgood’s papers after her death, and was “permitted to transcribe the letter,” (Griswold 133) but it is unknown if he ever consulted Louise Hunter herself about the publication.

The close relation between Osgood and Hunter from 1845-49 is important, in view of their mutual appreciation of Poe as an inspirational poet. If we consider Hunter as a protégée introduced in the literary salons by her friend Osgood, a valentine written in her honor by one of the literary “lions” becomes plausible.²¹ After the break with Poe in early 1846, Osgood nevertheless remained friendly towards him until his doomed marriage plans with her friend Mrs. Whitman in Providence. From that time Osgood started a flirtation with Rufus Griswold, who was unhappily married, but willing.²² Since 1846 Poe was banned from the salon of Miss Lynch as a social liability, but that fact did not prevent him from attending other social occasions. He was duly missed by all New York “bluedom,” according to a letter from Mary Hewitt, written not long after the break with Osgood. Osgood, however, seems not to have been so enthusiastic.²³

What we can say is that Frances Osgood, during a good part of 1846 and the first months of 1847, was anxious not to get her angelic good name involved in the sordid public libel suit of the exiled Poe versus Hiram Fuller.²⁴ She shunned Poe and fled to Philadelphia, where she stayed at least until the month in which Virginia Poe was buried — lamenting herself. Around this time Osgood wrote Poe an acrostic in which his name was concealed, a discovery made by Mary DeJong.²⁵ Poe now began to associate with more sociable ladies. We know that he attended Mary S. Gove’s Christmas and New Year’s party in 1847. Gove was one of his true confidants, as was Mrs. Oakes Smith, who received him often in her Brooklyn salon. Another lady, Caroline Kirkland, also organized literary gatherings at home, first with her husband William, then after his death with her many friends. Poe had been unusually friendly to the Kirklands in his literati-series; he was able to describe the appearances of both in detail, called William “beloved by all who know him” (*Literati* 200) and lavished compliments on Caroline, who he said, is “frank, cordial, yet sufficiently dignified — even bold, yet especially ladylike; converses with remarkable accuracy as well as fluency; is brilliantly witty, and now and then not a little sarcastic, but a general amiability prevails” (*Literati* 76).

Most threads lead to the benevolent Mrs. Caroline M. Kirkland as the most likely candidate to have assigned or commissioned Poe as the writer of the valentine to Louise Hunter.²⁶ Kirkland was socially and professionally connected to many of the New York literati, including Poe, who respected her and her writings. As a schoolteacher in support of the education and advancement of women, she undoubtedly knew Dr. Charles West from Rutgers Female Institute. It is likely that the publisher Israel Post, who started the *Union Magazine of Literature and Art* in July 1847, wanted Kirkland as editor

because of her connections and popularity, and Caroline, recently widowed, certainly could have used the remunerations. Her husband William, before his untimely death in the Autumn of 1846, was connected with Israel Post's *Columbian Magazine*, in which Louise Hunter wrote her first verses and short stories. Post sold this magazine early in 1847 to commence a new monthly, with the widow Kirkland, who in the meantime had assumed editorial duties of her husband's newspaper, the *Christian Inquirer*. Caroline proved a great stimulant for young female writers, such as Louise Hunter, who in 1847 and 1848 was considered a budding talent. All the people connected in our story wrote for the new *Union Magazine*: Poe, Hunter, Osgood, Tuckerman, Simms, and Duyckinck, who was a warm friend of the Kirklands. These literati also frequented her house, described as "crowded with everybody who was *anybody*" in literary reputation, talent, or cleverness.²⁷ Simms is called a familiar figure at literary receptions (Trent 157), but never stayed long in New York (in 1846 for instance between June and August).

Kirkland, a mother of four, was just the sort of woman to give talented people a fair chance, regardless of their social standing or opinion. In 1848 for instance, she gave the young poetess from Philadelphia, Annie Drinker ("Edith May"), a head start in her magazine, after a letter of recommendation from Annie's patron Nat Willis. Kirkland's young friend Bayard Taylor was known for his valentines. Entering the social life of New York in 1846, Taylor first visited the salon of Miss Lynch, also frequented by the Kirklands, where he was introduced to the circle that gathered about Elizabeth Oakes Smith in Brooklyn. Here he attended a "grand valentine party... where the valentines assigned him to write included those for Mrs. Kirkland and Mrs. Seba Smith".²⁸ The popular poet "Grace Greenwood" wrote him an impromptu valentine and Taylor once provided Herman Melville with one, to be used at a party. There are strong indications that valentines in this decade grew into a literary commodity.²⁹ An experienced poet sometimes wrote several poems for the occasion and got paid for them. In these circles it had become known that the Poes, during the Winter of 1846-47, were in starving conditions. It was a reason for the charity-hearted to help marshal resources. Caroline Kirkland, knowing Hunter's morbid bent and admiration for the absent Osgood and Poe, may have suggested to Poe that he write something for the girl. She may even have provided the Whatman sheet, which must have been imported from Britain, the country in which the fad had originated.³⁰

Poe wrote valentines for his nursing friend Marie Louise Shew in 1847 and 1848 (Miller 115).³¹ The 1847 poem was published a month later in Willis's *Home Journal*. Of course, Poe could have written several valentines, but for a romantic man there was a strict code that a valentine was to be written only for one special woman, the one most loved or esteemed. And Poe indeed loved and esteemed Mrs. Shew as a sister, although she confessed herself a simple, pious country girl, a nurse ignorant of fancy imaginations and belles lettres, including those of the patient Poe. Both valentines for Shew overflow with holy thankfulness, quite contrary to the light-hearted but elaborate acrostic Poe wrote for Frances Osgood in 1846, which is full of gentlemanly compliments (apart from the ungentlemanly suggestion that only a dunce cannot descry the hidden name). There can be no greater difference between the prayer-like, Keatsian, deeply felt

valentine for Mrs. Shew,³² and the little “crib” from Simms, sent or handed to Louise Hunter, though both, it seems, were written on or near the same day and for the same lovable occasion.

Simms’s Poem and Poe’s Valentine

We are still left with the question of why Poe would use a poem from southern poet, novelist, and historian William Gilmore Simms for his valentine to Hunter. For this I might suggest a sort of double approach to reading. On the one hand, Poe might have taken an easy route for the practical assignment. He would not be at all concerned that the lines might be recognized as having been composed by someone else.³³ One purpose of such poetry was much like that for poems left in the albums of young ladies or in replies to fan mail, and was very commonly unoriginal. It was a thought dedicated to the receiver, and although originality was preferred, it was not a necessity (particularly for someone who was merely a friendly acquaintance). In the same way, we might send a commercial greeting card today, with no one presuming that the verses it contains are original. When written, we look at the handwriting to see who sent it, or ask around with a blush. On the other hand, as noted, there could be no greater contrast with the valentine Poe wrote on or near the same day to the married Marie Louise Shew. They are original lines of truth, love, and virtue, in the true spirit of the saint’s day. This dichotomy in an approach to a unified goal (here, Valentine’s Day) is, we presume, on a deeper level the same in Poe’s attitude toward Simms.

Poe’s valentine is identified with certainty as a poetical effusion of the pen of Simms.³⁴ Obviously it was not recognized as such by the late Prof. Arlin Turner of Duke University, a friend of Mabbott and also an expert on Poe, Simms, and their contemporaries of the American Renaissance. Turner was one of the first scholars who stressed the literary relationship between the two southern bards, focusing on their stories and criticism, which is perhaps the reason why he doesn’t mention the valentine in his germinal 1972 article. To my knowledge, Simms’s lyrical poem appeared for the first time in the *American Monthly Magazine* of 1 July 1834, under the title “Song.” In 1834, Simms was temporarily in New York to read the proof sheets of his novel *Guy Rivers: A Tale of Georgia* at the Harpers (Trent 120) and probably took the occasion to deliver his “Song” at the office of H.W. Herbert’s *Monthly Magazine*.³⁵ In the same number the magazine published a long and cheering review of *Guy Rivers* (295-304). It was an anonymous publication, but in the January 1840 number of *The Southern Literary Messenger* the poem reappeared under the heading of its first line “There are Dreams of Bowers” in a slightly revised wording, with Simms’s name attached. In the same *Messenger*, between December 1839 and July 1841, there appeared, irregularly, 57 numbered poems by Simms under the heading of “Early Lays,” which should not be confused with his collection of Byronic juvenile poems with the same title, published in 1827. Simms introduced these poems with the following note:

[They are] what they prefer to be; the early exercises of a writer, who, whatever may be his present performances, would be loth [sic] to be suspected of sitting down, at this time of day, to the grave composition of love-ditties. They

constitute the early trials of a pen seeking for the flexibilities of language and freedom of speech, by overcoming the difficulties of various artificial measures of verse. (April 1840: 290n)

Similarly, in his 1846 preface to *Areytos; or, Songs of the South*, in which “There Are Dreams of Bowers” later appeared, Simms claimed to have written the poem originally as one of many youthful heart-strings for a public of southern belles. Of course, it was equally attractive to later belles of the North like the young Louise Hunter, who devoured everything she read — especially morbid poems.

In 1834 Simms was in between wives; it is tempting to read the poem as a lament after the death of his first wife, Anne Malcolm Giles, of tuberculosis. This would help to describe the mix of attraction to and repulsion from the charms-spells of other ladies, but we do not know for sure when he wrote the earliest version of the poem. We do know that the poem kept growing in his mind. In 1857-58 Simms published several poems, under his alias Adrian Beaufain in the *Messenger*, as new “Areytos or Songs of the South” — not yet including a new version of “There Are Dreams of Bowers,” but the title signals his unvarying attention to these older songs. In elaborate form, it was included in the enlarged 1860 edition of *Songs and Ballads of the South with Other Poems*, under the heading of the changed first line “I Have Had Dreams,” For completeness’ sake I give Simms’s final version of the poem in the Appendix. This version is no amelioration. It is more verbose, in an effort to enhance the alliteration and cadence, but also the cause of losing the centrality of stressed words, rendering it less song-like.

Collation of the three texts of Simms’s poem conclusively reveals that Poe used the latest version from *Areytos; or Songs of the South*. Because the volume appeared in May of 1846 this fact definitely rules out the 1846 valentine option, leaving 1847 as the likely year of writing/copying by Poe. Poe deleted the first stanza of his model text, omitted a line and changed one word. He changed “may not depart” (line 10) to the more outspoken phrase “cannot depart.” “Coil” was a pet verb with Simms; Poe condemned it thrice, but did not change it because of the rhyme and the snake metaphor. More significant is the omission of line 14 (the same line with which Simms eventually also proved unhappy) about the despondent sighing/flying friends. Omitting this line means breaking the unity of three rhyming words, recurring in the second stanza: “dying-flying-relying” and “lover-hover-over.” This is not typical of Poe, who was a conscientious, almost mathematical poet, standing undivided for unity. With these manipulations, Poe possibly was relaying a message, perhaps to himself, about the difference between everyday reality (the commissioned valentine as a potboiler) and the heart-felt essence of poetry (the beautiful, original love-poem for its own sake).

Simms’s poem is about the fate of the male lover, enticed by the female snake while in the protecting arms (bowers) of Nature. The enticement comes in the form of a hypnosis, a compelling gaze, that renders immobile; it freezes between hope and fear. There is a connotation of sleep (“there are dreams”...“on dreams relying”), a state that also immobilizes, in the romantic view changing the subject into a reason-less prey. An analogy is drawn between the lover and the male bird, with its free abode in the forest tree, curious about the snake, fluttering and frisking in fascination around the reptile until

it strikes. The second analogy concerns the speaker and the fictitious lover: the speaker also hovers dangerously over his (undecided) fate until the blow is dealt and he falls/ dies/ sinks. It is a typical Lamia-inspired poem, but without the sympathy readers have for Keats' poor serpent of that name, who only wants to be loved in her domain of the Lacanian real (see note 31), but who is chased forever by personified Reason while her lover dies at their lush wedding feast.

The topic, inspired by Keats, kept buzzing in Simms's mind.³⁶ In 1860 he published a long poem, "Lamia – the Beautiful Sin," in *Areytos* (enlarged edition). Compare the second stanza:

And oh! so sweet was that Beautiful Sin,
I laid myself down by the adder's nest,
Nor heard the hisses that rose within,
Nor fear'd the rise of each snaky crest;
I slept in the folds of her fatal form,
Nor dream'd of the vipers that made her breast,
And the pillow was soft, and the clasp was warm,
And I thought that the beautiful thing was bless'd;
In my heart's madness lay all the charm,
And I peril'd my soul, and thought it bless'd! (75)

And the fourth:

The innocent places of play — the groves,
In whose hallowed shelter my childhood grew,
That should have been precious to thousand loves,
For I felt them pure, and I knew them true;
Alas! in that wild and willful hour,
As I wander'd off under Passion's sway,
I strove to forget each tree and flower,
Nor hearken'd the bird as it sang by the way!
'Gainst that Beautiful Sin she had no power,
And I shut mine ears to her pleading lay! (75)

Also compare a fragment from the twelfth stanza: "Her smile of love was a deadly shaft,/ The very last hope from the soul to part;/ Her arms that wound me, so fond and warm,/ Were coiling snakes" (78).

Interestingly enough, but not surprisingly, the same darkly-romantic topic also influenced Poe. To my knowledge, James B. Twitchell was the first to forge a connection between the Lamia and Poe's female figures, in his 1977 article, expanded in his book *The Living Dead: a Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* (39-73). Included is a study of the development during the eighteenth century of the Lamia into a romantic persona, the Lamia-figure. In the quality of "poisonous female figure" the Lamia is also important in Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story "Rappaccini's Daughter" (1844) and, of course, as a symbol of male visions of female evil in a grander gender discourse. Another striking resemblance is found in Frances Osgood's popular volume *The Poetry of Flowers and Flowers of Poetry* where she describes the emblematic meaning of the thorn-apple

(55). The lines about deceitful, feminized charm are almost exactly repeated in Hunter's most elaborate story, "Lizzie Carrington; or, The Coquette's First Lesson," where they are attributed to the yellow (poisonous) rose: "Heed not her sigh / 'T is falsehood's breath! / Trust not her eye — / Belief is death! A serpent's coil / Thy strength may burst, / No power can foil / Her snares accurst" (158).

In Simms's first stanza the male lover is hypnotized by, apparently, a female lover in an enticement of fascination; an analogy with flowers and sleep is drawn which even drives his real, daylight friends to run. Because Poe omits the first stanza (which fact could be due to a practical reason) the reader is left in the dark about the natural location and the reason of the magic spell or enticement that hampers the free rein of his heart (who or what keeps it chained?) and lets his hopes (for what?) die. We do not know why the speaker turns (his head) away, but stays riveted in his position, while in Simms's poem the speaker has a choice to leave or to stand still before the scene in his dreams. Is "fly" to be read as fleeing or soaring like a bird? Some spell keeps him put, breaks his will, and prevents his letting his heart go. The omission of the flying friends may mean that Poe himself still relied on friends in this paralyzed situation, thus indicating a personal feeling.

In Poe's poem the major difference concerns the speakers: the "I" of his first stanza could be a lover, or somebody else. In the second stanza the speaker compares the lover-speaker of the first stanza not only with a hypnotized bird but also with himself. Simms provides more information: the speaker in the first stanza is disturbed by dreams and admits to be the owner of a worn and wan/wayward breast. During waking reality he must rely on these disturbing dreams because he cannot escape their enticement. There follows a comparison between a bird and a lover, who both perish, just as the speaker perishes (is he also a lover, or is he not?). The ending of version B does not gratify us as readers because the narrator-author of the poem could not have died before composing it – the earlier solution of "falls" is more elegant, as is "sinks," which was also a favorite with Poe. Simms's poem reminds us of Poe's minor lyric "To –" ["The bowers whereat, in dreams, I see / The wantonest singing birds..."], dating from 1829. In the poem the speaker longs to sleep and dream of the eyes of his love, but her heart is filled with trifles. Mabbott considers it "a reproach [of cruelty] to the [female] person addressed," and we can concur with this judgment (133, nt).

Whichever way we, as *a posteriori* readers, turn the contents and meaning, it is an unmistakable fact that Poe perpetrates an indirect plagiarism with this poem, making it an affront and insult to himself as a poet, also to the contemporary readers of the poem, be it Louise Hunter as recipient, or indirectly Mrs. Osgood or Mrs. Kirkland as instigator. Suppose that one, as a woman with a romantic soul, receives an anonymous valentine. The poem is in a neat but unfamiliar handwriting,³⁷ in which the speaker identifies with a mesmerized bird at the verge of being bitten by an artful, deadly snake, for centuries the symbol of the Devil, but for the occasion possibly dressed up as your serpent self (as a Lamia-concept). A lover is a fool because he is lured by a serpent, ready to be struck at and thus to sink (in disease, madness or an early grave) like the speaker, for some unknown reason. Suppose, too, that the poem is not even original, but borrowed from a

contemporary poet on his way to fame. We cannot fathom, then, Poe's motives in sending this to a young would-be poetess, or through her to a woman he had held in the highest esteem and loved in a platonic sort of way. Both women seem to have been voracious readers, and the recent poems and novels of Mr. Simms were all the rage in New York. It is hard to tally this with Poe's known idiosyncrasies, as the chivalric Mr. Poe and the firm denouncer of plagiarism.

The Intertextual Connection between Poe and Simms

We need not here evaluate in its subtle negotiations a topic which has, as yet, not been fully researched — the relation between Poe and Simms.³⁸ A striking feature of this relation, which for the main part only existed on paper, is the point of originality both men raised, and exactly that point needs a context here.³⁹ There are several verifiable instances of intertextuality, briefly defined as the influence of Simms's work on Poe's poetry and prose. For instance, the perverse impulse to confess a crime, a topic of the novel *Martin Faber* (1833) was used by Poe in "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "The Imp of the Perverse." An early tale of the sea (1828-29) may well have been Poe's inspiration for "MS. Found in a Bottle" (Guilds "Poe's" and *Simms* 30). In the Summer of 1845, Simms delivered a mysterious ballad "by Adrian Beaufain" to Poe's desk at the office of the *Broadway Journal*, while the latter was out, but Poe never published it.⁴⁰

We have already spoken of the poem "There Are Dreams of Bowers," appearing in the lyrical collection *Areytos; or, Songs of the South*, which version Poe must have had in front of him when he wrote the valentine for Louise Hunter. *Areytos* issued in May of 1846, too late for the inspiration of an 1846 valentine, but in all likelihood Poe purloined the poem for the first possible occasion in 1847. The book was favorably reviewed, not by Poe, in *Godey's* for June and *The Living Age* in July 1846. Poe must have read it in May or June, perhaps after receiving it from Evert Duyckinck or Cornelius Mathews to be used for a short review in the July 1846 *Democratic Review*, as a part of the ongoing series *Marginalia*. This date also excludes the possibility that he received the volume from Simms himself, after the latter's arrival in New York in late June, but Poe could have discussed it with Simms or showed his review.

Several years earlier, in 1841, Poe read the poetry (and prose) of Simms: "As a poet, indeed, we like him far better than as a novelist," (*Autography* 229). In the said *Marginalia* item, after thoroughly reading *Areytos*, he comments briefly on some separate poems. After some compliments, Poe concedes that the "Indian Serenade" is Simms's best poem, but that he would like to improve the line "By Bonita's silver shore" (in an earlier version "By Samana's yielding shore") in a more musical way into *Sounding shore*, which, of course, is the famous last line of Poe's own "Annabel Lee." He concluded his review with the following remark:

These and other imitations, however, are but the inevitable sins of the youth of genius—which invariably begins its career by imitation— an imitation, nevertheless, interspersed with vivid originality. I think I have before observed that, in letters, a copyist is, as a general rule, by no means necessarily

unoriginal, except at the exact points of the copy. Mr. Simms is, beyond doubt, one of our most original writers.⁴¹

This is a strange remark indeed, because in the review itself he had not mentioned any youthful imitations. If we follow his line of reasoning closely, then it appears that a copyist, opposed to a youthful imitator, *can* be original and that Simms, as an adult master-copyist, is one of the most original American writers, provided he does not literally copy out the text in front of him. This quaintly stressed issue of originality surfaces time and again in Poe's judgments of Simms. In view of Poe's purloined poem it can, retroactively, even be read as a self-judgment.

Poe had been more specific in his very severe condemnation of Simms in his 1839 review of *The Damsel of Darien*, in which he also copied the "Indian Serenade" – the only poem he truly valued:

The leading sin [of the novel] is the sin of imitation — *the entire absence of originality* [my italics] ... Every sentence puts us in mind of something we have heard similarly said before. Mr. Simms is now and then guilty of a grossness of thought and expression which indicates anything but refinement of mind... we do not mean indelicacy — but the expression of images which repel and disgust (284).

Moreover, Simms's imagery lacked poetical beauty, which for Poe is an even deadlier sin than imitation.⁴² In the *Marginalia* item cited above it is therefore wry and contradictory, albeit sarcastic, to describe Simms as "beyond doubt, one of our most original writers." In 1847, then, as in 1839, a crib from Simms by Poe must be considered as the acme of unoriginality; sending it to Louise Hunter was an offense indeed. It runs counter to Poe's own poetical principles and conscience. It is not at all a tribute to the originator, because he did not adapt the imagery to the loftier regions of poetry. As usual with Poe, negative and positive are on the same face of the intertwined yin-yang symbol. The sound and imagery of the alliterative 'Samana's silver shore' from "Indian Serenade" kept running through his mind and later became transformed into the sounding sea-shore of "Annabel Lee" and the shiver and quiver of "The Bells." Not so with Simms's dreams of bowers. This poem was deliberately copied and manipulated to transmit a message.

Plagiarism, as a form of doubling, is crucial to the understanding of Poe's character. But the phenomenon appears in many guises. One way of looking at Poe is to consider him as a poet throughout, that is, in all his works. Praise as a juxtaposition to harsh criticism is probably a reflection of Poe's own struggle with subjective identification as a man and an author — with dual identity; in a certain way he is paying a compliment to the author thus considered because, as a growing poet in his own right, he/she is on the same divine pathway to a form of human, laborious poetry which, with the right touch of imaginative genius, can almost reach the sublime.⁴³ For this, [s]he has to sever the ties with the work of others to follow his/her own idiosyncrasies, at whatever costs. But this pathway can and will be booby trapped by man's congenital defaults, leading the other way — as a fork or dichotomy — to loss of reason and downright madness. For Simms, however, who also considered himself foremost a poet, possibly with as great an

interest in the dual nature of the self as Poe (Nakamura 69), poetical theory was not so metaphysical but more down to the American soil. Genius, in his view a characteristic of the happy young, white few, must be allowed to let its imagination express itself freely, leading to an improved moral and a grander realization of the nationalist American idea. It was likened to the true “Spirit of Discovery.”⁴⁴

Conclusions

In March of 1845 Simms had called Poe “no friend of mine” in a letter to Evert Duyckinck, who was a friend of both (Simms, *Letters* 2: 242). But in the course of 1845 things had changed in a positive way on paper. Simms was very perceptive about Poe in his December review of Poe’s *Tales*, “A writer of rare imaginative excellence, great intensity of mood, and a singularly mathematical directness of purpose,” emphasizing Poe’s originality, but he concluded in a negative pitch: “Mr. Poe is a mystic, and rises constantly into an atmosphere which as continually loses him the sympathy of the unimaginative reader... That he has his faults [is] beyond question, and some very serious ones...” (Guilds 395, nt.). The review was the result of a swap, staged by Duyckinck, the editor/reader of Wiley and Putnam’s Library of American Books series: Poe was to review Simms’s volumes of *The Wigwam and the Cabin*, and Simms Poe’s *Tales*. Poe was first with his review, which appeared in *The Broadway Journal* of 4 October 1845 (it was, with few revisions, reprinted in *Godey’s* for January 1846). Both prose works were strongly condemned by Harvard professor Cornelius Felton in October 1846, which fanned Poe’s ire in the years he had left.⁴⁵

Simms was known for his emphasis on moral improvement, to be achieved by free expression of the imagination of potential geniuses such as Poe (Lora 193). But the latter had to be a man of principle and character. On 30 July 1846, just before he returned from New York to the South, he wrote Poe a pat-on-the-back letter, full of warnings disguised as sound advice to a friend he had scarcely seen but whose letter of a “desponding character”⁴⁶ had alarmed him: “You have a young wife — I am told a suffering & an interesting one, — let me entreat you to cherish her, and to cast away those pleasures which are not worthy of your mind, and to trample those temptations under foot, which degrade your person, and make it familiar to the mouth of vulgar jest. You may do all this, by a little circumspection. It is still within your power” (Ostrom 652). Had Simms heard some gossip about Poe as a womanizer? Does it refer to Mrs. Osgood? It is known that Simms had no patience with her kind of writing, and as a moralist he would hardly tolerate her childish flirtations (noticed by Simms’s character Paddy McGann) as a married woman.

Is this admonition the reason for Poe to strike back with a tit-for-tat verse from Simms himself in which a tempted, dreamy mind comes down to earth, only to be devoured by a luring serpent? Did Poe think Simms had preyed on his poetry, like his one time obscure poem “The Bowers Whereat”? But why in the form of a valentine to Louise Hunter, who was too immature to be counted among the literati? In spite of this token of southern brotherhood, Simms, who became a man of some means around 1836, did not take the trouble to visit Poe and Virginia at home in Fordham in a period that visits by other literati to the “ravenous outcast” began to take place. As it turned out, Simms was

reluctant to marshal his powers in the South to make a case for Poe in the ongoing War of the New York Literati. Instead, Poe turned to his few other friends in the South, Thomas Holley Chivers (who corresponded with Simms), Joseph M. Field and, later, John R. Thompson, another Simms correspondent.

It is tempting to relate the skewed image of Poe as a moral wretch with the Columbia-based writer Elizabeth F. Ellet, who was developing as a self-made all-American historian with lofty moral feelings, not unlike Simms's. Any inklings of interference with his personal life by outsiders, who were not personal friends, were not appreciated by Poe. He maintained that Virginia, on her death-bed, accused Elizabeth Ellet of murdering her because of the malicious letters she sent her. Poe certainly held a grudge against Ellet since early 1846, excluding her from the literati-series, which he began in March. It is known that Simms knew Ellet in Columbia and Charleston (she contributed to the *Southern and Western Magazine and Review*), and that he helped with her project to portray the heroic women of the South during the Revolutionary years. He might even have suggested the topic to her and later complained that her indebtedness was not expressed properly. Did Ellet, who was by all reports a calculating woman, tell Simms, either directly or indirectly, through their mutual friend Caroline Gilman of the *Southern Rose Bud*, about the latest gossip from New York and did Poe surmise this from his letter? There is even a possibility that Rufus Griswold⁴⁷ told Simms the latest news, while visiting Charleston, a month before Simms left for New York, to sort out his protracted divorce. From November 1846 onward, Poe was being satirized in the series "The Trippings of Tom Pepper" by a vindictive C.F. Briggs, who also had a grudge against Simms. In those series Simms was the pompous Mr. Myrtle Pippis, "the American George Paul [Payne] Rainsford James," (the actual British "Historiographer Royal," quite an apt comparison), who disdained the North. Ellet was given a complimentary profile in *Godey's* (February 1847), probably to make up for Poe's deliberate omission in the same magazine, but Maine fan George Eveleth stood up for Poe's genius in the same volume.⁴⁸ We mention these libretto-like developments to mark the weird mix of gossip, animosity, pugnacity, helplessness, and salvation that seemed to culminate in Poe's life after the turn of the year 1846.

In conclusion, how *should* we characterize Poe's use of Simms's poem? Poe himself said about plagiarism: "The charge of plagiarism ... is a purely literary one; and a plagiarism even distinctly proved by no means necessarily involves any moral delinquency. This proposition applies very especially to what appear to be *poetical* thefts. The poetic sentiment presupposes a keen appreciation of the beautiful with a longing for its assimilation into the poetic identity. What the poet intensely admires becomes, thus, in very fact, although only partially, a portion of his own soul" ("Literati" 16-17). Poe certainly admired Simms as a poet and the appropriation of his poem indicates an identification with Simms's part of the poetic soul, which is in its essence always original. As an effect of the struggle with dual identity in the sphere of the suppositious Lacanian real and reality, it is known that Poe in composing his poetry sometimes resorted to purloining ideas or phrases as a welcome addition to his approximations of sublime beauty. In this view Poe was paying Simms an indirect compliment of the soul by copying the poem to Louise Hunter almost verbatim. For Poe plagiary only becomes a vice when

the plagiarist prides himself on the object purloined, by copying it and publishing it under his own name. Purloining is no theft like a pick-pocket, but a much nobler word for a compromise between a plagiarist (“a thief of letters”) of a brother poet and his conscience. Yet there is always a darker side for Poe which does not permit itself to be read because the moral appearances of identity cannot exist without other people judging them from the inside out. Simms’s poetics thus become only a part of Poe’s soul, which was much bigger and more unfathomable.

The question of whether the poem was chosen aptly to commemorate Virginia Poe’s death is, really, a moot one. When we disregard the date of February 14th (which could be post-dated), if Poe was commissioned to write a valentine, the task must have been given in a timely manner, probably after the first notices in the newspapers that the little Poe family was starving, just before Christmas 1846. On the other hand, if the poem was written between Virginia’s death, on January 30th, and Valentine’s Day, the connection with Simms’s subject would have been unmistakable. We are inclined to the first idea, while we see shades of Virginia hovering over the true valentine to Mrs. Shew. For this sort of work about the death of a beautiful woman, Poe did not need to pick the cherries from his neighbor’s tree.

As an anomaly in Poe’s canon the poem’s place must be reconsidered and the indebtedness to Simms must be recorded. Because of the changing identity from lay to valentine, the omission of the first stanza, the missing line about flying friends, and the mystic status of the recipient, “To Miss Louise Olivia Hunter,” is also a metaphysical conundrum, worthy of the Transcendentalists of Poe’s time. In the case of Poe, metaphysics equals the psyche in its darker guise. Mystification was an intentional part of the valentine genre. With Poe it was a natural outlet of the idiosyncrasies of his mind, apparent in all his work, even in the way he used other people’s texts. The male valentine poet entertained his sweetheart by quizzing her with acrostics, puns, initials, and riddles, without directly disclosing his name. But Louise was no sweetheart, nor was the angelic Mrs. Shew. Poe had to resort to another vein of poetry, composed by a congenial soul. It seems that Poe quizzed Louise unintentionally with this special kind of heavy-handed, semi-anonymity that approaches the so-called vinegar valentine.⁴⁹ In reality it discloses a struggle within his own doubled conscience, always engaged with life, death, and the ebb and flow of willpower.

Notes

¹ Special thanks to Jeffrey A. Savoye, secretary-treasurer of the Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore, for his suggestions and support — both equally valuable.

² The text has recently been set to music; this dreamlike song can be accessed on YouTube

³ *New York Times* (14 & 21 February 1932). The discovery must have been fairly recent (“the newly discovered poem”) in New York City (“Valentine of Edgar Allan Poe found here”), but does not exclude a somewhat earlier time (“research indicates,” “to date the identity of the friend... has not been determined”). [My italics] The facts identifying Hunter are very superficial and were never supplemented.

⁴ Percy Flage, postscript in the *Wellington Evening Post* 113.74 (29 March 1932): 6: "LITERARY RELIC. — Exclusive to our literati. Tipsters, bar-tenders, billiards-makers, high-powered, salesmen, and wild cat company promoters are warned off. Over in New York someone has discovered a valentine by Edgar Allan Poe, sent to a Miss Louise Olivia Hunter, and never before published. It is dated 14th February, 1847, and, written on Victorian valentine paper, with a lace pattern border. Here are the lines [...]. The poem reflects the tragedy which Poe had just experienced. Sixteen days before it was written, Poe's wife had died. This loss, and his subsequent long illness, left him a shattered man, and the morbid state of his mind was not assisted by the fact that the poet's libel suit against 'The Mirror' was pending. So far as is known, only one other valentine was written by Poe—the one indited to Mrs. Osgood in 1846." This item was lifted almost verbatim from the *Times* item of February 14th.

⁵ A disappointing 1935 article by Sydney R. McLean never proved germinal, but did provide a better black and white facsimile of the document than the first, published in the *New York Times* newspaper. The manuscript was listed in the auction of Hogan's collection, January 24, 1945, item 563. According to *American Book-Prices Current*, it was sold for \$3,900. The buyer was almost certainly William H. Koester (1888-1964). (The entry in Hogan's catalogue gives the full text of the poem and quotes from McLean's article, but offers no new information.) Koester's collection was transferred in 1966 to the University of Texas. The original is kept by the University of Texas at Austin, in the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, Edgar Allan Poe Collection, Subseries A, Container 1.14. A digitalized copy is publicly available on the internet (see illustration, page 18).

⁶ It is described as a single sheet of ornately bordered paper, measuring 7 15/16 inches wide by 9 13/16 inches high. The paper is watermarked "J WHATMAN 1845." It is mostly white, although there is blue in the background of the ornate border, which imitates lace-work.

⁷ Source: Whatman Ltd, 2007-2009. For instance, the English botanists Anne Dixon and Anna Atkins used the paper in the 1850s for a photographic printing of their plant specimens and the famous bird prints of John J. Audubon appeared in London on the same expensive paper.

⁸ Many dealers bought Cossey's forgeries because they admired his skill, wanted to give him a small sum to get by, or to get the material off the market. The way Rosenbach described the poem in 1933 does not indicate that he had had dealings with Cossey on this score. About Cossey, see Hamilton.

⁹ Both versions of her first name occur. She is not to be confused with one Louisa or Eliza M. Hunter, purportedly a younger niece of Charles Ellis, business partner of Poe's non-official foster-father John Allan. To her, Poe allegedly addressed the juvenile poem "Rise, infernal spirits" (sometimes issued with the invented titles "Vital Stream" and "Lines to Louisa"). This poem is no longer accepted as an original, but as a crudely quilled copy from Thomas Skinner Surr's *George Barnwell* (1798) in which a murdered character is called Louisa.

¹⁰ Louise was the youngest daughter of Jacob Hunter (1791-1875), from a family which gave its name to Hunter's Point, Queens. Jacob was a veteran of the War of 1812 and a well-respected New York businessman with "excellent financial abilities" and a nose for real estate in the vicinity of the future Long Island City. Her mother was an Englishwoman, Charlotte Lahy (1795-1865). Jacob was obviously a man with the proper means to give his daughters a fitting education for "accomplishment" of talents and things practical, though he is not listed among New York's richest in 1844: see Beach. Louise resided in 1882 in "the old family mansion in 29th Street, purchased by her father" around 1855. See Munsell (265-268). Around 1896 she moved from Midtown to Uptown Manhattan, where she died.

¹¹ The other was the neat but "quiet" (as in Quietist) Bostonian critic Henry T. Tuckerman, who had an eye for poetry, but was not liked much by Poe; Rufus Wilmot Griswold had dodged the ceremony

and Philadelphian Joseph Snodgrass had himself excused. Also Dr. John W. Francis, who was later to diagnose Poe with a potentially lethal heart disease, was present among the learned company on the platform.

¹² We know all this thanks to the reminiscences of the rector of the institute, Dr. Charles West, and the reporter for the *New-York Mirror*, who, a week later, wrote a lengthy article about the occasion. Historian Hervey Allen was the first who took the trouble to read the article, but omitted to mention the name of the winner of the poetry prize composition (657-658).

¹³ Though sometimes considered a promising writer in the late 1840s, she is, understandably, not mentioned in the updated editions of *Female Poets of America*, the anthology of Buchanan Read (1848 and 1855), neither in Griswold and Stoddard's anthology (1874), nor in Caroline May's (1848 and 1853); no novel or volume of poems has thus far surfaced in any American library. New York society lady Anne Lynch-Botta seemed to have forgotten her, and the eager prying ear and eye of the same circles, socialite Mrs. Elizabeth Oakes Smith, never wrote about her. There is no known correspondence between Poe and Louise. Also, Poe's few real friends from the forties, like Marie Louise Shew, constantly commuting between Fordham and the City, or Evert Duyckinck, who knew kith and kin of the literati, did not notice her.

¹⁴ The *New York Times* archive, online. Elisabeth C. Marston noticed in 1932 that Louise had died in 1899, which is an excusable error after such a long lapse of time. Louise must have remained unmarried, because in later life she only appears under her maiden's name. In her old age she was a striking appearance in the fashionable resort of Lake Placid with her white cat Tiger Lily on a leash and her upper Manhattan house filled with literary memorabilia. Apparently, she was a private teacher. Her estate was probated on 27 Oct. 1898 for the appraiser's fee of \$40. Source: *Report of the special committee of the assembly to investigate the surrogates' court and office of the County of New York*. New York and Albany (1899): 733. Sources from the years 1876 tot 1889 in the *Real Estate Record and Builder's Guide* (New York) indicate that Louise and her brothers were executors of their father's will, and managed his real estate as trustees.

¹⁵ *New York Times* (21 Feb. 1932), letter from Elisabeth Marston, whose mother was related to Louise Hunter.

¹⁶ Apart from Osgood and Poe, Hunter quotes from an array of other writers. In her letter is a quote from *The President's Daughters*, a novel by the popular Swedish novelist Fredrika Bremer, originally published in 1834, translated in English in 1843 (Boston: James Munroe & Co). Louise had also been impressed by N.P. Willis's long poem "Melanie," using some lines as a motto to her poem "The Solitary." *Columbian Magazine* (Feb. 1848): 91. Amelia Welby's graveyard and tombstone-poetry in "The First Death of the Household" was used in the short story "The Stepmother." *Columbian Magazine* (Oct. 1848): 444-449; in other stories Louise used quotes from Thomas Moore, William Cowper, and Letitia E. Langdon — all conventional influences for a young romantic girl.

¹⁷ According to an announcement in *The Texas Democrat* of 17 Feb. 1849, Louise had also contributed, or engaged to contribute, to *The American Metropolitan* (New York) of Israel Post, in which Poe, Mrs. Osgood and Mrs. Whitman all published. Poe was in contact both with the proprietor and the editor in 1849. This sloppy magazine barely survived two issues.

¹⁸ In the 1890s she was still teaching "The Raven" at her house; so Poe must have made a lasting impression.

¹⁹ The poem appeared in New York's *The Columbian Magazine* 9 (Mar. 1848): 144. Incidentally this was the same copy in which Poe's second valentine, to Mrs. Shew, appeared.

²⁰ Elizabeth Marston wrote in 1932: “She knew and loved Frances Osgood, of whom I often heard her speak.”

²¹ Osgood herself was also fond of valentines and wrote a short story about the subject: “Valentine’s Day. Or a Lover’s Reminiscences.” *Graham’s Magazine* 25 (July 1844): 23-25. The male lover first sends an original valentine, in a distorted handwriting, and after the marriage of his beloved to a richer man he sends a copy from a popular song of Thomas Moore about pure, angelic love, meant as a reproach.

²² On 3 Mar. 1849, while her husband was away, Osgood was to write a poem with the concealed name of her admirer, Rufus W. Griswold (“whose being is to mine a star”), artfully woven with hers in a double acrostic. See Griswold (218).

²³ Osgood knew where to find Poe, who had moved to the Turtle Bay area or, temporarily, back to the Brennan Farm in Manhattan. On one occasion she forwarded fan mail to him, an April 1846 request from Mary Neal, the teenage daughter of John Neal, for a lock of Poe’s hair and an autograph. These were accompanied by Poe’s rehashed poem “To Elizabeth,” not very original, but certainly his own work.

²⁴ This libel suit lasted from July 1846 to February 1847. Poe felt his good name was defamed in the columns of the *New York Mirror*, at the instigation of publisher Hiram Fuller and Poe’s former colleague-turned-foe T.D. English, but the real causes of his defamation were some scathing remarks in the *Literati*-series and his ungentlemanly behavior toward Elizabeth F. Ellet and Frances Osgood, both married ladies, concerning an exchange of alleged love letters. Poe won the case, but at considerable damage to his reputation. See Moss.

²⁵ Text available at <http://libarts.wsu.edu/english/Journals/PoeStudies/PSDeJong.html>. Abstract consulted 2 Aug. 2010. In DeJong’s article the years are confounded. Clearly, Poe’s valentine to Frances dates from 1846, not 1847, so Osgood’s 1847 poem cannot be a reaction to an acrostic valentine Poe addressed to her a year earlier. Instead, this Osgood ‘valentine’ (though we are not sure of the genre) rings like a final ‘Dear John’ letter with the same borderline overtones with which Helen Whitman was to compose her goodbye verses a couple of years later. Obviously, the woman (“that being”) in Osgood’s poem, who was blessed and damned ([may] “She become all I could but Pray to be”) for her cares, was indeed Marie Louise Shew, not Louise Hunter. Poe confounded things himself, too. The acrostic to Osgood was somewhat altered in 1848, dated Valentine’s Eve, 1848, but was not published; next year the same poem appeared in *Sartain’s Union Magazine* and *The Flag of Our Union*, dated Valentine’s Eve, 1849. Both magazines thought they had received an original contribution, for which they paid. Obviously, Poe wanted to make the most out of his poem.

²⁶ Caroline Kirkland’s most recent biography is Jana A. Bouma, *Caroline M. Kirkland: A Literary Life*, Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 2000, which could not be consulted. Dr. Bouma, however, writes in a personal e-mail, “It is entirely possible that Kirkland was acquainted with Hunter” and acknowledges Kirkland’s connection with Poe, though not as personal friends.

²⁷ See Nerber (9). Many of these friends, including Kirkland herself, can also be labeled as “Putnam Authors.”

²⁸ See Wyman (123-24).

²⁹ By 1849, Valentine’s Day was popular enough to be hailed as something like “a national holiday,” for the young to brave their sweethearts and for the elder generation to reflect on past loved ones

and cheer new ones. Phrase from J.R. Chandler, "St. Valentine's Day." *Graham's Magazine* 34.2 (February 1849): 110-12.

³⁰ To date, there are no specialized literary or cultural studies on Valentine's Day. The year 1847 proved crucial in the commercializing of the feast. An excellent introduction is made by Leigh Eric Schmidt, "The Fashioning of a Modern Holiday: St. Valentine's Day, 1840-1870." *Winterthur Portfolio* 28.4 (Winter 1993): 209-45.

³¹ In a letter to Poe-biographer Ingram she clearly states "They were both Valentines." In recent correspondence with historian Patricia C. Cohen, University of California at Santa Barbara, the author has uncovered that Poe also copied an original valentine poem from Mrs. Shew's friend John Henry Hopkins, earlier ascribed to health-reformer Mary S. Gove. This was a personal favor at the request of Mrs. Shew herself, but the year is very likely 1848. Hopkins published this poem decades later, after the death of Mrs. Shew (then Mrs. Houghton).

³² In the original poem, the angelic Marie Louise is in the dreamy region of ultimate bliss, the poet stands at the threshold and glimpses her everywhere but is impotent, as a mere mortal, to utter her name. This state, frequent in Poe's works, has been interpreted as an experience of the "Lacanian real," after the French psychiatrist Jacques Lacan, much like the voiceless soul of Louise Hunter after visiting Frances Osgood, as described in her only extant letter. See Lacan's seminars, esp. *Book II: The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis*. Ed. Jacques-Alain Miller. New York: Norton, 1988.

³³ And indeed, they were never recognized as such, because the poem was never published in Poe's lifetime, contrary to the other known, original valentines he wrote. This, by itself, is a strong argument in favor of an assignment, paid by the initiator. Simms never encountered one of his lays in print as "composed" by Poe.

³⁴ For a new evaluation of Simms as a poet (a neglected subject), see Matthew C. Brennan's monograph, *The Poet's Holy Craft: William Gilmore Simms and Romantic Verse Tradition*, Columbia, SC: U of South Carolina P, 2010, which concentrates on the influence of British Romanticism; also see the special issue of *The Simms Review* for Summer/ Winter 2009. Of major importance is James E. Kibler's revised edition of and introduction to the *Selected Poems of William Gilmore Simms*, Columbia, SC: U of South Carolina P, 2010. See also *The Poetry of William Gilmore Simms, an Introduction and Bibliography*. Ed. James E. Kibler, Jr. Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Co., 1979.

³⁵ In 1834, sporting enthusiast Henry William Herbert ("Frank Forester") was the editor "for the proprietors." The only connection between Poe and the *American Monthly Magazine* was the publication of the short story "Von Jung, the Mystific" in June 1837 when he was temporarily living in New York City. Chances are slim that he was a reader of the magazine as early as 1834.

³⁶ The signification of the Lamia-figure is still present in Simms's later Gothic potboiler "The Idyll of the Dream" (unpublished, written 1868). See the Jungian approach of Simms's Gothics in Matthew C. Brennan's "Simms's Gothic Revival in 'The Idyll of the Dream: A Psychological Tale,'" *The Simms Review* 18.1-2 (Summer/Winter 2010): 45-53, in which this ancient female figure is considered psychologically rooted in the minds of Keats, Coleridge (in "Christabel"), and Simms.

³⁷ No letters from Poe to Hunter are known. A revelation of Poe as the author, by Mrs. Kirkland, or Osgood, would have come as a surprise to Louise.

³⁸ The output of studies on Poe and Simms is on the increase. See Benjamin F. Fisher and Alvin Turner, *Trent and Guilds in the Works Cited*. Also, see the introduction by James E. Kibler (1996) which claims that the vilification of Poe in and after 1845 seems to have been the impetus for Simms

to commence his project of *The Poetry and the Practical* in 1850, probably inspired by Poe's newly published lecture "The Poetic Principle." A comparative study is Molly Boyd's "'The Fall of the House of Usher,' Simms's *Castle Dismal*, and *The Scarlet Letter*: Literary Connections." *Studies in the Novel* 35.2 (Summer 2003): 231-41. A part of the correspondence between Simms and Poe is lost. For Simms, Duyckinck was the main informant on Poe's doings in Gotham: see Simms, *Letters* 2: 1845-1849, *passim*.

³⁹ Simms wrote in July 1846 that he saw Poe "on two or three occasions and have enjoyed a good opportunity of examining him carefully," which should indicate as many visits to Fordham. However, Simms's only extant letter to Poe reveals that he never met Virginia Poe, which indicates that he had met her husband somewhere in the city, not in Fordham, around the first week of July. Apparently Simms also received a "report" about Poe's "brain fever" (Simms, *Letters* 2: 174n).

⁴⁰ Simms, *Letters* 2: 126. Letter to Duyckinck, 22 Dec. 1845. According to Simms, the "verse was a peculiar one, and the strain a melancholy one." This was decidedly a new work Simms wanted to publish for the first time, not the already twice published poem that Poe would use.

⁴¹ See *US Magazine* and Poe (*Brevities*: 287-88).

⁴² Apart from the Simms context, we may also stress one of Poe's most outspoken condemnations of plagiarism in a *Broadway Journal* editorial of 20 Sep. 1845. In it Poe condemns the alleged plagiarism by John Greenleaf Whittier of a striking poetical description of the death and mourning of a beautiful girl, which is of course Poe's major poetic topic. See G.R. Thompson, ed. *Edgar Allan Poe: Essays and Reviews*. New York: Library of America, 1984: 1067-69.

⁴³ In the psychology of plagiarism, the plagiarist (though an ambiguous term) has been interpreted as "eiconic" behavior: the perception of the Self, as internally influenced, is opposed to the image we think others have of us, thus an eicon externally influenced. We falsify to fit the moment. "Representations and utterances may be outright distortions, falsifications or fabrications of experience. Other representations or utterances may be made only to enhance the moment or the context." Quote from Felipe de Ortega y Garca, "Lies Like Truth: Discourse Issues in Language." *Plagiarism* 1 (2006). An interesting and recent study of the relation of literary plagiarism and intertextuality, with some attention to Poe, is the dissertation of Stephan Fadinger, "Literaturplagiat und Intertextualität," University of Vienna (Austria), 2008.

⁴⁴ Simms, "Skeleton Essays." *Snowden's Ladies' Companion* 15 (July 1841):109. Fisher (14-15) and Nakamura (90-91) notice the similarity of those poetical ideas between Simms and Poe meant to penetrate a soul. According to Simms, characterizing the Greek playwright Aeschylus, poetry is musically, beautifully "winged Thought... founded upon close observation of man and nature, the moral and physical world; delivered with adequate emphasis, from the lips of art, and supported by Imagination which constitutes its wings" (Simms, *Letters* 4: 616). Simms harbored the sustained idea that poetry has to soar like an eagle, but the idea behind it should not be too mystical and with its reason and sense work for the good of the unselfish part of mankind.

⁴⁵ From his side, Poe remained a supporter of Simms as a compatriot, in his article "Tale Writing-Nathaniel Hawthorne." *Godey's* (Nov. 1847): 254 and still three years after Simms was downplayed by Cornelius Felton in the October 1846 *North American Review*. "Marginalia." *Southern Literary Messenger*. 15.4 (Apr. 1849): 22: "The fact is, some person should write, at once, a Magazine paper exposing-- ruthlessly exposing, the *dessous de cartes* of our literary affairs. He should show how and why it is that ubiquitous quack in letters can always 'succeed,' while *genius*, (which implies self-respect with a scorn of creeping and crawling,) must inevitably succumb. He should point out the 'easy arts' by which any one, base enough to do it, can get himself placed at the very head of American Letters by an article in that magnanimous Journal, 'The -- Review.' He should explain,

too, how readily the same work can be induced (in the case of Simms,) to vilify personally, any one not a Northerner, for a trifling "consideration." In fact, our criticism needs a thorough regeneration, *and must have it.*"

⁴⁶ This letter has not been located.

⁴⁷ Simms and Griswold were on friendly terms. As an aside, we mention that both spent a day on Sullivan's Island in South Carolina (the location of Poe's "Gold-Bug"). The day led to Simms's *Father Abbot, or, The Home Tourist; a Medley* (Charleston, 1849).

⁴⁸ Eveleth wrote defenses of Poe as a critic and a poet in two anonymous letters to the publisher (Louis Godey). Incidentally, the sketch of Ellet was directly followed by the first installment of Simms's "Maize in Milk." For the background of her major work, see *The Women of the American Revolution* (1848-50) and for the Simms connection, Scott E. Casper's *Constructing American Lives: Biography and Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*. U of North Carolina P, 1999: 158-78.

⁴⁹ One such vinegar valentine proved deadly on the same Valentine's Day 1847, according to a footnote to a short story in the *Union Magazine*: a Mary Marlowe from New York committed suicide after receiving a Dear Mary letter on the Saint's day from someone who pretended to be her true lover, signing "your Valentine"; three days later the real lover came back only to find his beloved already buried. Charles Lanman. "The Fatal Valentine." *Union Magazine* 2 (June 1848): 282-83. It remains, however, undecided if it is an "ower true tale" or a tall tale.

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Appendix

Collation of texts

- A “Song” in *American Monthly Magazine* (New York) vol. 3, no. 5 (1 July 1834), p. 326;
 B “There are Dreams of Bowers” in *The Southern Literary Messenger* (Richmond, Va.), vol. 6, no. 1 (January 1840), p. 36, numbered as poem no. IX of ‘Early Lays’;
 C “There Are Dreams of Bowers” in *Aretyos; or, Songs of the South* (Charleston: John Russell, 1846), pp. 88-89;
 D “I Have Had Dreams” in the enlarged edition *Aretyos; or, Songs and Ballads of the South, with Other Poems* (Charleston and New York: Russell & Jones, 1860), pp. 94-95. Text D has so many changes that it can be considered as virtually a new poem.

[C] There Are Dreams of Bowers

To Miss Louise Olivia Hunter

[I.]^a

There are dreams of bowers,
 Beautiful and blest,
 Filled with sweetest^b flowers,
 That disturb my rest;
 5 And^c with rapture smiling,
^dThey are still beguiling,^d
^eThough all stand reviling,—^e
 My worn^f and wayward breast.

II.

10 Though I turn, I fly not —
 I may not depart;^g
 I would try, but try not,
 To release my heart:
 And my hopes are dying,^h
 And my friends are flying,ⁱ
 15 While,^j on dreams relying,^k
 I am spell’d^l by art.

Though I turn, I fly not —
 I cannot depart;
 I would try, but try not
 To release my heart.
 And my hopes are dying

While on dreams relying,
 I am spelled by art.

III.

Thus,^m the bright snakeⁿ coiling,^o
 ‘Neath the forest-tree,^p
 Wins the ^qbird, beguiling,^q
 20 To come down and see:^r
 Like that bird^s the lover
 Round his fate will hover,
 ‘Till^t the blow is over,^u
 And he sinks^v like me.

Thus the bright snake coiling
 Neath the forest tree
 Wins the bird, beguiling,
 To come down and see:
 Like that bird the lover
 Round his fate will hover
 Till the blow is over
 And he sinks—like me.

[D] I have had dreams

I.

I have had dreams of bowers,
Far off, beautiful, bright and blest,
Fill'd with rich fruits and the sweetest flowers,
That delight, but disturb my rest!

- 5 Ever with rapture smiling,
They spread themselves, wooing and wiling,
To very madness beguiling,
The passions that fill my breast.

II.

Fain would I fly, but I fly not –

- 10 I have no strength to depart:
I would try, but I try not,
To drive that spells from my heart.
And my hopes of ambition are dying,
And my promise of fortune is flying,
15 Still on these visions relying,
I am spelled by the cruellest art!

III.

Thus the bright serpent lies coiling,
Watching the forest tree,
While the bird, won down by his wil[l]ing,

- 20 Flutters in vain to flee!
Like that fated bird, the lover
Round his danger will hover,
Till fetter'd by Fate, the rover
Droops sad to his destiny!

Appendix Notes

^a Stanzas not numbered (A, B); first stanza not numbered, an omission by the printer (C)

^b richest (A)

^c And, (A)

^d ...^d Though all stand reviling, (A); They are still beguiling – (B)

^e ...^e They are still beguiling (A); Though all stand reviling (B)

^f wan (A)

^g depart; – (A, B)

^h flying, (A)

ⁱ sighing (A)

^j Still (A)

^k relying – (A)

^l bound (A)

^m Thus (A)

ⁿ snake, (A)

^o coiling (A, B)

^p forest tree, (A)

^q ...^q bird with wiling, (A, B)

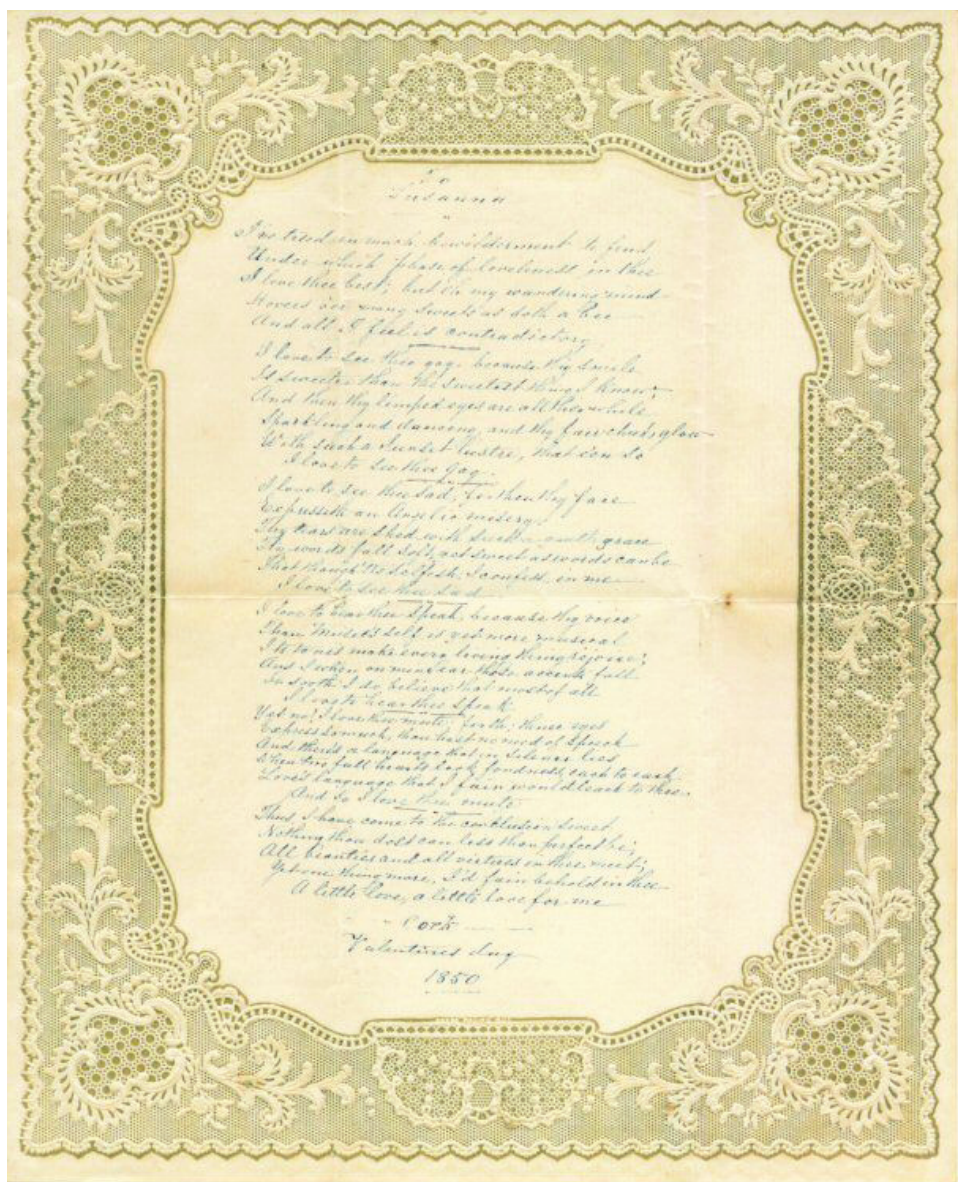
^r see. (A)

^s bird, (A, B)

^t Till (A)

^u over, – (A)

^v falls (A); dies (B)



Handwritten Valentine poem "To Susanna," Cork, Ireland, dated Valentine's Day, 1850. Source: Wikimedia Commons, in file: Valentine Cork 1850.jpg [public domain.]

Nature as Character in Simms's Short Fiction

Kevin Collins

In her landmark combination of ecological and feminist criticism of literature, *The Lay of the Land*, Annette Kolodny ably demonstrates the ways that male American writers in general — and William Gilmore Simms in particular — have envisioned the American landscape as a woman: as a virgin to be despoiled for pleasure, as a wife to be altered into a state of productivity, as a mother from whom nourishment can be derived. Published in 1975, at the peak of “second-wave feminism,” *The Lay of the Land* cites several examples of Simms’s tendency in his Revolutionary Romances, simultaneously, to personify the environment and to objectify women by repeatedly conflating the two. Among the many examples she cites, Kolodny specifies that a campsite in *The Partisan* suggests “an almost womb-like ambience, ‘deeply embowered,’ ‘girdled...in’ by ‘thick forest walls’ or by ‘woods too impenetrably dense’” (117). She also points out that Simms’s tendency to present nature as a female human is not strictly limited to the landscape, citing Simms’s description of a fish from *The Forayers*: “the blue-cat of the Edisto, one of the nicest fish that swims, tender as young love, white as maiden purity, delicate as a dream of innocence” (qtd. in Kolodny 117). In these and scores of other examples, Kolodny presents Simms’s view of the relationship between (male) characters and their environments as fairly simple, as comparable to the relationship between victimizer and victim, not radically different from the class struggle in the Marxist dialectic.

Feminist critical thought, including eco-feminism, has undergone radical changes in the decades following the publication of *The Lay of the Land*, none more significant than the rise of “third-wave feminism,” a movement that is difficult to define fully but that is marked less by a dismissal of the Marxist dialectic than by the recognition of its complications. Many third-wave feminist critics, for example, wrestle with the notion of essentialism, the idea that there is such a thing as a “feminine nature.” As Niamh Moore points out, “Trenchant critics see eco-feminism as merely reproducing normative connections between women and nature, such as that women’s nature is to nurture, which feminists have long been working hard to challenge” (228). Other aspects of third-wave feminism are equally troubling: if gender equity is the non-negotiable goal, and if men routinely use traditional gender dynamics to their advantage, are women not permitted—perhaps required—to employ those same traditional dynamics to their own advantage? Many twenty-first century professional women say yes, selecting an outfit just a degree more provocative than it has to be for an important meeting, employing a tactical crying jag when it serves a purpose. These possibilities raise a question as disturbing as any produced by third-wave feminism: is “tactical femininity” like this, self-interested

collusion in seemingly oppressive relationships, a phenomenon that appeared only in the 1990s? Or have women always acted in their self-interest, resisting or cooperating with oppressive social traditions depending on the specific circumstances they are facing?

The development of this complicated third-wave feminism has the potential greatly to enrich Annette Kolodny's essentially Marxian metaphor comparing oppressed nature to oppressed women, for if Simms and other American authors consistently portrayed this metaphor in their fiction, Kolodny's study is necessarily incomplete without an examination of the degree to which Simms's nature/woman did what women have always done: exercise volition in their self-interest. In several of the stories collected in *The Wigwam and the Cabin*, Simms presents aspects of his landscapes as volitional; in two of these stories, it is a decision seemingly taken by the landscape itself that determines the resolution of the story's central conflict. The natural settings of at least three other stories demonstrate a volition that — while less central to the outcome of each tale — argues that the author intended some of his landscapes to exercise a sort of will that is most often limited to human characters. In each case, nature takes sides in favor of the human characters who are most firmly committed to the land and — importantly — to the ideals and principles that Simms has identified as typically American.

The foremost example of the volitional force of nature to be found in *The Wigwam and the Cabin* appears in "Lucas de Ayllon," a story (Simms labels it a "nouvellette") loosely based on Spain's abortive attempt to colonize the Carolinas in the sixteenth century. As in most of Simms's historical fiction, the central conflict in the story is between Americans — people who love the land — and a militarily superior force of outsiders who seek nothing but plunder from the land. In this story, the Americans are the Carolina Indians, symbolized by their proud queen, Combahee, and the outsiders are the Spaniards, symbolized by their captain, Lucas de Ayllon.

The Spanish arrive on the Carolina coast seeking not to add to the life force of the region, but to subtract from it. Having worked to death most of their Haitian slaves, they plan to replenish their labor force by transplanting to Haiti the hardier Carolina Indians. Ignorant of De Ayllon's malign intent, the Indians curiously paddle out to greet the huge ships that approach their coast. Though Combahee is suspicious of the Spaniards, her companions — especially her husband, the prince, Chiquola — convince her to join the tribe's leaders on the ship, where the Spanish offer seeming-friendship, token gifts, and liquor. Though Combahee is interested in none of these, her companions accept all three, and they are enfeebled by both the whiskey and the false friendship of the strangers. After some hours of revelry in the hold of the ship, the Spanish drop their pretense and lock down the hold. Most of the captives are too drunk to help themselves, but Combahee is both small enough and quick-witted enough to jump out the only open porthole into the sea, where her tribesmen help her into a canoe.

In the action thus far described, the first third of the story, Simms already begins to equate the desires of the Indians with the desires of natural forces by a series of comparisons. When the Spanish wrestle Chiquola to the deck, the prince resists with "a manful courage, which, equally with their forests, was the inheritance of the American Indians" (352). Startled by the sudden attack despite her skepticism, Combahee too dis-

plays the characteristics of natural forces: “If her eye betrayed the startled apprehension of the fawn of her native forests, it equally expressed the fierce indignation which flames in that of their tameless eagle” (353). However comparable the Indian protagonists may be to the forces of nature in the first part of the story, though, nature’s will is not yet made plain.

The second part of the story focuses on the captive Chiquola. Whereas his companions seem to accept their subjugation, drinking more and offering no resistance, the prince is defiant. The Spanish display him to Combahee and her cohort hoping to inspire an attack that will result in a greater haul of slaves. Chiquola gestures to his people, imploring one of them to end his captivity by ending his life with a well-placed arrow. The Indians do launch arrows from their canoes—arrows “formed from the long canes of the adjacent swamps,” “feathered with plumes from the eagle or the stork” and “headed with triangular barbs of flint” (354-55)—but their intended targets are the Spanish sailors. Their righteous fury, their weapons drawn from the bounties of nature, and their skillful aim, though, are no match for the superior technology of the Spaniards: They do strike their targets—including the breast of De Ayllon himself—but his impermeable armor makes the arrows ineffective. The Spanish make sail and head out to the open sea. There, at his first opportunity, Chiquola dives into the sea, killing himself.

To the degree that it can be affected by human agency, the story’s central conflict is essentially resolved at the end of part two: because of their superior technology, the base Spaniards have triumphed over the noble Indians. It is here, though, that nature herself exercises a volition that alters the outcome of the story.

Day after day, Combahee sits at the seashore mourning her husband. Her tribe urges her to resume her life, and her father even selects a new husband for her, but the queen insists on maintaining her vigil until a time that Simms expresses in terms that would mean nothing to sixteenth-century Carolina Indians: September 23rd. At the moment of the autumnal equinox — a moment at which the seaside Indians would ordinarily move inland to escape the greatest of nature’s furies, the hurricane — Combahee’s band lingers by the shore in deference to her loss.

“It was the eve of the 23d of September” — the day of the equinox — that nature took a hand (374). The fiercest hurricane in the memory of the tribe’s elders begins to blow, and in a coincidence that might strain credulity — were it a mere coincidence—De Ayllon’s diminished fleet is blown back to the very site of its earlier assault upon and humiliation of the Indians. Nature acts not only to return the marauders to the scene of their crime, but also to offset the Spanish technological advantage that had encouraged them in their depredations. The Indians swarm upon the crippled, grounded vessels, execute the crews with arrows, but save De Ayllon for the stake, where — Combahee promises in a prayer to her dead husband — the burning bones of his enemy will warm his spirit (379).

Simms establishes in “Lucas De Ayllon” a bond between the Indian characters and their environment that clearly does not exist between that environment and the Spaniards. And when the two races come into conflict, the Indians themselves are powerless against the superior technology of their enemies, so their own volition is at least

somewhat irrelevant to the resolution of the story's central conflict. If there is a force of will that affects the outcome of the story, it arises from the hurricane itself, an outgrowth of the natural environment, acting in behalf of the shepherds of that environment.

In a few discrete passages of *The Lay of the Land*, Kolodny suggests the possibility of a sort of volition in Simms's nature-woman. The most notable of these is a passage from *The Forayers* in which Captain St. Julian, escorting Bertha Travis and her mother through the forest, gives the names of the various flowers lining their path and follows the list immediately with a warning about snakes: "There is a dragon that always watches over beauty" (484-85). As Kolodny interprets it, this passage suggests the will of the earth itself: "In terms of the natural world protecting its precincts against the incursions of humans, the snake manifests the mythic power of the Great Mother protecting her own lovely and vulnerable femininity" (121). At best, Kolodny's analysis posits a nature that is willful, but one that is driven by only the basest of instincts and that is universally hostile to human inclusions. Substantial evidence from "Lucas de Ayllon," however, suggests both that nature makes conscious choices—perhaps even reasoned choices—and that she makes them with the intention of assisting some human characters at the expense of others.

The theme of volitional forces in nature is also a significant part of another story from the collection, "The Arm-Chair of Tustenuggee." This story is comparable to "Lucas De Ayllon" in that it is based upon Simms's understandings of the spiritual beliefs of Southeastern Indians, but it is very different in that — instead of treating historical events — it takes a comical look at interpersonal relations that perhaps transcend ethnic identities. Even in this comical context, though, it is interesting that the will of natural forces — the *choices* nature makes — work to the benefit of the characters whose attributes are most in harmony with the attributes of the land itself.

The heroes of the story are Conattee and Selonee, two Catawbas whose primary joy in life is pursuing together their professions as hunters, living upon the land free of societal interference, yet — paradoxically — serving an important social function by keeping full the larders of the tribe with the fruits of their expeditions. While their effectiveness as hunters is legendary, they are careful to pay respect to the land, even to their prey. All in the tribe sing the praises of the great hunters, and eligible women dream of romantic attachments to either of them. But while these dreams of romance might be appropriate in the case of Selonee, Conattee is a married man.

Simms describes Macourah, Conattee's wife, as "a greater scold than Xantippe" (94), the wife of Socrates whose husband's accomplishments were never great enough to satisfy her. Macourah's nagging cows not only Conattee, but even passers-by who overhear her abuse of the great hunter. The young girls of the village regularly mark the return of Conattee from his hunts by the onset of Macourah's shrewish nagging. To top it off, Macourah is "quite as ugly as the one-eyed squaw of Tustenuggee" (94), a reference to the demon-god of the story's title and a foreshadowing of the harridan's eventual fate. Even Macourah's few peaceful moments are somewhat painful to Conattee: she holds her tongue — indeed, behaves sweetly — only in the presence of Selonee, making clear to her husband that she would prefer to be married to his friend. Conattee does not blame

Selonee for this insult — the latter makes plain that he does not return Macourah's warm feelings; indeed, this odd situation only strengthens the bonds of the hunters' friendship: Conattee not only derives joy from his gambols in the wild with Selonee, but Selonee's presence is Conattee's only protection from his wife's attacks at home.

The unhappy marriage between Conattee and Macourah amounts to the central conflict of the story, and it is toward the resolution of this conflict that nature exerts its volition to the benefit of the open and natural hunters and the detriment of the unpleasant shrew. In this case, though, the force of nature that exercises its will is not a threatening hurricane, but an oddly-shaped tree trunk, lined with cushions of moss, whose configuration invites weary travelers to sit upon it to rest.

On one of their adventures, the hunters encounter first one wolf, then another. Conattee injures the first, and — stripping off his own clothes — he pursues it into a river. Selonee meanwhile pursues the second wolf, returning hours later, with the pelt, to the point at which the pair had split up. Seeing that Conattee had not returned for his clothes, Selonee searches frantically for his friend, finally assuming the worst and heading back to his village with his friend's clothes and a tragic tale. Though many of his listeners are sympathetic, the village elders — and especially Macourah — refuse to believe that so great a hunter as Conattee could be done in by his prey. They conclude that Selonee killed his friend, and the devastated hunter is sentenced to die. But the Catawba tradition offers a reprieve, a fate that might be worse than mere death: Macourah can spare Selonee's life and take him to replace the husband she has lost. Nearly resigned to this terror, Selonee asks for and is granted one opportunity to locate his friend. He sets out on his quest, but Macourah — to ensure that he doesn't escape — follows him.

At this point of the story, Simms's readers know something about which all of the characters save Conattee himself are ignorant: the great hunter is not dead at all. He had pursued his prey for miles before he'd lost it, and, naked and weary, he sat down to rest on an inviting tree-trunk: the arm-chair of Tustenuggee. The bark of the magical tree had engirded him, and his substance had become the substance of the tree itself. There, Tustenuggee — the demon god — informed him that he would be trapped for eternity unless some other victim should sit down on the tree to release him by taking his place.

While this in itself certainly represents an act of will by a force of nature — the tree — that act is thus far inconsistent with my claim that nature acts on behalf of those closest to her: she seems to act to punish the hardy and happy hunter with strong connections to the earth, to punish even more grievously his partner, and to reward only the termagant. But the story continues, and the tree continues to work its will.

Selonee becomes aware that Macourah is tracking him, and his purpose becomes split: he continues his search for Conattee, but he also takes pains to shake off his pursuer. Macourah exerts great energy to keep her new victim in range, but her strength and her motivation are no match for those of Selonee, and — exhausted — she gives up her pursuit just as she comes to an oddly-shaped, moss-encrusted tree-trunk that invites her to sit. Within seconds, she is trapped by the bark of the tree, and Conattee is released. He is quickly reunited with Selonee, and they return to the village, even happier than they had been on their earlier returns.

It is notable that, while the primary natural force in the story is male (the god Tustennuggee), he seems to be affected in his decisions by a nameless female goddess, his one-eyed wife. When the shrew Macourah tires in her quest to recapture her husband, she announces its end with reference to the supernatural lady: “‘I can go no further,’ cried the woman — ‘a curse on Connattee, since in losing one I have lost both. I am too faint to follow. As for Selonee, may the one-eyed witch of Tustennuggee take him for her dog’” (110-111). She misinterprets the will of the goddess, though, and the act of sitting on the tree-trunk simultaneously entraps her and releases her husband.

As with the fortuitous hurricane in “Lucas De Ayllon,” the arm-chair of Tustennuggee can be interpreted as a sort of *deus ex machina*, a convenient device to resolve a story quickly, an alternative to the hard work necessary to bring about a plausible resolution to his conflicts. But together with the pronouncements in some of his non-fiction works, the consistency with which Simms imbues in his natural settings a decision-making agency argues for another interpretation: that the author presents in his short fiction a natural American environment that takes sides in conflicts between characters, favoring those who work with and within its laws, who respect its agency, its values, and its power. In “Americanism in Literature,” as he does elsewhere in his non-fiction works, Simms suggests — in the course of a discussion of a uniquely American literature — a blurring of the distinction between the identities of the inhabitants of a given region of the country and the identities of the regions themselves: “We are rejoiced to behold symptoms of this intellectual working, simultaneously, in the remote regions of the country; and flatter ourselves with the vision of a generous growth in art and letters, of which tokens begin to make themselves felt from the Aroostook to the Rio Bravo” (11). This commingling of the wills of the people and the land permeates much of his short fiction.

It is certainly ironic if a story like “The Arm-Chair of Tustennuggee” — one that is full of stale stereotypes about nagging wives and the freedom and joy implicit in their absence — works to extend the already admirable thesis of a consciously feminist scholar like Kolodny, yet there is plenty of evidence that it does. Nature itself, a specifically feminine nature, is not merely acted upon in the story, but she acts, specifically to assist one character who is attuned to her needs and her preferences, at the expense of another character who is not.

The “title character” of another story in *The Wigwam and the Cabin*, “The Giant’s Coffin,” is a hollow stone structure on the bank of a river. When a sympathetic character — the gentle and loving Leda Houston — takes refuge in the cave with her infant child, The Giant’s Coffin protects her from both the weather and from her insanely jealous Tory husband, John Houston, who seeks to murder her. When Leda flees the cave, though, and her place is taken by the villainous husband, the nature of The Giant’s Coffin changes radically, and the cave colludes with another willful aspect of the landscape — the river — to trap and drown the would-be murderer.

Nature discriminates in Simms’s fiction, and her desire to reward the innocent and punish the guilty often seems less an effort at retribution than at education: an effort to show the survivors the wisdom of virtue and the folly of vice. (As Matthew Brennan

points out in *The Poet's Holy Craft*, Simms often viewed nature in just this way in his poetry as well [86-87].)

The volitional nature of yet another title character, "The Lazy Crow," is more problematic, yet it is worth consideration here just the same. The problem with the crow is that, while it takes actions that seem to reflect human-like thought and will, it may be acting at the behest of other characters. As he did with Indian mythology in other stories, though, Simms attempts in "The Lazy Crow" to replicate the world view of recently arrived African American characters who see nature — no less than Classical cultures and perhaps most Christian sects have — as an expression of some personal will.

For weeks, the crow follows a slave, Scipio, after Scipio had shown accidental disrespect to Gullah Sam, a voodoo man who is a slave on a neighboring plantation. Though he is proud of his marksmanship, Scipio cannot shoot the crow, even at close range, and he soon becomes convinced that his tormentor is actually Gullah Sam in the form of the crow. Scipio becomes obsessed with the crow, and his obsession makes him physically ill. He pleads with his master to send for Methuselah, a voodoo man several counties away whose powers are greater than Sam's, and the indulgent master does as he is bidden. After some prayers, potions, a talisman, and — importantly — a discussion with Gullah Sam, Methuselah assures Scipio that his troubles with the crow are over. Still, when Scipio steps out into the fields the following day, the crow is there to torment him. This time, Scipio's shotgun brings down the bird. When he searches the field for the carcass, though, he finds only Gullah Sam, dazed and pock-marked, with the pattern of his wounds closely resembling a pattern made by bird-shot. Neither Sam nor the crow bothers Scipio again.

Simms's narrator is ambivalent regarding the efficacy of African religion, and the author clearly intends to impart a similar ambivalence to his readers. But even if the crow amounts to a mere tool in the exercise of the wills of first Gullah Sam and then Methuselah, it is — consistent with voodoo belief — a natural force that acts with a will and intent that are uniquely human: in this case, to restore religious piety first to Scipio, then to Sam, to "teach them their place" in the social hierarchy of enslaved African Americans.

Annette Kolodny's convincing analysis of Simms's tendency to personify nature in the Revolutionary Romances was perfectly appropriate in the context of the second-wave feminist movement in which it was produced. Nature is passive, is acted upon rather than consulted, for the pleasure and use of the male characters. Given the complications of late twentieth-century third-wave feminism — including the possibility that even the most grievously exploited of historical women may have offered some self-interested collusion in her own exploitation — it becomes possible to see nature-as-character in Simms as more volitional, especially in the stories collected for *The Wigwam and the Cabin*.

In all of these stories, Simms's seeming-attribution of will and agency to natural forces that are unrecognized by the scientific western mind abounds with important implications for American literature. First, it expands Kolodny's vision of landscape-as-woman beyond the vilification of one sex for its exploitation of the other; it suggests

that the nature-woman brings to the development of the American nation not only an independent will, but an important power that the nation would lack without her. Second, Simms's repeated employment of the myth systems of Native American and African American peoples in demonstrating his views on the volitional forces of nature hint at one of the earliest visions of a multicultural nation and a multicultural literature. Even when these myth systems are presented less than perfectly accurately, as they often are, they reflect Simms's desire to make them parts of the American story. Finally, the connection of awesome natural power with awesome supernatural power imply—despite the mixed feelings about them that he expresses elsewhere—a sympathy at least for his own concoction of the two “natural religions” that dominated the first century of American thought: one beyond the dry rationalism of the Deists, short of the unattainable idealistic visions of the Transcendentalists, and infused with the notion that the phrase “manifest destiny” refers as much to the destiny of a land as to the destiny of the people.

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Simms, Shakespeare, and Civil War

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William Shakespeare was a vital author for William Gilmore Simms. Simms found himself strategically positioned as the historical interpreter of two secessionist movements in American history: the first, successful, in the American War of Independence and the second, a dismal historical tragedy, in the failed campaign for southern independence. Simms discovered in Shakespeare's plays a running commentary on the complex issues he faced as secession and Civil War loomed. Shakespeare showed Simms, as he would later William Faulkner and Shelby Foote, how to deal dramatically with imperial invasion and sectional loyalties, as well as political leaders involved with such issues. In terms of character, the *dramatis personae* of the American Revolution and the Civil War were better than what a novelist could come up with anyway. Foote makes this clear — no novelist could improve on Nathan Bedford Forrest, Robert E. Lee, or Abraham Lincoln.

Shakespeare perfected the chronicle or history play, showing in the process how scenes and characters from English history could effectively work on the stage. The English history plays show the British are adroit in their cruelties, engaging in poisonings, drownings, blindings, stabbings, hangings, beheadings, ambushes, and starvation to advance their political disagreements, often with their own blood kin and friends. Huck Finn, in educating the runaway slave, Jim, about royalty, states, "taken all around kings is a mighty ornery lot." Shakespeare's Henry V insists that English monarchs should not be mistaken for the "Turkish court," but even the famous Islamic general, Saladin, looks good in comparison to cruel English tyrants like Richard III.

Shakespeare's skills echo in the English language. Winston Churchill drew on the xenophobic rhetoric of Henry V to instill hope during the darkest days of World War II, and even the Republican congressional managers at the impeachment trial of President Bill Clinton called themselves a "happy band of brothers." They were in good company. In colonial times Abigail Adams often signed her letters to John, "Portia," and likened herself to Brutus's loyal wife in *Julius Caesar*. Jefferson considered himself a student of Shakespeare, and most of the signers of the Declaration of Independence he penned were familiar with Shakespeare's plays. In 1828, James Fenimore Cooper proclaimed Shakespeare the "great author of America" whose memorable lines were on the lips and in the hearts of Americans (Levine 40). Tocqueville in the 1830s observed "there is hardly a pioneer's hut that does not contain a few odd volumes of Shakespeare." (Levine 38). Popular legend cast Abraham Lincoln reading scripture and Shakespeare by firelight, where he memorized soliloquies from *Julius Caesar* and *Henry V*. The

Shakespearian grandeur of imperial rhetoric would find its way into Lincoln's oratory. Like Henry V, Lincoln became the implacable invader, steely and enduring, only to fall victim to assassins, as did Caesar.

Like Lincoln, Simms was similarly attuned to the cadences of Shakespearean language and the drama of history. When Simms wrote about Shakespeare, he had seen his plays performed many times throughout the South and beyond. Shakespeare was much admired in the South, and there was ample opportunity to attend plays. Simms and his countrymen delighted in these dramatic events. Even frontier settings like Arkansas had Shakespeare performances, portrayed hilariously by Mark Twain in *Huckleberry Finn*.

Writers from the southern tradition like Twain and Simms loved the stage's raucous humor. Theatrical spectacle, on the other hand, won little admiration from their New England counterpart, Ralph Waldo Emerson. The excesses of the stage upset Emerson's puritanic calmness. He preferred Shakespeare as a mystical transcendental poet of wisdom. Shakespeare, the working playwright who portrayed some unseemly scenes with characters using bawdy humor and rakish puns, led Emerson to suspect the theatre and playwrights. He sometimes sounds like Malvolio and even used puritanic language to label Shakespeare the "master of revels to mankind" (Falk 532). Emerson also lamented that Shakespeare, "the best poet, led an obscure and profane life, using his genius for the public amusement" (Falk 542).

Given Emerson's conflicts about Shakespeare, Simms commentary about the bard is refreshing. As many writers before, in 1843, Simms penned a poem of homage to "the Mighty master" noting "how the mind follows, how vibrates the heart" when Shakespeare "bends him to his art." (Guilds, *Reader* 388) During a prolific period of editing literary magazines Simms published serially a year later, in 1844, in the *Orion* an essay, "The Moral Character of Hamlet." A decade later he plunged into the perennial field of existential quandary that persists to this day concerning Shakespearean authorship. In 1855 Simms edited a volume, *A Supplement to the Plays of William Shakespeare* (New York: Alden and Beardsley) with his own Introduction. Like Poe, he engaged in such literary ventures, at least in part, to enhance his credentials in the Anglo-American international community of men of letters. Simms took his place seamlessly as an aggressively American critic. He entered into discussions about Shakespeare with his English counterparts, among them Dr. Johnson, Hazlitt, Coleridge, and Lamb. In doing so, Simms took exception to one of the most celebrated utterances of Shakespeare commentary from the opinionated Dr. Johnson, who remarked in his celebrated Preface to his edition of Shakespeare plays that "Shakespeare sacrificed virtue to convenience and seemed to write without moral purpose" (Eliot 217). Simms said of this judgment: Johnson's "incidental remarks" "deserve little notice, as it is surprising how little genuine thought seems to be accorded."¹

This is an interesting comment in light of the fact that Johnson's celebrated Preface and careful editing of the plays became a kind of textual gold standard for most Americans reading Shakespeare from 1795 to 1831. Dr. Johnson was *the* authority until an edition of Shakespeare plays, edited by the American, S.W. Singer, was published in

1831. Simms may have possibly read *Hamlet* in an edition edited by Dr. Johnson, but he still disagreed with the great critic's criticism of the lack of morality in Shakespeare. He was glad that the merriment and innocence of what Orson Welles calls "old England" exempted from Johnson's censure its greatest embodiment, Sir John Falstaff of the *Henry IV* plays. Simms saw in both characters an unexpected, resourceful way to advance his own advocacy of southern aristocracy that had proved itself in the War for Independence. A chronicler of the Revolution in his magisterial novels and biographies of the American patriots, Simms found in these two characters from Shakespeare remarkable universality for unfolding American history. Yet Simms, unlike Emerson, the relentless utopian optimist, gravitated as William R. Taylor observes, to Shakespeare's tragic characters: Simms "grew to accept the ideal of a separate Southern destiny and came to feel that an impending doom was settling over the world" (Taylor 292).

Seeking to develop "Americanism" in literature, Simms did as other Americans (such as Mark Twain) and used Shakespeare's characters as a useful resource. In Simms's case, this was as he sought to deal with the growing castigation of southern planters by abolitionists, radical Republicans, and inflexible Unionists. Falstaff and Hamlet were vital in Simms's shaping an inclusive aristocratic social vision rooted in his regional loyalties. As John Guilds notes, by 1840, Simms was "fully allied" with the "Southern planter aristocracy," yet he, like Poe, in literary matters "retained a national outlook" and was an "advocate of a distinctively American literature and was an 'equally determined opponent of British dominance of American literary thought'" (*Literary Life*, 131).

Shakespeare's dealing with civil wars and invasion was helpful to Simms, especially the *Henry IV* plays. There, Falstaff is the witty Socratic critic of civil wars in general, noting their brutality and folly. He praises survival at the bloody battle of Shrewsbury in the much-quoted, "discretion is the better part of valor in which I have saved my life." Falstaff undercuts chivalric values by insisting they lead to ugly deaths that he surveys on the Shrewsbury battlefield. He points at Sir Walter Blunt, dead on the ground, noting, "there's honor for you."

Falstaff's wisdom found its way into the comic quips of Captain Porgy in *Woodcraft*. Simms skillfully distinguishes between aristocratic South Carolina slave-owners, such as Captain Porgy and the Widow Everleigh, and merciless slave traders, such as Colonel Moncrief and McKewn. Notwithstanding the stark contrasts in *Woodcraft*, Frederick Douglass insisted, in his *Narrative of an Ex-Slave*, that southern aristocrats were the cruelest of hypocrites in professing "slaveholding religion."

As the sectional divisions hardened, the rhetoric became more heated and the fateful prospect of secession more likely. It was against this backdrop that Simms used certain characters from Shakespeare to explore and promote the character and value of planter hierarchy in the face of alien forces. The defeat of the French by Shakespeare's Henry V was a testament to the bravery exalted in Henry's St. Crispin's Day's speech before the Agincourt battle. Yet that campaign came at enormous personal cost to Henry V's humanity: at his earlier coronation the young monarch castigates his old friend, the jovial Sir John Falstaff, as a "fool" and "jester," thereby destroying a deep bond of affection through cruel public humiliation and rejection of the old man.

While Henry V rejected Falstaff, Simms breathes new life into the comparable character of Captain Porgy of *Woodcraft*, a rotund character as dedicated to “gormandizing” as his counterpart. Captain Porgy, with his ungainly appearance and his tattered clothes, would not be mistaken for Mel Gibson’s Benjamin Martin in the movie *The Patriot*. Simms brilliantly locates in the Carolina low country a disheveled Falstaffian planter. In a scene of adroit historical precision Porgy mentions Othello as he faces his transition from patriot soldier to debt-ridden planter in the immediate years after the British were expelled from Charleston. Captain Porgy in *Woodcraft* tells his compatriot, Lance, “Othello’s occupation’s gone.” Porgy recalls he was “a Moorish soldier” and a “famous fighter in his day; but there came a day when his wars ended like ours” (53). Porgy’s emotional state is not nearly as agitated as Othello’s at the end of the play, but he shares in Othello’s brooding and, as for the Moor, suicide looms in Captain Porgy’s deliberations about the future. He notes that “throat cutting” was Othello’s “business” and that if Captain Porgy had to forego “throat cutting” altogether in his new civilian life, he would ask Lance, his friend in arms, “to pass the edge of your sabre across my jugular” (53).

Captain Porgy’s suicidal thought is fleeting as the restoration of the planter hierarchy proceeds, culminating in his reunion with his devoted slaves at the end of *Woodcraft*. For Simms, the contrast is great between the Carolina low country, where the bonds of affection unite all the members of the plantation community, and the racially stratified Venice of *Othello*. The Venetian community (excepting Desdemona) does not accept Othello socially but is happy to have him serve as a mercenary commander to repel the infidel Ottoman Turks. Othello heads a professional military with its rootless class of soldiers that spawns alienated villains like Iago, who deceives Othello at every turn. The Moorish general, despite his military accomplishments in exotic places, lacks what Simms calls “woodcraft” and also the trust that inspires the loyalties of Captain Porgy’s devoted followers. Such characters as Millhouse and Lance endure much with Captain Porgy to win hard won victories against the military equivalent of Othello’s mercenary army: the British. The imperial forces are the professionals who lose to the irregular partisans and local militia, who who do not even have consistent uniforms.

In probing the reasons for such an unlikely outcome, Simms turns to another Shakespearean character. It is not surprising that he finds his way to the most resourceful of Shakespeare’s characters, Hamlet. In repelling the war scavengers McKewn, Bostwick, and their band of desperados, Simms editorializes on the recklessness of Arthur, the widow Eveleigh’s son: had he known the truth he might have congratulated himself in the language of Hamlet, “praised be the rashness for it” (95). By the time Simms identified Arthur in *Woodcraft* with the Danish prince, he had been looking to Hamlet for guidance at least since he first discussed the prince’s moral character in that 1844 article.

The domestic and foreign perils faced by Hamlet were similar to forces soon to be arrayed against the South. In the 1844 article on Hamlet Simms found in the Danish prince, in some respects, an ideal aristocrat and a paragon of breeding and sensibility. Simms, however, did not deal with Hamlet’s problematic education, but instead praised his formation at “the finest German universities.” At Wittenberg Hamlet begins to lose

his religious patrimony and adopted a debilitating introspection that would lead to his later undoing. At that fine “German university” Hamlet imbibed deeply of philosophic skepticism that underlies his suspicions about the spiritual origins of his father’s ghost: is it a valid purgatorial being or is it a demonic presence to be repelled?

Simms faults Hamlet’s delay, resulting from spiritual doubt, in fulfilling the Ghost’s demands to avenge his murder. Unlike the empirical Hamlet, Simms implies that the Ghost is a valid being. He resembles a shade from what in Dante’s *Divine Comedy* is known as ante-Purgatory, specifically those souls who lost their lives through battle, murder, or sudden death. The Ghost’s misery is compounded in that Claudius’ crime is not just murder, but a theologically heinous one. In the context of the pre-Reformation older religiousness of Denmark (which Simms does not consider), Claudius murders his brother, who dies without the benefit of last rites and confession. The Ghost’s agony is spiritual. He tells Hamlet, he was “cut off even in the blossoms of my sin” with “no reck’ing made but sent to my account/ With all my imperfections on my head/ O horrible, O horrible, most horrible”(Shakespeare 1135). Simms laments Hamlet’s deficiency in responding to these dastardly crimes without recognizing their source. Hamlet’s skepticism is rooted in his Wittenberg education that undercuts instinctive, immediate bravery. For Simms the ability to act courageously without ruminating is the foundation of aristocratic character.

Hamlet’s other gifts, in oratory, theatricality, and sword-fighting, make him for Simms a resourceful paradigm for evolving southern identity. Simms assessed Hamlet through the lens of the American Revolution. Hamlet embodies much that Simms found replicated, with some significant differences, in the Revolutionary patriots. His criticism of the Dane’s character is rooted in the heroic feats of Marion, Greene, and others. Simms also saw that the successful “woodcraft” of the Revolutionary patriots may have to be revisited in the coming years by the heirs of their bravery. Little more than a decade after Simms analysis of Hamlet, southerners would find themselves on distant battlefields fighting a second war for independence.

Hamlet’s introspection, however, differentiates him from the bold American patriots. William R. Taylor, in his seminal *Cavalier and Yankee*, cites Thomas Nelson Page’s observation about the antebellum period. Page believed the gentleman of the American Revolution had been the “most active and enterprising,” while their grandsons “had been left too brood over the declining fortunes of the South.” (157). Simms faulted Hamlet for a similar inwardness yet observed that Hamlet’s indecision showed him to be a cultured Prince. This meant that his “tastes were trained and refined at the expense of his energies...There are certain roughing processes in very proper system of training, which are requisite to the proper development of manhood. Smooth seas make no seaman...The boy must have his trials, as a boy, preparatory to those of manhood.” As a result, Simms, concluded, Hamlet suffers “a misfortune to which the children of an aristocracy are commonly subject” (“Moral Character”).

As southern planters in the nineteenth century increasingly came under attack by what Simms considered lesser men from the outside, ill-formed socially and lacking in courtliness, Hamlet’s inaction was not helpful. Abolitionist vituperation and the

cerebral utopianism of the Transcendentalist “wise men” required instinctive courage that Simms faulted Hamlet for not possessing: “A little more blood, and of the proper kind in his [Hamlet’s] veins, would have dethroned and beheaded the usurper, placed his mother in a convent and himself upon the throne, without difficulty and with little risk” (Moral Character). In Simms’s view, delay in expunging “something rotten in Denmark” should not be emulated by aristocratic southern soldiers and public men facing their own growing political threats. The patriots had realized as much in the Revolution and acted decisively. They managed to expel the British whose attempted conquest of the Americans was inspired, in part, by the mythical soldier-king, Henry V.

The French submission to the indignities of English invasion was a cautionary tale for Simms. The political and social forces arrayed against Hamlet were also germane to the perils and complexity of the southern political situation in the mid 1800s. Looking to the past of the Revolution and looking forward to what might become a new independent southern nation made Hamlet, for Simms, a cogent historical parallel. Indeed, Hamlet faces domestic conspiracies at every turn in the Danish court. The Norwegian army led by Fortinbras only adds to the threats facing the Danish prince, who is driven as a result, in the “to-be-or-not-to-be” soliloquy, to contemplate suicide.

Simms criticized Hamlet for isolation, distrustfulness, and an “antic disposition” to appear mad. While Simms states in *Woodcraft* that the strategy entails “art improving brute force,” Hamlet has too much artifice and too much untested courage. He lacks “woodcraft” and he lacks companions in “woodcraft.” Instead of building on the trust of Horatio and Ophelia, Hamlet dwells on the treachery of Claudius and his sycophants, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Moreover the dramatic stabbing of Polonius is brazen, and the subsequent erotic imaginings uttered to his mother are unspeakable. Immoderate and vulgar, Hamlet speaks of “the bloat king” “in the rank sweat of an enseamed bed / Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love / Over the nasty sty” (Shakespeare 1152).

Simms, nevertheless, admired Hamlet for resisting plots and a nefarious kinsman. Simms believed only older places could produce a character such as this: Denmark, and in America, Charleston and Boston. Simms decried, in the border novels, the crude characters “of the West, in Texas” or “any regions where the rude primary wants of life throw the moral man into the shade.” (It is likely Emerson would have concurred). Hamlet by contrast, Simms observed “we encounter in all *old communities*.” In these places, “individual manhood” “is restrained by the high tone of social refinements.” In America only Charleston and Boston possessed the social chemistry to produce such individuals. Simms notes that, in Charleston, “we know of several Hamlets”, “individuals who, placed in the same circumstances with the youthful Dane would have been like him the victim to the circumstances which they should have mastered” (“Moral Character”).

Simms through Hamlet skillfully appealed to the aristocracy of both North and South in identifying the two iconic American cities. Emerson agreed in noting that Hamlet was an “inborn gentleman” (Falk 539). During the American Revolution Charleston and Boston had produced American Hamlets. In the future, Simms hoped, new Hamlets, embracing aristocratic moderation, would appear. Simms’s hopes would not have been

lost on New England men of letters and public figures such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, U.S. President Franklin Pierce, the unjustly obscure Orestes Brownson, and Henry Adams. They were *all* critical of what struck them as the extremism of abolitionists and Lincoln's nationalist political agenda. Hawthorne observed that no one deserved hanging more than the insurrectionist of Harper's Ferry, John Brown. Hawthorne's college roommate at Bowdoin, Franklin Pierce, having served as a Democratic U. S. President, opposed Lincoln's Republican agenda. (He was one of a handful of Americans who thought the poetry of the Gettysburg address did not mitigate the grievous loss of 50,000 dead in the great battle). The Lincoln government's imprisonment and threat of a treason trial of Jefferson Davis particularly outraged Pierce. The prospect of a show trial of the forlorn Confederate President, former U.S. Senator and Secretary of War in Pierce's administration, promised to cast Davis as an American Lear. Pierce courageously objected. Similarly, Orestes Brownson was no "Lincoln man." A mild Unionist, he criticized what he thought were the excesses of Lincoln's war policies. He predicted that the Civil War might promise to free slaves at a terrible price: the destruction of the southern aristocracy and its vital link to the American Revolution.

Simms had similar fears. He appealed to aristocratic leadership of both North and South in his analysis of *Hamlet*. By the 1840s when Simms wrote his commentary, the high body count at the end was terrifying and foreboding: king and queen dead; the prince of Denmark also dead; court counselor, Polonius, stabbed unceremoniously by Hamlet; Laertes, his son, poisoned; and Ophelia drowned. The ending of the play was cautionary as the storm clouds of war gathered and the shrill voices of sectional ideology overwhelmed counsels of political moderation.

In advocating restraint borne of a balanced aristocratic temperament, Simms paralleled another Shakespeare play setting forth an essential kinship of aristocratic classes badly divided by war. In *Troilus and Cressida*, a play set in the Trojan War, voices of division seek to continue a mindless fratricidal conflict. After nine years of protracted bloodshed, Hector, the Trojan general, however, offers peace to his Greek adversaries based on their kinship. He proposes avoiding more bloodshed, proclaiming to Ajax, his stolid, surprised enemy:

Thou art, great lord my father's sister' son,
A cousin-german to great Priam's seed;
The obligation of our blood forbids
A gory emulation twixt us twain... (Shakespeare 780)

Shakespeare in scene after scene in his plays evoked the power of feudalism and its rituals. Hector appeals to the common kinship among the Trojans and Greeks. He casts an unlikely Trojan general to voice alternatives to blood-letting. Against Hector's counsel are the increasingly dehumanized Greeks, who the mocking Thersites observes, threaten "barbarism."

Similarly Simms identified the dense aristocratic cultures of the "older communities" of Charleston and Boston as a basis for social mutuality rather than difference. This to Simms was borne out in the compromises of the American Revolution and the subsequent honing of hard sectional edges in the establishment of the new

American republic. John Adams, an ardent son of New England, restrained Jefferson's fondness for French political innovations; Jefferson through his stalwart anti-Federalism rooted in Virginia soil countered the ideas of centralization of Hamilton. Thus the political chemistry of sectional compromise worked its magic.

In terms of what Simms understood to be the great drama of the American Revolution, its form was tragic-comic. As the storm clouds of sectional discord gathered while Simms wrote about *Hamlet* in 1844, he hoped and worked for a similar dramatic outcome. He, however, sounded a note of foreboding when he observed that Hamlet was the most Greek of Shakespeare's plays. An inexorable cosmic fatalism overtook all the players. Simms ended his analysis where many critics do, with the beautiful, poignant words of Horatio to Hamlet: "good night, sweet Prince/ And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."

That is not the end of the story, however. Hamlet's adversary, the Norwegian Prince, Fortinbras, heard the moving last words of the two friends. Fortinbras, as Kenneth Branagh so precisely understands in his rich film version of the play, orders military funeral rites for the Prince of Denmark. Horatio says he will report: of "carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts," of "casual slaughters." Fortinbras, however, commands a military funeral for Hamlet befitting a prince of Denmark:

Let four captains

Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage

For he was likely to prove most royal; and for his passage

The soldiers music and the rite of war

Speak loudly for him. (Shakespeare 1170)

If Simms believed that Hamlet was the most Greek of Shakespeare's plays, he witnessed and endured a similar fate personally in the destruction of his home, the burning of Columbia, and the vindictive ruin of his beloved state in the Civil War. Simms reported, like Horatio, of "carnal, bloody and unnatural acts" in the *Sack and Destruction of the City of Columbia*. General Sherman would not be mistaken for Fortinbras. In Hamlet's last words to Horatio, the prince whispers: "in this harsh world, draw thy breath in pain/ to tell my story." Hamlet knew, as did Simms, the victors write the history. Fortinbras, however, proved more noble than those who loathed southern independence. Simms's social vision for an inclusive American aristocracy endures against the version of history written by the American nationalist victors dedicated to statist uniformity. A generation after the carnage of Shiloh, Gettysburg, and Antietam, Theodore Roosevelt praised, in "The Strenuous Life," the rejection of the "ignoble counsels of peace" voiced by "Peace" Democrats and others. Roosevelt found inspiration in "the suffering and loss, the blackness of sorrow and despair, that were unflinchingly faced, and the years of strife endured" through the "wisdom of Lincoln" and the "sword or rifle in the armies of Grant!" (Roosevelt, np).² Roosevelt's praise of the Civil War's protracted carnage starkly contrasts with Simms's pleas for restraint in his commentary on Hamlet. Simms wrote it to try to avert the violence Roosevelt found to be heroic. What Fortinbras said of Hamlet is no less true of Simms: "For he was likely to prove most royal."

Notes

¹ Simms, "The Moral Character of Hamlet," Parts I, II, III, IV, *Orion*, 1844. The original text is among the writings of William Gilmore Simms at the South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia. All references come from a transcribed copy of the original I made in 2007 under the auspices of a *Fides et Ratio* faculty grant, Franciscan University of Steubenville (Ohio). The transcribed copy is part of a larger collection I am editing of antebellum essays on Shakespeare by Simms, Poe, Emerson, J. Q. Adams, and others.

² Roosevelt changed his mind about war when his own son was killed in World War I.

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Rawlins' Rookery;

or

The House of Eld and Glamour.

a Prophecy.

a Brompton & "What Not."

Edited by

W. Gilmore Simms, Esq.

Author of "The Prayer," "The
Pantani," "The Emancipator" &c.

"Whatever we present, we wish it may be thought
the dancing of Agrippa's shadows, who, in the moment
they were seen, were of any shape one would conceive.
We have mixed death with counsel, & discipline with
delight: thinking it not an ill, in the same garden, to
sow for herbs, that we see flowers." John Lyly.

Respectfully New York.

1857.

Master of an Interior World: Masculinity, Sensibility, and William Gilmore Simms¹

Brian Fennessy

On 8 January 1841, Charleston author William Gilmore Simms wrote to his friend James Lawson in New York, "I have been scribbling another story, intending it originally for Snowden & for publication in numbers, called 'Castle Dismal, or a Bachelor's Christmas in Carolina'..." (*Letters* 1:212). It is not likely that Lawson thought much of either this cursory notice that Simms had conceived yet another literary idea or even the sensationally Gothic title. In the same letter, Simms mentioned the completion of another historical romance in his series on South Carolina in the Revolutionary War as well as two shorter tales that he was penning. By the early 1840s, Simms was publishing two to three novels, romances, collections of short stories, or volumes of poetry every year. He was hardly any more relenting in his frequent, and often confessional, letters to close friends like Lawson. Writing became a ritual for Simms, much more so than for any other southern man, and even more so than for most southern women. Like any ritual, writing invested the everyday occurrences of Simms's life with transcendent importance and allowed him to explore, define, and even challenge his place within the world around him.

Ironically, while writing gave meaning and purpose to Simms's life, it was also a source of conflict and insecurity. Nathaniel Hawthorne identified the highly gendered nature of this concern when he lashed out against his female competitors as "a d—d mob of scribbling women" (17:304). Women constituted an increasing percentage of American authors during the nineteenth century, and Simms too felt that this was one of the many problems threatening the future of southern letters. He complained that the struggling periodicals in his region were forced by a lack of solvent subscribers and worthy contributors to accept submissions "furnished by young Misses from their school exercises, and young Masters when they first begin to feel the startling sensations of the tender passions" (*Letters* 1:197). Besides revealing the peculiarly poignant misogyny that characterized nineteenth century male authors, such comments implicated Hawthorne and Simms in a cultural discourse that gendered romantic and sentimental writing as feminine, while it also made their own status as men and as authors problematic.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, when American masculinity became increasingly associated with self-creation and personal independence, the literary profession did not offer much promise for men who wished to establish themselves in their community. The economic difficulties of living as a professional author made this cultural ideal difficult enough to achieve elsewhere, but the troubles of a literary life were compounded in the American South by additional gender prescriptions. In the southern

states, the outward-looking masculine ideals of honor and public reputation often came into conflict with the more introspective ideals of sensibility and imagination valued by literary men. A life of thought and intellectual labor also made it difficult for southern writers to live up to the patriarchal ideals of mastery.² Southern men who dedicated a large portion of their lives to writing often felt that their literary achievements were unappreciated by family, friends, and southerners generally.

There was, as some historians have argued, a tradition of cultural and intellectual refinement in the South that stretched back to the colonial period and which the elite transmitted to their nineteenth-century descendants (Davis 3:1635; Luraghi 32-33, 65). In Charleston, Simms grew up around notable men of letters like James W. Simmons and Hugh Swinton Legaré, who provided models of authorship that were both masculine and honorable (Moltke-Hansen 30, 35). In the 1830s, literature gained far more cultural importance than in earlier periods, as Simms and contemporaries, both north and south, sought to establish a national literature for the United States. This development operated on the level of individual men and women, who began to hope that, as authors, they could rise in reputation by winning literary accolades. Since writers began by describing their particular section of the American union, the quest for a national literature took parallel paths in the southern states and elsewhere in the country. However, between 1830 and 1860, southern literature as American literature gradually became southern literature as separatist literature, insisting on regional distinctiveness and positing the idea of the South as a nation within a nation. Imperatives to defend slavery and southern exceptionalism gave even greater cultural weight to the author in the South.³

Thus it was not for a lack of models, tradition, or cultural significance that the position of the author in the American South was made precarious. Rather, the reason was that at the same time that literature was gaining in cultural significance, notions of gender were becoming polarized, with sentiment and imagination increasingly gendered as feminine.⁴ Certainly not all authors, critics, and readers considered writing to be a feminine or feminizing pursuit, but even those who combated such a contention, in the process of doing so, revealed their fears about the gendering of behavior. The need to control notions of gender and gendering became even more urgent as white southerners became more defensive of their society. Concerns over the place of literary men in the South were linked to concerns about mastery, which also necessarily reflected concerns about masculinity and the emotions it was proper for a white southern man to express.

This essay will explore the emotional world of the American South through the lens of William Gilmore Simms, one of the most prolific authors of his century and region. Simms's relationship with his society has absorbed scholars. Biographers William P. Trent and John C. Guilds have primarily wrestled with his literary reputation, in the process perpetuating a debate over whether Simms ranks above or below his contemporaries. Historians of southern intellectual culture, especially Drew Gilpin Faust, John McCardell Jr. (141-154, 166-176), Bertram Wyatt Brown (*Hearts* 63-91), Michael O'Brien (389-390, 404, 723-728), and John Mayfield, have probed deeper into Simms's relationship with his region. The contributions made by southern intellectual historians

gain even greater significance when supplemented with recent theories that historicize emotional experience, ultimately making the typical interpretation of Simms as a jovial planter and southern partisan far less tenable.

In a study of eighteenth and nineteenth century France, historian William Reddy crafted a valuable “framework for a history of emotion” that historians in other fields would do well to consider. Reddy explicated the changing “emotional regimes” that constructed, prescribed, and enforced the normative emotions that individuals were supposed to feel and express. According to Reddy, men and women “navigate” through their emotional life, guided by goals that may or may not coincide with those of the emotional regime. When a person’s emotional expressions reflect goals vastly different from those of the emotional regime, “emotional suffering” occurs.⁵

Reddy’s framework helps to make sense of Simms’s letters, the novel *Castle Dismal*, and the unpublished frame-story “Rawlins’ Rookery,” all of which are interconnected and rich in autobiographical expressions of emotion. They are most revealing for their insight into Simms’s relationship with his wife, his father-in-law, and his region, but by no means should they be taken to suggest that these relationships were the only ones that were important in his life. Simms’s father, grandmother, friends, and slaves figured prominently in the author’s emotional landscape. Certainly, the emotional history of a country or region also encompassed far more than gender concepts and relations. Nevertheless, Simms’s reflections in the documents explored here may lend greater merit to those historians who have suggested that gender was equally, if not more, essential, than race or class to the worldview of the southern elite (Stowe xvii-xviii; Berry 9-13, 85). Without limiting the emotional regime of the American South to the following attributes, Simms’s writings do suggest several implications about their historical context: (1) the private sphere was not wholly private due to the slow pace of industrialization and the persistence of patriarchal gender relations, (2) cheerfulness needed to characterize all social relations in order to maintain the sentimental vision of the plantation system, and finally (3) mastery and honor were essential to prevalent notions of masculinity. Furthermore, the range and intensity of emotions valued by literary men like Simms were particularly threatening to white southern mastery during the apex of plantation slavery between 1830 and 1860.

Simms first published “Castle Dismal; or, The Bachelor’s Christmas; A Nouvellette” in five issues of the *Magnolia; or Southern Monthly* in early 1842. With such a title for the work and a third subtitle, “A Domestic Legend,” added later for the 1844 and 1845 novel version, one might reasonably expect a quaint panegyric on southern customs at Christmastime. Indeed, the dedication even asserts that the work is “illustrative of the traditions of the Southern States” (iii). The narrator begins with sentimental praise for “the song and the dance, the frolic and the festival” of Christmas in South Carolina, “the fatted turkey, the selected ham, mince pies, and the unfailing egg-noggin” (10). Yet none of this is a part of the story. The charm and mirth of the Christmas season provide a recognizable backdrop against which Simms can subvert domestic expectations through the unnatural — a bachelor living in the home of married friends and the appearance of ghosts who nightly reenact a story of infidelity and murder.

Simms's ghost story casts a heavy gloom over middle class notions of the home as a haven from a heartless outside world and the faith of white southerners that the plantation was a miniature world of domestic bliss.⁶

Much has been said by historians who have looked at marriage as a ritual that defined and circumscribed the lives of southern women, but marriage also advanced and reified male ambitions for mastery. In a study of South Carolina yeomen who owned few or no slaves, Stephanie McCurry found that white southern males built their masculine identity not only on mastery over black slaves, but also on mastery over white female dependents. So in one sense marriage guaranteed a man's status as an independent master of his own small world (McCurry 56-61, 91, 304). But in another way, the fall from bachelorhood represented a loss of personal independence. The position of the bachelor was precarious in the nineteenth century because many viewed men who persisted in their unmarried state as homosexuals or dandies; yet American male authors also created a "bachelor literature" that suggested marriage might inhibit a man's quest for freedom, masculine self-discovery, and personal fulfillment. Writers like James Fenimore Cooper in the North and Simms in the South created unmarried protagonists who escaped the threat of femininity by avoiding marriage and escaping into the wilderness (Barker-Benfield, *The Horrors* 8-17). In Simms's *Castle Dismal*, ambivalence about domestic life, marriage, and bachelorhood are fully illustrated in the narrator, Ned Clifton. A man who describes himself as a "veteran bachelor" (10), Clifton entertains an intense fear that marriage "destroys many a good heart and generous spirit," turning man into "a tame cur" (12). Terror is a defining element of gothic literature, of which this tale is also an unmistakable example, but for Clifton this is a "terror of the sex" (20). Clifton's courtship of a young lady, who is remarkably similar to Simms's wife, occupies equal attention with the ghost plot. "I did, indeed," Clifton confesses, "at one moment apprehend that I might fall into some snares of marriage on this visit,—for a southern Christmas is apt to produce such disasters in the best regulated families; but I dismissed this suggestion with some rapidity from my thoughts as being quite too dreadful for contemplation" (19).

Simms had married early in life, but his first wife died in 1832, after which the rising author spent several weeks, sometimes months, each year with his friend James Lawson in New York, living as bachelors and courting young ladies. Simms held great ambitions for both literature and romantic love, but it was not until the 1835 Christmas season that he began to court Chevillette Roach from the plantation home of his friend, Charles Carroll. The courtship of Ned Clifton and Elizabeth Singleton in *Castle Dismal* is astonishingly similar to that of Simms and Chevillette, though few besides Simms's closest intimates may have recognized it. Clifton and Elizabeth are 30 and 18 years old respectively, just as Simms and Chevillette were in their courtship winter. Clifton inquires whether Elizabeth is an only child, only to have his query affirmed; Chevillette was an only child after her brother was killed in a duel. Clifton asks if his love interest has a good surname and then declares humorously that he would not marry a girl with an ugly one. 'Singleton' was not that bad of a name, but Chevillette's last name, Roach, was atrocious in the linguistic sense. Perhaps Simms's own reassurance in this regard was the same that was offered to the protagonist: "I trust she will suffer you to alter it to your liking" (*Castle* 21).

As Simms's joke about surnames also indicates, southern men were conscious of the possibilities that marriage held for mastery as well as for elevating one's social standing through an honorable match. Recent historians have turned their attention to the early roots of the southern middle-class, though Amanda Reece Mushal and Jennifer R. Green have shown just how difficult it was to distinguish middle class professionals from planters who engaged in other professions. The occupations of town life certainly became more respectable around mid-century, but planters continued to glory in their elevated status through ownership of land and slaves. Furthermore, Mushal points out that many middle class professionals raised their respectability by marrying into planter families (Wells, *The Origins* 151; Wells, *The Southern* 3-6, 63-66, 158-161). Simms is an excellent example of how marriage both blurred class lines and held out the hope of greater social prominence. Marriage into a planter family like the Roaches might provide respectability, as well as accommodate a man to planter ideals through the acquisition of land and dependents.

Yet Simms worried at first that because of his struggling finances as a professional author, marriage might actually make *him dependent* on his wife and her family. Even after he had a short burst of financial success, he still agonized over the complications that a southern marriage might cause: "for, though in marrying the lady to whom I am engaged, I should be at no expense while living in the South, the case would be very materially altered if I wished to carry her with me to the North during the Summer, as my desire and my pursuit, alike would render it necessary to do" (*Letters* 1:90-91). After their marriage later in 1836, Simms and Chevillette were given "Woodlands," the house and plantation across the Edisto River from the plantation of Chevillette's father, Nash Roach. Thus Simms would be financially secure as a full-time writer living on a plantation managed by his father-in-law.

An author who returned to bachelorhood again and again through his writing, Simms may have resented his role as husband most of all. During his first summer of married life, he took his bride on a grand tour through New England. When they left, Chevillette was four months pregnant. Simms wrote that she "suffered considerably at sea" and became "something fatigued with the stage traveling over a mountainous country, but she bore it better than I expected" (*Letters* 1:102). As Chevillette's condition worsened, Simms nursed his wife and complained peevishly, "I have been & am dull as ditch water,—unable to write or do anything" (*Letters* 1:106-107). After two months in the North with his wife, Simms wrote, "I have had so many draw backs and disappointments this year, that I am dull and desponding" (*Letters* 1:112).

In his letters, Simms hardly ever expressed empathy for his wife, who remained sick most of her life and yet bore him 14 children, only 5 of whom survived to adulthood. Simms travelled to New York nearly every year, and with increasingly frequency expressed a desire to relocate to New York on a permanent basis to be closer to his publishers. But Chevillette would only go north once more in her life—the same year that Simms secured the publication of *Castle Dismal* as a novel. It is possible that while in the home of James Lawson, Simms may have again endeavored to convince Chevillette that they should move the family nearby, but when the couple returned to Woodlands

plantation, Nash Roach sold his other plantation across the Edisto River and moved in with them.

Considering the abundance of autobiographical references in *Castle Dismal*, it is easy to read the story as Simms's dark reflections on his own life. To Clifton, the house from which the novel takes its name seems more like a "prison" or a "dungeon" (16). This may very well be a representation of Woodlands, where Simms felt trapped by his family as well as his own indecision about whether or not to abandon South Carolina. Clifton wanders through a grove where "the trees were nearly all of them old and massive. It was as if the fathers of the forest had survived their young, and were destined to die childless" (61). Simms had lost two daughters by the time he published the periodical version of the story; another died while it was being issued; so, by the time the novel version came out, he had lost three. The creation of a legacy was an extension of masculine mastery, but high infant mortality placed considerable strain on southern families. The details that unite Clifton with Simms suggest that this narrator served as an autobiographical proxy, and comparison with personal letters reveals that Clifton is an extraordinary mirror for Simms's most dark, eccentric, and introspective moods.

Historians have recently turned a critical eye to the emotional landscapes of southern planters' lives, investigating the normative prescriptions of cheerfulness and confidence that were supposed to characterize planters' interactions with others. Cheerfulness allowed white southerners to represent their own domestic world of the plantation household to themselves and to others as exemplary of the benevolence, paternalism, and sentimentality that they hoped and believed characterized their social relationships.⁷ Simms was a perfect example of how these prescriptions became a mask that planters used to hide more troubling emotions like doubt, fear, and anxiety that might threaten their claim to masculine mastery and make interactions with others more difficult. Paul Hamilton Hayne, a friend and literary pupil of Simms, recalled in later years the elder man's "emphatic" and almost "theatrical" style of speaking to an audience, and felt that "this manner was rightly his own, being the outward, unpremeditated expression of a fervent temperament, of hot, honest blood, and a buoyant, indomitable nature." Hayne remembered that his friend's humor had always been "bold, bluff, and masculine."⁸ However, such descriptions are hardly representative of the range of emotions that Simms expressed in his letters. In the early 1850s, Simms wrote to another friend and fellow intellectual, George Frederick Holmes, "My family is all well, I am glad to say, and spite of drudgery, I maintain a full front. But though the top of the tree is still green, there is much rot at the core. My friends do not see; but my brain is troubled, overwrought, and I look to drop down some sunny day, in the harness." (*Letters* 3:245). Probably only Simms's family and closest friends saw this side of Simms, and like Hayne, none of them sought to reveal it to the public.

Simms was certainly not the only southern man to feel this way. His friend James Henry Hammond felt crushed by the same disconnect between outward show and private feeling: "... that I have a speculative mind, keen sensibility, ardent sympathy and a brooding imagination few if any dream, I fear the world judging by appearances, by my bearing and conversation, have been wholly deceived in my character." Hammond

confided his secret thoughts to his diary and pleaded, “Think kindly of me if possible, Whoever may read these pages. I was created for a man — and in all respects a man” (Hammond 194, 259). Southern men like Hammond and Simms suffered when the emotions of their lives did not seem to match up with those demanded by southern society. They simultaneously sought to reconcile their actions and emotional expressions to those of the southern emotional regime, and at the same time felt that being a man was more than that.

Throughout *Castle Dismal*, the narrator self-consciously maintains an exterior appearance of jovial mirth that belies the melancholy and neurotic musings that he expresses to the reader. After his first night in the haunted bedchamber, Clifton determines to deceive his hosts with the claim that he witnessed nothing out of the ordinary, but this proves exceedingly difficult:

Still, though I had thus easily got through the opening scene, I had a part to perform throughout the day, which I found anything but easy. It would not do for me, with my reputation for animal spirits and philosophical phlegm, to suffer myself to appear abstracted and thoughtful — to be caught moodily chewing any cud of thought which might seem to be furnished by very grave and absorbing influences My part became momentarily more and more difficult, as, with each moment, I really became more and more thoughtful. My mind wandered from me at frequent periods — my fancy was continually active in presenting to my sight the shows and images which had annoyed me through the night. (57-58)

As a literary proxy for the novel’s author, Clifton experiences the same withdrawn contemplation that Simms counterbalanced with cheerfulness in his public interactions, but indulged in his most personal writings. Clifton’s struggle with conflicting feelings, accentuated by constantly indulging them rather than entirely pushing them aside, again and again prevents him from taking action. He self-consciously agonizes over his indecision at the beginning of the story, when he is unsure where he wants to spend the holidays, again when he feels ambivalent about courting Elizabeth Singleton, and again when he fails to confront the ghosts that he sees in his chamber, much “to the discredit of my manhood...” (45). Simms’s own indecision was a recurring theme in his life, particularly as it prevented him from choosing between New York and Charleston and then exercising patriarchal authority to determine his family’s residence.

The honor of southern men included inner self-worth as one of its components, but the primary inflection was toward public representation and public reputation. According to Bertram Wyatt-Brown, honor “often existed not in authenticity of the self but in symbols, expletives, ritual speeches, gestures, half-understood impulses, externalities, titles, and physical appearance” (*Southern Honor* 14-15, 22). Simms incorporated the many rituals that southerners associated with honor in the plot of *Castle Dismal*. There is hospitality, hunting, courtship, and even talk of dueling, but the contrast that these outward-looking rituals create in juxtaposition to Clifton’s introspective, nervous personality underscore Wyatt-Brown’s point that behind southerners’ “willingness to create good times with others” was the “fear of being left alone, bored, depressed”

(*Southern Honor* 329, *Hearts* xxi-xxiii). This would have been particularly disturbing in the context of an emotional regime that gendered feelings like loneliness, boredom, and depression as feminine. Yet at the same time, these emotions both stimulated and were reproduced by the ritual of writing, particularly in a period of sensibility and romanticism. Clifton engages in the same process of emotional indulgence and masking that Simms understood as a southern writer and a southern man.

Most significantly, Clifton's courtship of Elizabeth Singleton reflects Simms's concern with the gendering of "sensibility." The ideology of separate spheres emerged first in the northern states due to the greater rapidity of industrialization there, taking men's labor out of the household and allowing the home to be gendered feminine. In the South, men continued to exercise their authority as masters of slaves and white women within their households. Nevertheless, planters were surprisingly receptive to notions of gender difference and the sentimentalism that emerged out of separate spheres, because, in their mind, this seemed to justify the domestic harmony of the southern household. While men were characterized by intelligence, reason, and an ability to control their emotions, women had a "nervous temperament" and greater "sensibility," which indicated the intense sensitivity of mind and body to emotional stimulation. For women, feelings were thought to be experienced with inward depth, and the sincerity of these feelings was manifested in outward signs such as swooning or frequent illness.⁹ Middle class women sometimes stepped outside the domestic role, even in the South, but the fact that creative expression as writers or occasionally work as editors were the most acceptable deviations shows how deeply sensibility had become gendered and how closely this gendering tied in to literary careers (Wells 111-12, 131). According to Jonathan Wells, "the field of literature was viewed as quintessentially a feminine pursuit; the ability to express emotions, take imaginative flights of fancy, and transform feelings into poetry or prose were thought to be abilities particular to women" (116-117). Stephen Berry has also shown how southerners elaborated on the evolving theory of gender difference—men believed that it was their grandiose ambitions that gave meaning to their lives as they forged plantation empires, debated in the political arena, and went to war. Southern women, on the other hand, were seen through the eyes of their men as passive objects that embodied civilization's morality and virtue (83-103).

When Ned Clifton and Elizabeth Singleton walk through the oak grove, they speculate on the "sensibility" of previous generations who traversed the same paths. Demonstrating his own sensitivity to emotion, Clifton declares, "They had their loves as certainly as their hates — their fears as well as their hopes. The season of their youth was doubtlessly one of sentiment — such sentiment as belongs to the affections in an inartificial condition...and which prompted frequently to great self-sacrifice, and equally great mental suffering" (*Castle* 145). Yet misogynist bachelor that he is, Clifton declares that sentiment becomes callous after years of marriage. Here, the young lady reproves him and counters with her own faith in sincerity of feeling: "I should be disposed to think that the very exercise of the sensibilities up to a certain period, would render them too strong and active, to make it easy for any course of subsequent trial and distress, to subdue" (146). Elizabeth Singleton further infers that one who thought emotions could

fade so easily, never truly had them. This gives the lie to the narrator's belief that he holds greater sensibilities than any woman. Clifton assumes that women, who show no outward signs of love and maintain a cold dignity, are incapable of affection, but Miss Singleton seems to win the argument:

Your error consists in the assumption that she does not love because she has no visible ties — no engagements — no constant struggle of heart in and heart out, with some neighboring youth — a play and exercise of the affections which is equally common-place and unnecessary, for the maintenance of the affections. Nature provides, in order that the sensibilities should always be kept in activity, that she should love a mental image—an ideal of perfection as it appears to her—and when she assumes visible ties, all that her heart then performs is the clothing of its ideal with humanity. Your poets, who are never without a sweetheart in the name of a muse, have long since illustrated the natural law in this respect by their own practice. (147)

Elizabeth expresses a more acute sensibility than Clifton, and through her last blow, she even comes out ahead of male poets.

Literary reviews often functioned as both prescriptive and descriptive literature when discussing male authors. Like the ideal woman of the mid-nineteenth century, the romantic poet and author of sentimental fiction, even when male, was thought to exhibit a nervous temperament, extraordinary sensibilities, morality, and virtue. One contributor to a New Orleans periodical in 1848 wrote that there is "something glorious" and "divine" in the ideal romantic poet. He is "full of love and gentleness," and "the tears of his heart flow as a stream on the flowers of his mind, and they become gems of priceless value" (*New Orleans Miscellany* [Jan 1848]: 123). Such reviewers, like the writers they reviewed, were fluent in the emotional language of sensibility more common to eighteenth-century Europe, and which still seemed difficult to avoid when describing contemporary poets and authors. Yet in the mid-nineteenth century American South, this was also the conventional language of true womanhood, creating a strenuous contradiction of the emotional norms prescribed for southern men (Faust 40-41). Perhaps looking back at the British romantics, southern men of letters also made much of their "nervous temperament" and frequent illness. Southern writers went to considerable lengths to defend the British romantics against charges of effeminacy, giving no little indication of their own sensitivity to this charge (*Southern Literary Messenger* 8 [Jan 1842]: 37-41). Yet the fact that Simms spent more time on the couch or at the writing desk than in the fields or at the courthouse probably struck non-literary folk, not least of all Chevillette and her father, as a bit odd.

For Simms to have Elizabeth Singleton state, "your poets, who are never without a sweetheart in the name of a muse," and thus give over the province of poetry solely to men, was more than self-serving (*Castle* 147). On the other hand, Elizabeth almost seems to be condescending to these male romantics, and she even shows a greater understanding of sensibility than Simms's narrator. But then Clifton pulls the trump card: "'Anch 'io son amante!' — I involuntarily exclaimed," in effect, declaring his love and proposing to her (147). According to the discourse on sensibility in this time period, his

impulsivity would have signified sincerity (Halttunen 52, 99). Furthermore, as a man, only Clifton can offer such a dramatic proposal. Elizabeth is rendered speechless, and Clifton walks back to the house more introspective and amazed at his own emotional depth.

As this courtship develops, Clifton also has nightly visitations from ghosts of the house's previous inhabitants, who reenact their emotional torment in the chamber where Clifton sleeps. Clifton watches as the ghost of William Potter again discovers his wife's infidelity, murders the male lover, and drives his wife to commit suicide. In a twist that requires an even greater suspension of disbelief, it turns out that Potter is still living and Clifton confronts him with the crimes of the old man's youth. But Elizabeth Singleton intercedes, begging Clifton to take pity on Potter and not physically harm him: "Though earnest the speaker was subdued, nervous, and though speaking, as we see, to the point, yet she trembled not a little, and faltered somewhat, and was agitated to a degree, which, I confess it, was not unpleasant to me to behold" (*Castle* 171). This pleading submission and display of emotional delicacy "was eminently gratifying" to Clifton. "She could feel — she could fear — she had sensibilities — she could tremble at their instance — the woman had a girl's heart in spite of her *haut ton*" (172). Moreover, it reestablished his masculinity in a society that held patriarchal mastery to be the highest goal of male emotional life.

Clifton exemplifies Simms's own attempt to minimize the emotional suffering induced by the contradiction between feminine sensibility and masculine mastery. By paying more attention to the emotional sensibilities of the woman in front of him than his own on past occasions, as Clifton does when he witnesses Elizabeth's pleading, the man of sensibility could shore up the southern emotional hierarchy. The genre of gothic literature itself might even be taken as a response to the inability of men and women to cope with emotional extremes, just one reason why it had peculiar resonance in a slave society. "It was a genre," historian Michael O'Brien pointed out, "troubled, above all, by a fear of the loss of mastery, so it is little wonder that it appealed to some southern sensibilities" (754). If the emotions of the southern author and poet bordered on feminine, that certainly indicated a disruption of mastery. The Gothic literature written by male authors allowed for a transgression of gender roles, but that transgression was almost always rectified by the end of the story, reestablishing the normative status quo. A condescending response to Elizabeth's sensibilities allows Clifton to deny that he has transgressed through the emotionally introspective mode that he nonetheless continues to indulge; and the ghost story of infidelity and murder is resolved through the suicide of Potter's wife and Mr. Potter's own fatal collapse.

The ending of the story with Potter's death casts a dark cloud over the marital future of Clifton and Elizabeth. The similarities between the historical courtship story that emerges from Simms's letters and the literary one in *Castle Dismal* suggest that Simms used the novel as an outlet for the frustration, loss, and disappointment that he experienced during his married life. The sentimental and gothic conventions of literature allowed Simms to explore the emotion-laden thought material of his own experience as well as the guidelines and obstacles created by southern society's prescriptions for emotional life.

Castle Dismal became a symbol for the hopes and frustrations of life as a professional writer in the 1840s South in another way. Phillip C. Pendleton and James Burges, publishers of the *Magnolia*, the periodical in which Simms began to issue chapters of his ghost story in early 1842, boldly declared to readers that “we rejoice to believe that the day of southern lukewarmness to the necessity of mental culture, in our own land, has gone by forever. There is a glorious awakening. We have daily signs that a southern literature is demanded. The MAGNOLIA is demanded.” Centering their periodical within a public discourse on literature, manliness, and southern identity, the publishers declared that “the tone shall be manly, and the character and sentiment essentially and only Southern....We feel the sentiment of Southern intellectual independence, every where [sic], beginning to breath and burn around us” (*Letters* 1:328). The perception that the South as a region was becoming dependent on the North, politically, economically, and intellectually, produced a cultural anxiety that paralleled the anxieties that individual white southern men felt about their personal independence and mastery. Simms’s experience with southern literature had taught him to be less sanguine than the publishers of the *Magnolia*. He sent most of his larger volumes to northern publishers, who took a larger share of the profit than their counterparts to the south, but ensured that books would reach a larger audience. Likewise, periodicals thrived in the northern states, but similar attempts in the South were plagued by the problem of distribution across vast and discontinuous stretches of land. Simms identified additional regional obstacles: a lack of financial support, poor paper quality, and a dearth of contributors who could meet Simms’s literary standards (Simms, *Letters* 1:196-198; McCardell 155-165; O’Brien 571-580). Yet the largest share of the blame for the short life-span of southern periodicals, Simms admonished, belonged to the popular mind of the South: “If we reflect properly, the conclusion is irresistible, that the failure of the South to possess a literature of its own, arises not from any want either of her own men or her own material, but from the absolute and humiliating insensibility of the great body of her people to the value of such possession” (*Letters* 1:220, emphasis original).

While the serial version of *Castle Dismal* was being issued pseudonymously within the periodical’s pages in 1842, Simms gained confidence in the future of the *Magnolia* and accepted the role of associate editor. Then, after moving the periodical’s headquarters from Savannah to Charleston, he became sole editor. Simms’s leadership added subscribers to the magazine and also drew a greater quantity and quality of contributors. For once it seemed that the *Magnolia* had finally taken root, secure in the soil of Simms’s own backyard. Yet despite the dedication of his seemingly unlimited energies to the magazine, Simms was never able to overcome entirely the old obstacles that stood in the way of all southern periodicals. When this was compounded by personal disagreements between Pendleton and Burges, Simms decided to abandon the enterprise in May 1843, and the *Magnolia* died that June.

The failure of the periodical in which Simms had first published his gothic ghost story began to assume greater personal significance when he wrote to James Lawson, “Since throwing aside the Magazine, I have been seriously thinking of a tragedy — stretching it out, and taking notes” (*Letters* 1:353). This may have been a reference

to the manuscript fragment that Simms would later title “Rawlins’ Rookery.” Variations in the handwriting, as its style becomes more or less fine, indicate that Simms returned to this document at many different times. Other clues suggest a broad timeframe for its composition: its opening premise is the impending demise of the *Magnolia*; an invented letter in the text bears an 1842 date; the reverse side of one of the pages is a pass, dated 1843, for a slave to leave Woodlands plantation; and the cover page, which is written in a style of handwriting most similar to the latter half of the story, has the intended publication date of 1857, even though the story was never published. It is told from the narrative voice of Simms himself, in his resumed capacity as editor of the *Magnolia*:

My friends, I have a story of *the* story, which you will permit me, as an ancient Editor to narrate after mine own fashion. I shall use no art in doing this, for the story requires none, and almost tells itself, and I promise you, that, though an old Editor, given a little too much to writing in Nightgown and slippers, I shall be as little garrulous as possible. But, really, you must suffer me to have my say, in my own manner. (“Rawlins”)

The “story of *the* story” is that of the publication of the *Magnolia* version of “Castle Dismal.” Maintaining the charade that “Castle Dismal” was written by a Gualtier B. Singleton, and taking advantage of the fact that the final chapters were never issued in the serial version, Simms crafts a frame-story that is part fiction, part autobiographical self-reflection, in which Editor Simms goes off on a quest to find the author of “Castle Dismal”—who we know is also Simms! He probably found himself horribly witty when he said that his garrulousness “is somewhat necessary, in order that you should properly understand the idiosyncrasies of the very curious personage whom I propose to bring to your knowledge” (“Rawlins”). The pseudonym of the author of “Castle Dismal” allowed Simms to rend himself in two, explore his own discontents and emotional insecurities, and yet still engage in an act of Victorian masquerading that evaded the full implications of our knowledge that both editor and author were Simms.

The first half of the manuscript, probably written in the 1840s, concerns itself primarily with the *Magnolia* and southern society. When the publishers, and later Editor Simms, go looking for the native genius who wrote “Castle Dismal,” they first pass through the depot of “Dryrot,” and then on to the classical “Idalia”—both fictionalized names, but no doubt a satire on Simms’s own stomping grounds. The literary men ask about the missing author and are dismayed to find that the “witless citizens” have never heard of him and hope they never will. “Singleton? Who the — was Singleton? What did they care about Singleton?” (“Rawlins”). Simms likely included this jibe at intellectual anonymity and literary ignorance as a reference to a story he had heard told about himself. Supposedly, an English aristocrat, upon visiting Charleston, inquired after the residence of the William Gilmore Simms, only to be told that Simms was not considered a great man in Charleston. The astonished noble replied, “Simms not a great man! Then for God’s sake, who is your great man!” (Trent 129). Whether this actually happened or not is uncertain, and Simms’s reputation was certainly higher in Charleston, which sold and favorably reviewed his books, than Simms liked to admit. Nevertheless, Simms probably heard the gossip, and it certainly fueled his feelings of alienation and emotional dissonance with southern society.

Simms probably did not write the second half of “Rawlins’ Rookery” until 1857 or shortly before, but his productivity flourished in other literary labors. He also remained active in the effort to establish authorship as a career essential to society, as well as one that could satisfy masculine ideals of mastery. There was much uncertainty over whether authorship was an honorable profession, unlike the far more typical career paths of planting, law, politics, business, the military, and medicine (Glover 147-152; O’Brien 562-563, 567-568). This became most clear in the debate over an international copyright, which was opposed by those who differentiated intellectual labor from practical labor and who insisted that literary publications were not the author’s property. Simms wrote a series of letters for the *Southern Literary Messenger* arguing that the author’s right to protection against the unauthorized reprint of his works “is based upon the peculiar and personal labor and skill by which his books have been made.” Deemphasizing the combined labor of writing, printing, binding, publishing, and selling that manifested itself as a book, and also gainsaying the idea of literature as a universal property, Simms’s insisted that books “are emphatically his [the author’s] works. They are not *yours*” (10 [Aug 1844]: 455). Simms’s identification of literary creativity with personal ownership also linked his career with independent mastery: “The right of the author to the property of his productions, so far from being questionable, is really superior to that of all other producers....The fountain of their being is himself....He is peculiarly the thing he makes as the spider is of his web of gossamer, spinning from his brains and his sensibilities, as the latter from his bowels, the structure which he endows and inhabits. Thus then, *above*, we find him the sole proprietor” (10 [Aug 1844]: 456, emphasis original). In this articulation, literary *creation*, and even the sensibility that excited the fancy and provided the impulse for creation, could be intensely masculine. Representing morality, truth, and divinity in a different way from the women who were thought to passively symbolize those ideals, the male author participated in an *active* and manly exertion. “*He is its creator*,” Simms eulogized, “And he sends it [his work] abroad, even as God sends light, and air, and sunshine, for the benefit and the blessing of mankind” (10 [Jun 1844]: 345, emphasis original). At the same time that Simms sought to elevate the literary *genius* above his peers, he tried to avoid the dangerous implication that sensibility and literary scribbling might conflict with conventional notions of masculinity.

Simms’s arguments were not bought by everyone. When Francis Lieber made a similar case, one man retorted that an idea cannot be bound down, “as we can our lands and negroes and merchandize, and say, This is our property, or any man’s property, and it is not lawful to touch it” (*Southern Quarterly Review* 1 [Jan 1842] 253). Simms’s father-in-law seems to have reached the same conclusion, much to Simms’s great dismay. Simms complained to his neighbor, James Henry Hammond, that Nash Roach “is tenacious of his practice, his opinions, his experience, regards me as a literary man, not a practical one.” This condescension within the household seems not only to have set both adult men on edge, but also caused Simms considerable self-doubt, since Roach’s accusations did seem to have some kernel of truth: “Fortunately, he [Mr. Roach] is not in debt. I am the only debtor in the Establishment” (*Letters* 3:218).

At Woodlands plantation, Simms lived within a patriarchal world in which he was often uncertain whether he was actually a patriarch. It was his father-in-law’s

plantation. Usually, the southern wife relocated after marriage, exchanging her childhood home for that of her husband, and in some cases moving in with her husband's parents. The man's right to decide where his wife would live, as well as his right to periodically absent himself from her to fulfill the duties of his career, was tied to his economic responsibilities (Jabour 208-210). But Simms did not have any remaining immediate family in South Carolina when he married, and his choice of a career as a professional author was largely an untried one. So Simms chose to move in with Chevillette and her father. He probably hoped that the plantation income would help him through the difficult years when his books did not sell, and life on a plantation would also allow him to cultivate an image as one of the patrician gentry.

But until Nash Roach's death in 1858, Simms was never master of his own world. Even then, Woodlands was not willed directly to Simms, but rather to Chevillette, and then her eldest son (Guilds 353-354). More like the adolescent sons of the aged patriarchs who had set up their plantation empires at the beginning of the century, Simms always longed for escape from another man's authority. From the letters and family lore, it seems unlikely that there were many direct confrontations between the elder Roach and Simms. The only one mentioned by Simms's granddaughter concerned whether Roach would allow Simms to take Chevillette to Europe on a diplomatic mission. He would not (Guilds 120). That there were other conflicts between the two men over the life of their mutual dependent, Chevillette, seems probable considering Simms's perpetual desire to leave South Carolina for higher callings and Roach's indefatigable determination to keep Woodlands like some English country estate of time immemorial. Nash Roach provided a check against Simms's authority over Chevillette and the rest of the family, preventing Simms from fully living up to the ideal of patriarchal mastery and independence. Continually longing to escape Woodlands, he declared, "Mr. Roach's affairs do not prosper, and I seriously deliberate upon the propriety of transferring myself, family or not, to Philadelphia or New York" (*Letters* 2:195-196).

Around 1857, Simms again found escape from southern society and his domestic world through the manuscript "Rawlins' Rookery." The second half of the tale takes a darker and even more melodramatic turn as Editor Simms finds a personal friend of the missing author. Doctor Hilton, who was probably based on Hammond, complicates the confusion of pseudonyms by revealing that Gualtier B. Singleton's real name was Walter Rawlins—a name recycled from another novel that Simms wrote at about the same time as *Castle Dismal*. Nevertheless, the context of the manuscript and Simms's life makes it undeniable that Rawlins is supposed to stand as proxy for Simms himself, and through Hilton, Simms characterizes Rawlins as "strange but noble—a man of genius, generous, with fine impulses, but very wayward, eccentric, as is the case, I believe with your geniuses generally." Hilton explains to Editor Simms that he will not actually be able to speak to Rawlins because the discontented author has been missing for the past two months. "His home was hardly a grateful one to a person of his mind and sensibilities," Hilton explains. "He lived in his books and thoughts. He was always writing. His head teemed with fancies and inventions—a world, and beings of his mind amply compensating for his lack of society among men" ("Rawlins"). Imaginative

writing, and this manuscript in particular, provided Simms with what William Reddy calls an “emotional refuge” and defines as “a relationship, ritual, or organization... that provides safe release from the prevailing emotional norms and allows relaxation of emotional effort” (129). This refuge enabled Simms to escape from the normative constraints that southern society placed on men’s emotional life and which penetrated even into the quasi-private world of Woodlands plantation.

Instead of writing about the male author in conventional terms of southern masculinity, in “Rawlins’ Rookery,” Simms self-consciously indulged in the feminization of poetic sensibility. For Walter Rawlins, “love was a necessity. His need of sympathy was very urgent. His sensibilities, shyness, delicacy of soul and temper, made it so.” Generalizing from Rawlins to all men of letters, Doctor Hilton provides the most profound insight of the story: “all men of genius, let me tell you, have a certain feminine nature, which finds in love its true and only sufficing aliment” (“Rawlins”).

Margaret Fuller had offered a similar hypothesis in her 1845 social analysis, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, which was received as very radical by contemporaries. After recognizing the normative prescriptions of separate spheres that categorized “energy,” “power,” and “intellect” as masculine, and “harmony,” “beauty,” and “love” as feminine, Fuller argued that the real distribution of these traits in actual human beings made this a false dualism (155). “There is no wholly masculine man, no purely feminine woman” she boldly asserted, and there seemed to be no better example of this than the male intellectual (101, 103). “Wherever the poet or artist gave free course to his genius,” wrote Fuller, “he saw the truth, and expressed it in worthy forms, for these men especially share and need the feminine principle” (157). One southern periodical editor was unwilling to admit so much and responded by maintaining that the peculiarities of the female nature stem from her “nervous type.” For women, “every passion which springs solely from the heart, burns in them with a brilliancy unknown to the more phlegmatic constitution of men. Love, which is, but an episode with man, forms the whole story of a woman’s life.” Furthermore, “Imagination reigns predominant in woman. So great is her susceptibility that she rushes with facility from one feeling to another” (*Southern Quarterly Review* 10 [19 Jul 1846]: 167-168). Even the editor of *Russell’s Magazine*, Paul Hamilton Hayne, whose own works were praised for being “tender, touching, wild, passionate, and melancholy” (*Charleston Mercury* [12 Dec 1857]), thought that Fuller made “hasty generalizations” (*Russell’s* 1 [Jun 1857]: 232).

Sensibility provided no small problem for southern authors and the reviewers who had to present these authors and their texts for public consumption. By the 1850s, whenever southern reviewers found themselves using too many words like “sensibility,” “tenderness,” or “delicate fancy” to describe a particular male author and his art, they would, obsessively and almost without exception, include “manly” as a qualifier.¹⁰ One reviewer of Simms compared his mastery over the art of words to the masculine ritual of hunting on horseback: “he keeps his seat firmly, and sustains himself most gallantly until the chase terminates in the capture of the game, when the busy multitude clap their hands and throw up their hats in perfect wonder at the gallant bearing of the rider” (*New Orleans Miscellany* [Jan 1848]: 123-124). Other journalists thought it best to emphasize Simms’s

social status as a planter, debatable as that claim may have been. Charleston's *Southern Patriot* titled an 1848 article on Woodlands, "The Plantation of a Novelist," and avoided any mention of Nash Roach, probably to Simms's satisfaction. Focusing on animal life, scenery, and hunting, the journalist told readers that at Woodlands, Simms "cultivates cotton and literature" (27 Apr 1848). In 1859, the *Charleston Mercury* responded to an attack on Simms in another local newspaper by claiming that he had "the character and moral worth of a private gentleman" (1 Oct 1859).

The gendering of sensibility as feminine also had important implications for the relationships that southern men formed with others. Rawlins's sensibilities made him "a dependant [sic] and upon woman," much to the contrary of normative prescriptions and descriptions of southern men as independent masters who controlled the lives of the women in their households. Hilton elaborates in the more conventional language of sentimentalism and separate spheres, maintaining that woman "alone can yield the proper sympathy — can surrender her self to a kindred soul, and feel all its throbbing in her own. If truly loving she can appreciate any intellect, however subtle, however exalted, and minister to any sensibility, however exquisite and tender" ("Rawlins"). This feminine ideal of sensibility, located in woman, offered men the opportunity to relax their public exertion within a domestic haven (Berry 80). But the sentimental ideal did not fully dismiss the threat that feelings of dependence posed to a masculine sense of self, and Hilton explains that in Rawlins's "craving" for a woman who could share the sensibilities of a literary man, the author "has been disappointed." Rawlins's "generous sympathies made him an easy victim to a cold, coarse nature, which possessed the serpent's wisdom only. His easy faith, blind confidence, warm passions, made him succumb to the trained cunning of a mere woman — the merest woman, in the lowest sense, — in the world" ("Rawlins"). Portraying Rawlins's wife as a seductive Eve, rather than a symbol of morality and virtue, Simms elevates the literary genius's capacity for emotional sincerity even as he maintains sensibility as a feminine ideal.

Rawlins's alienation from his wife represented the emotional suffering that Simms experienced in his relationship with his own wife, Chevillette, as well as in his relationship with South Carolina. Offering an interpretation of his own life, Simms has Hilton explain that after Rawlins married, his wife "fell heir to certain lands, here, which she now occupies, and hither they removed; he abandoning his profession—at which he had done but little — and becoming planter on a small scale His wife, cold, coarse, vulgar, as at the beginning, — coarsening still — has mortified his affections" ("Rawlins"). In a similar vein, Simms wrote in a letter to Hammond, "I am an author without living in the city of publication — an anomaly which is not to be found in other countries, or even in our own in the case of other individuals. This abridges my profits, while it increases my necessities & tasks. You will see the difficulties of this point without my dwelling on them" He continued, "My wife is an invalid — breeding every year — is an only child — her father advanced in life—unwilling that she should leave home even for a week's visit, — and I too have learned to be a nurse — to rise at midnight & kindle light & fire — to warm the infant's tea and subdue myself to something of a drudge" (*Letters* 2:247). Simms seemed to feel, however unjustly, that his wife, domestic duties, and life at Woodlands stymied his literary creativity.

The suffering that Simms felt in his interactions with Chevillet stemmed from the divergence between his own behavior and the emotional prescriptions of southern society. This intensified the love-hate relationship between the male author and his region, manifesting itself in a gendered metaphor of unrequited love. Rawlins's wife did not simply represent how Simms saw his relationship with his wife; she also embodied Simms's mixed feelings about South Carolina. At the end of 1856, shortly before the most likely date that Simms wrote the second half of "Rawlins' Rookery," the author decided to undertake a lecture tour through the Northern states. But when sectional animosity resulted in damning notices from New York newspapers and a cold treatment from audiences, Simms wrote to the other venues to cancel the rest of the tour. After returning to South Carolina, Simms then discovered that rumors and the state's newspapers were implying that his decision to abandon the tour was unmanly (*Letters* 3:456-458, 474-475). Hammond wrote to his slandered friend, "As I see it, you have gone North at a somewhat critical time for you & martyred yourself for So Ca who will not even buy your books ...you ought to have known that there is no gratitude in the South & that a man is a fool who will sacrifice a red cent for her" (qtd. in *Letters* 3: 465-466n). Simms replied with equal indignation toward both northern sectionalism and South Carolina:

You are right in saying that S.C. had no claim of self-sacrifice upon me. But mon ami, neither you nor I, — are quite capable, whatever the wrongs or neglect we suffer — to condemn, discard, or escape from our own impulses. My heart (suffer me to have one) was slavishly in these topics of S.C. I could no more fling them off from it, than I could fly. And my mind followed my heart Do not you reproach me with this weakness, in which I could not suffer a selfishness to share. I expect nothing from S.C., but I have been too long accustomed to toils & sacrifice for her, to feel her injustice now. My losses are all pecuniary. She will never make them up to me. She will probably never acknowledge my performances. (*Letters* 3: 468-469)

Simms wrote of South Carolina as though the state were a haughty, cruel woman. He had borne for her an unrequited love, and now she had made her deception clear. This was not the first time that he had gendered South Carolina as feminine, and he had alternately hated and loved her embrace, longing to escape it, but then choosing it again and again. Now more than ever, he felt that South Carolina and his domestic life had ensnared him and extracted every duty of piety, while giving no affection in return. In the second half of "Rawlins' Rookery," all of Simms's frustrations with his state, wife, family, and position as a literary man in the South merged into a single metaphor of disappointed love.

Through Rawlins, Simms could exercise mastery over his imaginative world and take control of his life to an extent that he felt unable to do outside his study — what Paul Hamilton Hayne recalled as Simms's "*sanctum sanctorum*, whence all but a few sympathetic friends were excluded" (qtd. in *Guilds* 252). Simms failed to be the patriarchal master of his household who could have 'written' the lives of his dependents, and so he instead 'wrote' Rawlins, Rawlins's wife, and a new narrative in which he did take control and leave the stultifying landscape of his home. Yet despite Simms's ability to find emotional refuge in his study, the ritual of writing, and the manuscript

“Rawlins Rookery,” ultimately he was unable to exorcise fully the ghost of femininity that continued to haunt his profession and wrack him and other men with insecurity.

Michael O’Brien wisely pointed out that southerners lived in more than their geographical places—they also conjectured imaginative worlds that imperfectly reflected the social reality of the American South (21). We must further explore the emotional scenery of southerners’ imaginative worlds, what they *felt* while there, as well as how those emotions influenced their interactions with other real men and women.

Southerners had to navigate between their own goals, thought material, and emotions, as well as ideas about what emotions society considered it proper for them to express. This process was especially strenuous for men who took their cues for emotional expression not only from southern society, but also from literary culture. For writers particularly, the goals of literary labor, and the emotional expression associated with those goals in a romantic era, diverged from the demands made by southern society. Literary men like Simms tried to internalize the cheerfulness that they expressed publically, but they failed to erase the distance between normative emotional expression and their most dismal feelings. Simms and other southern intellectuals longed to position themselves as strong-willed masters, but persistently failed to create power relationships which would reflect such ideals. Simms found that the constraints of southern society on masculine selfhood even infiltrated into the quasi-private world of the plantation. Only through intensely personal reflections like “Rawlins’ Rookery” did he find an emotional refuge and establish his own sense of mastery over an interior world. This articulation of poetic mastery was only partially consonant with conventional notions of mastery over real dependents, but however threatening it was to cultural expectations, it did little to alter them. Highly suggestive of the power of the southern emotional regime, Simms may have intended to publish “Rawlins’ Rookery” in 1857, but he never did.

Notes

¹ This paper extends from a larger project in which I am collaborating with John M. McCardell Jr. of The University of the South to produce a new volume that combines annotated versions of *Castle Dismal* and “Rawlins’ Rookery” with a biographical narrative of Simms’s life. My research has benefited from this collaboration as well as from the suggestions of several other professors at the University of the South.

² For more on these masculine gender ideals see Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor* (14-15, 22, 328-330) and McCurry (56-61, 91, 304).

³ See McCardell (141-176); Faust (53-55, 87-88, 115); and O’Brien (20).

⁴ The literature on the cultural construction and gendering of sensibility is extensive, even when limited to the American context: see Halttunen (57-58); Fox-Genovese (195, 202-203); Barker-Benfield, *The Horrors* (45-57); Hessinger (29-30, 42); and a recent paper presented at the Southern Historical Association by Woods. For sensibility’s British origins see Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility* xvii-xx, (24-26, 35-36).

⁵ Reddy (118-130). In France, emotional regimes roughly corresponded with changes in political culture, but the same framework seems adjustable to the nineteenth century United States, where

the political division inherent in federalism and augmented by the sectional differences created emotional regimes on national, regional, and perhaps even the state level, which both differentiation and overlap. For another perspective on American emotional history see Stearns and Lewis.

⁶ In *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, Jonathan Daniel Wells describes a southern middle class that became conscious of its ideological differences with planters in the 1850s. Wells and other historians like Jennifer R. Green have helped to outline these differences (see Green's essay in a volume she co-edited with Wells, *The Southern Middle Class in the Long Nineteenth Century*), though I believe that sentimentalism was one intellectual strand that united both middle class professionals and planters. Simms himself straddled these class lines, often benefiting from identification with his father-in-law's plantation, yet taking more personal fulfillment from his literary career.

⁷ See Fox-Genovese (195, 202-203); Berry (10-14); and Woods.

⁸ Hayne qtd. in A.S. Salley's introduction, "William Gilmore Simms," *Letters I: lxxxii-lxxxiii* and in O'Brien 404.

⁹ See Halttunen (57-58); Fox-Genovese (195, 202-203); Barker-Benfield, *The Horrors* (45-57); Hessinger (29-30, 42); and Woods.

¹⁰ For examples that relate to southern authors other than Simms see particularly "Hayne's Poems," *The Southern Literary Messenger* 22 (Feb 1855): 122-124 and "Southern Poets and Poetry," *Charleston Mercury* (12 Dec 1857).

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Simms and Hawthorne on History and Historical Development

Sean R. Busick

William Gilmore Simms's forgotten classic, *The Cassique of Kiawah*, is an exceptionally good novel, based upon accurate history, and a meditation on the historical development of South Carolina. One can also draw some telling parallels between it and the work of Nathaniel Hawthorne. Simms scholar Masahiro Nakamura has noted that there are several similarities between the two authors' lives and circumstances. Most notably, both suffered the emotional disruption of losing a parent early in life. As a result, "both placed a high value on order and home" that can be observed in their writing (Nakamura 190). Of the few critics who have actually read *The Cassique of Kiawah*, most number it among Simms's best novels. David Aiken has pronounced the novel "a lost masterpiece," and "one of the great works of American literature." Another Simms scholar described the novel as "at once a major historical romance, a delightful novel of manners, and a realistic depiction of the early evolution of a society. It is also a final, full-scale revelation of Simms's profoundest thoughts on the principles of his art" (Aiken iii; Blythe 54).

Like all of Simms's romances, *The Cassique of Kiawah* is based on careful research in the available sources. Therefore Simms considered it not simply a work of fiction, but also a truthful history. William James Rivers, author of a history of colonial South Carolina, gave Simms his approval of the use he had made of history in *The Cassique of Kiawah*. Responding to Rivers' praise, Simms wrote:

Your kind estimate of my volume, of course gave me the greatest satisfaction; for you are one of the few, whom I know, capable of following me along the route which I pursued. You, perhaps, better than most persons, know the embarrassments of such a study, and have grasped, as well as may be done, the whole extent of the province I flatter myself that I have been the first to reveal the latent and romantic uses which lay in the soil. But I must not insist on these matters. It is enough if I congratulate myself on the favorable opinion of one so well knowing & ably judging as yourself (*Letters* 6: 199).

Though Simms realized that most readers were not well-informed enough about the history of colonial South Carolina to appreciate fully the novel's historical accuracy, he knew that historical romances were an important way of teaching history to a popular audience.

The first major comparison between Simms and Hawthorne concerns how they both use serious history in their imaginative work. History was also important

to Hawthorne and provided more than simply a picturesque setting for his fiction. As David Levin has observed, “most of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s work centers in the past. From the stark first-generation Boston of *The Scarlet Letter* to the rich but decadent Rome of *The Marble Faun*, all four of his romances ask the contemporary reader to study human conduct against a deep, gloomy historical background” (Levin 7). Though Hawthorne’s fiction may not always be as obviously historical as Simms’s Revolutionary War Romances, it is thoroughly informed by his historical consciousness. Even *The Blithedale Romance*, which has a contemporary setting, is written as a history of a failed experiment in utopianism based on his experience at the Brook Farm commune. Both authors often sought to deserve well of their country “by snatching from oblivion some else unheard-of fact of history” (Hawthorne, “Edward Randolph’s Portrait” 198).

With respect to Simms, not only is *The Cassique of Kiawah* based upon accurate history, but it is also a commentary on the nature of historical development. Set in the new colony of Carolina in 1684, the novel provides Simms an opportunity to describe the early years of the colony’s historical development, when the seeds of later refinement and civilization were being planted in a harsh environment by a rough people. As Simms describes it, Charleston, at this early stage, has a gallows but as yet there are “no churches, no marketplaces, no places of amusement, religion, pleasure, trade The community has scarcely begun yet to work together as a whole” (Simms, *Cassique* 104).

In this regard, colonial Charleston is no different from the Puritan colony described by Nathaniel Hawthorne in *The Scarlet Letter*. Mortality and human nature mocked the millennialist aspirations of Hawthorne’s Puritan settlers. Soon after their arrival, they found themselves compelled to construct both a prison and a cemetery in their City on a Hill. “The founders of a new colony,” Hawthorne explained, “whatever Utopia of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognized it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison” (Hawthorne, *Scarlet* 53). In *The Blithedale Romance*, a tale, based on the author’s own experience at Brook Farm, of the founding and ultimate collapse of a utopian commune, Hawthorne has his fictional utopians neglect to provide for a cemetery. Then, near the end of the novel, when a woman has died, they are faced with a dilemma: “Blithedale, thus far in its progress, had never found the necessity of a burial-ground.” They first considered designing a new “funereal ceremony, which should be the proper symbolic expression of our ... eternal hopes,” which they would “substitute for those customary rites.” But in the end, the defeated utopians contented themselves with the old fashion and buried her “very much as other people have been, for hundreds of years gone by” (Hawthorne, *Blithedale* 211).

The first settlers, who attempted to plant civilization in the wilderness, whether in Carolina or Massachusetts, were, according to Simms in *The Cassique of Kiawah*, generally blackguards and ruffians. It was these more pragmatic characters, not utopians, who founded successful colonies. “We could not well do without them. There is a great deal of dirty work to be done in new communities,” Simms explains. The privateer Harry Calvert was of this sort. There followed shrewd merchants ambitious for financial gain. Social position and refinement came closely on the heels of wealth. “This is a history,”

writes Simms. "It is the history in Carolina" (Simms, *Cassique* 143, 145). Yet however much Carolina prospered, human nature remained fixed.

So, *The Cassique of Kiawah* is the history of how, from humble origins, the little settlement planted between the Ashley and Cooper rivers began to grow into what would become a proud and prosperous civilization. That civilization was built and safeguarded by individual men and women of great personal character. "Here, from this frail hamlet," Simms writes,

we have seen great patriots, and sagacious statesmen, and mighty warriors emerge, doing great things in various seasons, and rising into noblest heroism in the hour of storm and danger. And we can not forget, and should not, how this infant heart beat, in this lone region, with all those pulses of courage, and self-denial, and faith, and virtue, which men were decreed to honor in coming times — to love and honor, without once asking where these beautiful virtues were first cradled for renown! (196)

Simms was familiar with, but suspicious of, overly deterministic European theories about historical progress. Simms's writings show that he was far more interested in the power of personal character and action to shape history than he was in impersonal forces such as materialism, climate, or a mystical national spirit.¹ Individuality based upon free will, Simms explained to his friend James Henry Hammond, is a Christian principle "that separates man from the mass, and lifts him into a responsible personality, crowning him with a will which is based on new considerations of his own importance." He also explained to Hammond his religious belief in original sin. That with sin death entered the world and man was driven from earthly paradise. "I regard the penalty which was incurred by Adam & his race, as the forfeiture of the gift of immortality" (*Letters* 2: 385). Human action and free will shaped history. History therefore should be imbued with the artist's touch and presented as a story in which autonomous individuals play a large role, not exclusively as a story of classes or nations in which all individuals are lost in the faceless multitude. True, he recognized that the moral objects of the historian "concern not the individual so much as the race." Yet, the romancer's "inquiries conduct him into the recesses of the individual heart." To Simms, the romancer's task was more attractive precisely because "it admits of so much more of that detail, in the affairs of a favourite, which brings us to a familiar acquaintance with the graces of the family circle, the nice sensibilities of the heart, the growth of the purest affections, and those more ennobling virtues of the citizen." This was part of the reason Simms sought to seamlessly blend history and art, to employ history for the purposes of art. Properly researched and written, the historical romance need not be a "disparagement" or "perversion" of history. "On this subject we are daily growing more and more enlightened" (*Views and Reviews* 42-45).

Because of his belief in the Christian doctrines of free will and original sin, Simms flatly rejected any theories based on the inevitability of progress or utopian perfectibility. Like most educated people of the nineteenth century, he marveled at the improvements in technology that were changing his world and accepted this as a necessary, though limited, type of progress. However, Simms was careful to distinguish

between moral and material progress. It was moral progress for which people should strive. But moral progress was far less certain; it was not inevitable and there were limits to how far we could progress morally.² Once sin entered the world through Adam it was no longer possible for man to live in an earthly paradise. With human perfectibility and earthly utopia both impossible, Simms recognized that there are limits to progress. “We doubt if the world improves one jot from all the truths which are told it, especially of itself; and we doubt if it can improve under any existing condition; and we half doubt whether it was designed that it should improve, beyond a certain point; and so we do not so much believe in a millenium as in a regeneration,” Simms writes in *The Cassique of Kiawah*. He continues, “we are but the germs for a new creation, under a new dispensation, and the development goes just so far — and there an end for the present” (*Cassique* 120). Material and scientific advances were occurring every day, but none of these improved humanity’s moral or spiritual nature.

Hawthorne was similarly skeptical of the idea of progress. In *The Blithedale Romance*, for instance, Miles Coverdale, Hawthorne’s narrator, remarks “As regards human progress, ... let them believe in it who can, and aid in it who choose! If I could earnestly do either, it might be all the better for my comfort” (*Blithedale* 217). Hawthorne’s skepticism concerning human perfectibility, or even progressive improvement, comes across so forcefully in *The Blithedale Romance* that James D. B. DeBow even recommended the novel as a corrective to what he considered the delusions and sophistry of Harriet Beecher Stowe (DeBow 487-8).³

Simms, like most nineteenth-century southerners, accepted the idea of progress with qualifications. The first qualification was that there were limits to progress and that we cannot transform the City of Man into the City of God. It is with this human limitation in mind that, in *The Cassique of Kiawah*, he has Governor Quarry ridicule Edward Berkeley’s idealism. “He is something of a curiosity;” Quarry says of Berkeley, “is antiquated in his notions of virtue; believes in human perfectibility, and speaks of humanizing the Indians, and putting them in the small-clothes of civilization, as if it were any concern of his, yours, or mine, whether men go to the devil or not! We are wiser, and know that the best way to take care of the race is to see that one does not himself go bare!” (*Cassique* 132). The second qualification was that Simms carefully distinguished moral from material progress. The third qualification was that he rejected any notion of the inevitability of progress.

In Simms’s view, the path to higher levels of civilization was narrow and strewn with dangerous obstacles. Decline was as likely as progress and there were no guarantees that moral progress would accompany scientific achievements. Having separated scientific from moral advances, he viewed progress as more like a rolling hoop going through cycles, or revolutions, of ascent and decline, than as a steady ascent up a slope. Morality tended to spin in revolutions between progress and decline, independent of the state of science and technology, but never reaching perfection. Here Simms was in agreement with Thomas Jefferson, who believed that England, the wealthiest and most industrialized nation on earth, was morally bankrupt.

As distinguished Simms scholar James Kibler has shown, “Simms above all advocates an inspired way of seeing, not bounded by the utilitarian or empirical but,

rather, open to the deepened mystery of the world around. Certainly not the reduced and impoverished materialist's way of seeing the world as real estate or resources to exploit for profit" (Kibler 217). As a Christian he knew that the only truly profitable endeavors were those that benefitted man's moral and spiritual nature. Therefore Simms was appalled by the excessive materialism and faith in science of some of his contemporaries. "Novelties of invention do not establish the fact of moral superiority," he explained. Such novelties merely satisfy our "economies" or "gratify [our] animal passions" (*Egeria* 202, 203). Advances in transportation, "the capacity to overcome time and space, are wonderful things — but they are not virtues I do not believe that all the steam power in the world can bring happiness to one poor human heart. Still less can I believe that all the railroads in the world can carry one poor soul to heaven" (*Social* 53).

We find a critique of excessive materialism and unquestioning faith in scientific advancements in Hawthorne's work as well. In his short story, "The Celestial Railroad," he powerfully ridicules the notion that advances in technology are virtues that bring us closer to the Celestial City. Another classic example is found in a modern man of science from "The Birthmark," whose faith in man's control over nature and his love of science ultimately prove stronger than his love for his wife. Hawthorne writes, "the momentary circumstance was too strong for him; he failed to look beyond the shadowy scope of time, and, living once for all in eternity, to find the perfect future in the present" (Hawthorne, "Birthmark" 220). He destroys that which is beautiful seeking that which is perfect. Also, in *The Blithedale Romance*, the narrator, hearing a supposedly scientific lecture on spiritualism, remarks "Alas, my countrymen, methinks we have fallen on an evil age! ... [T]he soul of man is descending to a lower point than it has ever before reached We are pursuing a downward course, in the eternal march" (*Blithedale* 183). Both men were, in some respects, quite progressive for their era, however both also voiced this conservative strain of skepticism.

In *The Cassique of Kiawah*, Simms mocks mankind's misplaced faith in reason to improve our moral condition or lift us to a higher level of dignity. "We are apt to speak of reason as the distinguishing attribute of man, and to prattle, with wondrous self-complacency, upon its dignity and grandeur," Simms writes. Yet, he asks, do we use our reason to improve our moral or spiritual state? His answer:

Not one in a hundred of those who thus pride themselves, and prattle, ever employ it with any due regard to the superior interests of immortality, or even of a considerate and becoming humanity. We use it rather as a drudge — a dog, with which we hunt down the game that is started by our fancies or our passions — and in this we exhibit ourselves as children only; our toys and sports being scarcely a whit more dignified than those of children, and only more imposing, in our sight, as involving the exercise of intenser passions, which are far less innocent than those which beguile the boy (*Cassique* 323).

Despite our highly prized reason, we have failed to progress morally beyond children and are no closer to establishing an earthly paradise.

Hawthorne agreed with Simms on the limits of human reason. "There are no new truths, much as we have prided ourselves on finding some," wrote Hawthorne in *The Blithedale Romance* (201). This was, undoubtedly, one of the lessons Hawthorne took

away from his experience of communal living at Brook Farm. Furthermore, this attitude goes far toward explaining why he turned toward history in his fiction. Believing that human nature was constant, Hawthorne viewed history and experience as sources of true wisdom.

More important to Simms than reason, was strength of character. Through responsibly exercising his free will, Simms believed that the individual man or woman could separate himself or herself from the mass. Free from the despotism and moral corruption of old Europe, the American colonists had the opportunity, not to build the City of God, but to attain a slightly higher level of moral development: "Here, manhood, if it so wills, can live in every vein and muscle, in every beat of heart and brain. And here," Harry Calvert concludes, "I can maintain my manhood—the noblest of all mortal conditions; though I may not be able to escape pain and privation" (*Cassique* 597).

Similarly, one of the morals of Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* was that those who seek to reform the world should begin with themselves. If the Blithedale utopians had contented themselves with this humbler project, they may well have succeeded. We might also make note here of Hawthorne's short story, "The Earth's Holocaust," in which overzealous reformers destroy the earth in their misguided attempt to save it. This story expresses his conviction "that man's efforts to improve society will continue to accomplish nothing until the heart is purified" (Turner 95).

Both Simms and Hawthorne offered, through their fiction, sophisticated commentary on the nature and process of historical development. For both men, "the romance provided the perfect literary mode for the expression of the historical imagination" (Holman 47). Like Hawthorne, Simms understood that history is made by individual men and women. Though both men believed that human nature was constant and were skeptical of the excess of reform movements that proliferated in nineteenth-century America, both also affirmed the strength of the individual human heart.

Notes

¹ For one explanation of how and why eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Americans often explained historical events as the result of individual actions and decisions rather than impersonal historical forces, see Wood's "Conspiracy."

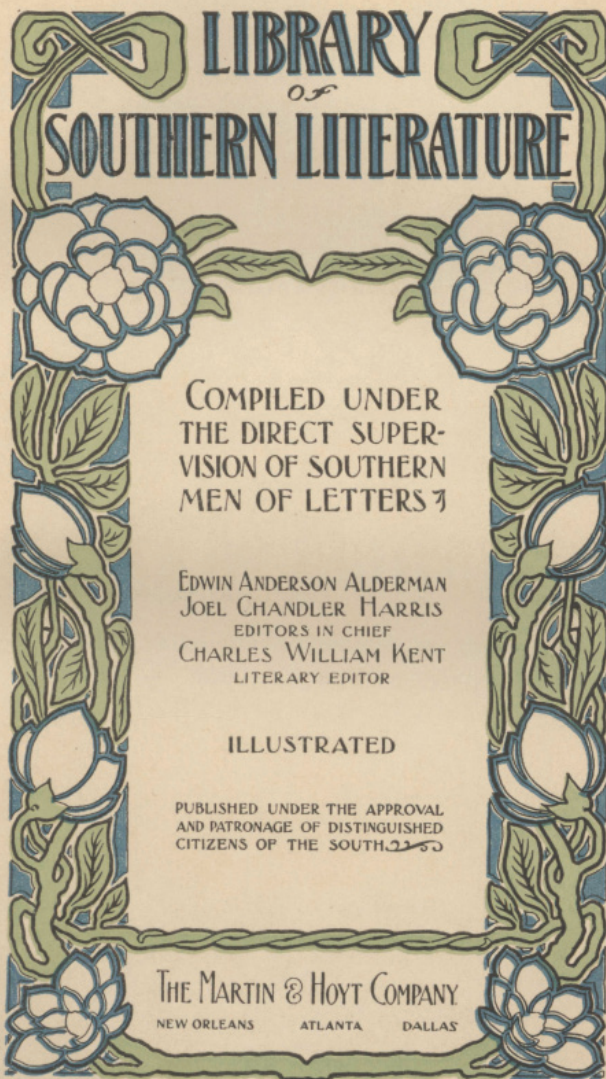
² For Simms's view of progress and how he differentiated between moral and material progress, see Busick "Actual and Ideal" and *Sober Desire*, Pearce "All Aboard" (79-85), Roberts "Mighty River," Smith "Feel and Touch," and Tate *Conservatism* (199).

³ See also Fox-Genovese (134).

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Title page from the *Library of Southern Literature*, the 17-volume, 8,400-page anthology of southern writing that was published over the course of 16 years, beginning in 1907.

Forum

William Gilmore Simms wrote a lot and, in doing so, played important roles in his life time. His significance has diminished considerably since. Indeed, he is scarcely read. As the forum below explores, there are multiple reasons why a figure, who was once central in not just southern, but American literary life, has not been so for generations. In considering the fact, several of the respondents to David Moltke-Hansen's think-piece, "The Elephant out of the Room: Reflections on William Gilmore Simms and the Anthologies," raise the issue of which Simms pieces might best merit inclusion in future anthologies, how, and why. Recent scholarship suggests some possible answers. For instance, Matthew Brennan's 2010 The Poet's Holy Craft: William Gilmore Simms and Romantic Verse Tradition makes the case that not only did Simms precede Emerson and others Americans in his use of Wordsworth and Coleridge, but he did so with a level of technical sophistication and fluency that resulted in some fine poems, many included in James Everett Kibler's expanded, twentieth anniversary edition, also from 2010, of Selected Poems of William Gilmore Simms. Over the last couple of decades, too, Mary Ann Wimsatt, John C. Guilds, and Keen Butterworth have identified, in addition to what they have called Tales of the South and Backwoods Tales, other "Selections from the Writings of William Gilmore Simms" — letters, , nonfiction, and verse — to make up The Simms Reader. How such texts are included and deployed in the class room is the preoccupation of other respondents. Whether and, if so, how this matters are yet other questions taken up. Affordable classroom editions of Simms's selected works are now issuing from both the University of Arkansas Press and the University of South Carolina Press; his complete book works are also being made available digitally through the Simms Initiatives at simms.library.sc.edu.

The Elephant Out of the Room: Reflections on William Gilmore Simms and the Anthologies

David Moltke-Hansen

Where oh where has William Gilmore gone?
...Oh where, oh where can Simms be?

The questions were already fair ones by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century: what place should William Gilmore Simms have in anthologies of American and southern literature? No less a critic than Edgar Allan Poe, in his 4 October 1845 *Broadway Journal* review of Simms's short story collection *The Wigwam and the Cabin*, had judged him "the best novelist which this country has, on the whole, produced" (190-91). This assessment from that source would seem to suggest that he should have had, and should still have, a substantial place in anthologies. Admittedly, Poe's review appeared before the so-called American Renaissance of the 1850s and the publication then of acclaimed works by Melville, Hawthorne, Whitman, and others. It was as well,

however, before the appearance of Simms's best novels. Among these were *Woodcraft* (called by Jan Bakker "The first 'Realistic' Novel in America") and *The Cassique of Kiawah*. These, too, issued in the '50s, the same decade that saw publication of twenty titles in a selected edition of Simms's works.

Clearly, no antebellum southerner, after Poe's departure for the North, played a larger or more visible role in the South's literary framing and life or in the South's place in the nation's imagination and cultural development. Yet, even so, *The Library of Southern Literature* of 1909 gives Simms only 38 pages out of 6,079 (in the first 13 volumes) devoted to 274 individual writers. Though Poe gets slightly more, on average authors and orators receive 22 pages. In the final analysis, these differences in page counts do not reflect as much critical or historical assessment of various writers' works and roles as other considerations.

The kind of judgment at work is clear. Excluding the ten for whom there are no dates given, only three writers from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and ten Revolutionary-era figures are included — just over four percent of the total from the first two centuries of the region's then three-centuries-long history. The 25 children of the Revolution represented are another nine percent. Add the fifty from the next generation, the one largely responsible for starting the Civil War but mostly too old to fight, and less than a third of the collection is of writers of the pre-Civil War South. On the other hand, there are 96 writers from the Civil War generation (35 percent of the total), and eighty (29 percent), born too late to fight, who nevertheless grew up in the shadow of the war and Reconstruction. Almost a half century after secession and over forty years after Simms's death, *The Library* was foregrounding southern authors of those intervening decades. This emphasis means that the lost cause and the New South substantially overshadowed their antecedents—denominated, after the war, the Old South.

Almost ninety years later, the editors of the 1998 Norton anthology of *The Literature of the American South* made the same kind of judgment call. Just over twenty percent of the volume treats figures and works from the colonial and antebellum South. Roughly another thirty percent focuses on writers who flourished between the end of Reconstruction and World War II. Almost half the volume features authors, many still alive, working in the latter half of the twentieth century. This similarity is only partial explanation for the fact that the collections do not include many of the same writers. Additionally, one needs to remember that *The Library* excludes African Americans and abolitionist white southerners and visitors, and *The Literature of the American South* gives a third of the space devoted to the colonial and antebellum South to such figures. For the postbellum period, the percentage is closer to half. Consequently, just ten percent of the writers in *The Library* appear in the later collection. Simms is one of those, and again he gets more pages than the average figure—twenty instead of 13.

A few other, recent anthologies similarly include Simms but not substantially. In the new, five-volume, eighth edition of *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (2011), Simms does not figure among the writers represented in the Authors section of the student website for volume B, which covers the years 1825-1860 (www.wwnorton.com/college/english/naal8/). Yet authors with whom he often was favorably compared in his

own day — Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, and William Cullen Bryant — are, together, of course, with Poe, Dickinson, Whitman, and Hawthorne. Simms does not figure either among the authors included in the section on “Slavery, Race, and the Making of American Literature.” Indeed, only abolitionists do, if one excepts Thomas Jefferson, and he was a critic of slavery while also a slave holder. It is as if only anti-slavery and northern voices addressed or fictionalized the issues that are the focus of this section. Why, therefore, they needed to argue as they did is unclear.

An excerpt of Simms’s *Young America* piece, “Americanism in Literature,” does appear in the next section, “Region, Nation, Hemisphere.” The only other white southerner included, if one does not count Lincoln, is Mary Boykin Chesnut. Reportedly, this is because the many teachers of American literature surveyed indicated whom and what they wanted included, and that list reflected the joining of two historical developments — the canonization of certain writers, beginning in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and the discovery of voices of historically neglected and subordinated populations, especially in the third and fourth quarters of the twentieth century.

Simms, of course, did not enter the newly forming canon when Irving, Cooper, Melville, and Hawthorne did. Neither did he a generation later, when William Peterfield Trent, Simms’s first scholarly biographer and harsh critic, started writing favorably on and anthologizing Poe, whom European writers celebrated. Even before Simms’s death in 1870, the *Charlestonian* had seen his national reputation fall with the Confederacy he had vigorously supported, the slave regime that many in the North had come to despise, and the passing of the taste for historical romances. Although reprints of most of the titles in the selected edition of his works were available up until the publication of *The Library*, thereafter little was, and this meant that Simms was effectively not teachable and, therefore, not of interest as a subject of study.

The publication of five volumes of his letters in 1952-56, the growth of scholarship on the plantation as well as slavery, starting in the 1960s, and the development of the field of southern literary study through the 1970s and after meant that there were new reasons to consider Simms. Consequently, the last three decades of the twentieth century saw more published on Simms than the previous hundred years. More of Simms’s work also became available again, sometimes in scholarly editions. Nevertheless, not enough titles were affordable for teaching purposes. Moreover, the total corpus was huge and largely available only in one institution, the South Caroliniana Library of the University of South Carolina. No wonder others among his contemporaries continued to get more attention. Even though the last decade of the twentieth and the first decade of the twenty-first centuries saw more dissertations on him (41) than had appeared in all the years before, the Modern Language Association International Bibliography lists roughly four times as many scholarly publications on Cooper, more than ten times as many on Hawthorne, and 16 times as many on Poe over the past decade.

It is not surprising either, therefore, that Simms is not yet included more prominently and often in anthologies of American literature. Consider an anthology conceived differently than *The Norton*. The sixth edition of *The Heath Anthology of American Literature* (2009) includes in its volume B, covering the “Early Nineteenth

Century (1800-1865),” not only Native American and Hispanic authors representing their respective cultures and homelands, but also sections on regional cultures. One of these latter is titled “Race, Slavery, and the Invention of the ‘South.’” Once again, there are numerous abolitionist and African American voices. There also, however, are figures such as Caroline Lee Hentz, a Massachusetts pro-slavery neighbor and later friend of Harriet Beecher Stowe writing in Alabama, and George Fitzhugh, the self-proclaimed sociologist and pro-slavery, anti-capitalist theorist from Virginia. Yet Simms is not among them despite the fact that he did more to imagine or invent the South than any other single individual. Neither, despite his humorous writings, is he included in the section, under “The Development of Narrative,” called “A Sheaf of Humor of the Old Southwest.” And despite his average of one published poem per week over 45 years, he does not appear in the section on “The Emergence of American Poetic Voices” either.

The first volume of *The Bedford Anthology of American Literature* (2008) is apparently as unmindful. The section considering “Calls for a National Literature,” something on which Simms wrote influentially and frequently, does not feature him but, instead, as the token white southerner, Augustus Baldwin Longstreet. Although Simms was for many years the single most influential cultural journalist and periodical editor in the South, he does not figure either in the section on “The Role of the Periodical Press.” Again, too, he is excluded from the ranks of poets, also from the section on “The Meanings of the Civil War.”

In the face of such inattention, it is something of a surprise to open another new collection. Volume 1 of the 2011 *Longman’s Anthology of American Literature* actually includes an important Simms short story. The section on Simms and his gothic tale, “Grayling; or ‘Murder Will Out,’” spreads over 24 pages, just after the two hundred pages devoted to Thoreau. The difference may startle as well. Yet the inclusion of this well-regarded short story is suggestive. Poe explicitly acknowledged following Simms as a gothic tale teller, after all.

A number of Simms’s other stories also explore sensational themes, including racial and sexual relations, in complex and surprising ways. “Calayo; or the Loves of the Driver,” published in *Godey’s Ladies’ Book*, is an example. The debate between a predatory black slave driver and a Catawba Indian about the freedoms and oppressions in their lives is set within the story of the driver’s pursuit of the Native American’s wife. In another twist of these racial and gendered issues and relations, Simms’s “ante-colonial” romance *Vasconcelos* (1853) has an heroic, run-away, meztizo slave who is murdered, a young, incestuously abused, white noble woman dressed and stained as a black boy, and a white Portuguese protagonist who marries the daughter of the Native American chieftain Tuscaloosa and remains behind when the remnants of the Spanish expeditionary force of Hernando de Soto flee their failed mission. In Simms’s humorous tales, much praised by modern critics, there are other explorations that also destabilize expectations and refigure the landscape of American literary development. This is true whether they are regarded as fantasies or as political critiques or as anticipations of Mark Twain or local colorists.

Having Simms deployed to such purposes in future anthologies could be interesting and even instructive. It won’t happen overnight, the promise of the Longman anthology

to the contrary notwithstanding. First Simms must become more available for classroom teaching. The University of South Carolina Press's Print-on-Demand offerings of sixty-plus Simms titles by 2014 will facilitate this. Second, Simms must be read in broader contexts and discourses. As scholars of African American and Native American representations are learning, Simms is a significant figure. Interesting work on him and Hawthorne and on his influence as a dialect writer is suggestive as well about directions to go. Too, he is an ideal person through whom to access and analyze cultural and other networks of the mid-nineteenth century, given the extraordinary body of his letters, reviews, and other periodical contributions being made progressively available through the Simms Initiatives of the University of South Carolina Libraries (simms.libraries.sc.edu).

Yet these observations beg another question: is there reason to look forward to the anthologizing of any previously neglected writer in a post-canonical age? The implicit arguments suggested by the anthologies considered here are several: different populations should be represented; different literary strains and preoccupations should be emphasized; historically and literarily as well as politically influential authors and texts and issues should be included; and teachers' expectations and foci should be considered. If not yet on this last score, Simms nevertheless is a strong candidate on the first several grounds.

Despite the relative absence of white southern voices, or one quarter of the U.S. population of 1860, in the antebellum sections of anthologies, however, it will continue to be hard to urge presentation of points of view many find deeply objectionable and morally reprehensible. It apparently is beside the point that this means editing out perspectives, voices, and populations fundamental to the shaping of those years and many of the texts that are included. As in the case of *The Library of Southern Literature* a century ago, the concerns of the present restrict and shape the amounts and kinds of history and texts given attention. So the process of learning continues as well to be a process of forgetting. In many twenty-first-century readers' eyes, there may be justice in this fact; there certainly is irony.

Although most abolitionists were, like Simms, stadialists convinced of the superiority of whites, they were not, like him, slave owners. While he wrote more than most of his contemporaries on Native Americans and African Americans, he also relegated these populations to subordinate and liminal positions. Since, he has been similarly relegated. Yet that point and its implications are lost if one does not hear his voice. Because the definers of American literature for the overwhelming majority of students are the anthologists, their decisions to include and exclude will continue to cause us all to ask: what has been erased in the process and with what consequences?

Response 1:

A Response to David Moltke-Hansen

John Grammer

I think David Moltke-Hansen does a fine job of describing a real failing among teachers and anthologists of American Literature. Simms was considered a major author in his own time, and by something close to acclamation he was the literary voice of antebellum white southerners — 25% of the U.S. population, as Moltke-Hansen points out. And yet he's barely present in classroom anthologies, which is both a cause and an indicator of his negligible presence in undergraduate courses on American and southern literature.

Moltke-Hansen identifies several of the reasons, political and aesthetic, for this failure. But another, perhaps more easily solved, is the absence of a generally accepted Simms masterpiece or representative work. Harried teachers making their syllabi, and therefore harried anthologists composing their contents, need to know: if I must include something by Simms, *what*? What is his *Scarlet Letter*, his *Huckleberry Finn*, his "Because I could not stop for death"? Those of us who read Simms haven't agreed on an answer and may resist doing so, since his productivity and versatility are part of what we admire about the man. But we probably should. The harried teacher and anthologist don't have time to read their way into the Simms canon and make their own choices.

Apparently it has always been thus. In the anthologies Moltke-Hansen mentions, and some others I've glanced at, stretching from the turn of the twentieth century to the present, there seems to be no consensus even about Simms's primary genre or the major phase of his career, let alone his single best work. He is often represented by the early gothic tale "Grayling: or, Murder Will Out," but nearly as often by the humorous sketch "How Sharp Snaffles Got His Capital and Wife," published just after his death. Short excerpts from two early historical romances, *The Yemassee* and *The Partisan*, are also common choices — for anthologists who see Simms as a fiction writer. For many he is more important as a poet, and here, surprisingly given the vastness of his output, the anthologists display remarkable consensus: Simms's best poems, one would infer from the anthologies, are "The Lost Pleiad," "The Grapevine Swing," "The Edge of the Swamp," and "The Swamp Fox." This unanimity may not, however, be especially encouraging: most of Simms's verse is of a fairly uniform quality, so that the persistent selection of these four poems may just mean that the anthologists are following their predecessors rather than wading in and making their own selections. And then there's Simms the literary critic, propagandist for Young America, who may be represented by one of the essays from his *Views and Reviews In American Literature*—but which

one? Again, the experts can't seem to agree, usually favoring either "Americanism in Literature" or "The Writings of James Fenimore Cooper."

What is to be done? For my money, Simms is at his best in the historical romances he wrote at mid-career, in the 1850s. If I could persuade my Americanist colleagues and their students to read one work by Simms, it would be *Woodcraft*. But it won't fit into an anthology, and it takes some energetic shoe-horning to get it on a syllabus. The problems are these: (1) there's not an affordable classroom edition (I hope the USC Simms Initiative may solve this problem); and (2) an academic semester is short, while *Woodcraft* is long — well over 500 pages. Add to those problems the fact that students have a hard time warming up to the book, that better-known books clamor for syllabus-space, and that nobody will blame you for not teaching *Woodcraft*, and most teachers will take a pass. Now I actually have taught *Woodcraft* in American literature surveys and had real success with it, often by pairing it with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. But you give up a lot to make room for those two monsters, and even I'm not sure it's worth it. I'm afraid the same objections apply to *The Cassique of Kiawah*, another book I wish people would read, and to those old favorites *The Yemassee* and *The Partisan*.

If Simms the romancer makes an impractical classroom choice, where do we turn? I'd love to see the real Simms experts (I do not qualify here) debate this point. My solution, most recently, has been "Sharp Snaffles," which is reasonably short (you can cover it in one class hour), pretty readable, and lets you introduce the concepts of southern humor, dialect fiction, and local color writing. And it is pretty rich thematically, especially if you put it in its post-bellum, Gilded Age context. I teach it every spring in Southern Literature class and see no reason to drop it. On the other hand I'm aware of its shortcomings: the sketch doesn't fully represent Simms — who was not primarily a humorist or a dialect writer — nor does it fully represent the white South, having, e.g., nothing to say about race or slavery. So I hope others will chime in and offer their own choices and strategies. "Rediscovering William Gilmore Simms" is, alas, an old sport in discussions of American literature, and one that has never quite caught on despite the considerable enthusiasm of his partisans. Maybe this time it will be different.

Response 2:

Reasons to Anthologize Simms?

Peter Schmidt

Dr. Moltke-Hansen's is an excellent essay about learned historical amnesia and the responsibilities of scholars and teachers. Attempts have been made for years to revive an interest in Simms and to get his works included in anthologies featuring antebellum U.S. literature and history, but as Dr. Moltke-Hansen shows these efforts have not had dramatic results. My guess (I don't have data on this) is that the majority of course syllabi that include a module on antebellum southern literature follow similar patterns, for those syllabi are influenced by and often dependent upon print anthologies. The irony here is sharp: while American literature historians argue for a broader, more representative inclusion of past authors, our notion of "representative" still contains many unexamined blind spots — and Simms is surely one of them.

One reason perhaps for optimism: the rise of print-on-demand books. Because of the Simms Initiative and the University of South Carolina Press, Simms may actually be positioned better than just about any other U.S. author to benefit from this new technology. (It's a development Simms would have heartily approved, while relishing the irony of it.) Practicing teachers who want to include Simms can, when necessary, circumvent the limitations of current print anthologies. (Print-on-demand technology from university presses and other sources can be helpful in adding other authors to our syllabi as well.) It would be most beneficial if key texts by Simms or other authors poorly represented in anthologies were made available in e-book editions, however, not just via print-on-demand, for a decade from now students may very well be reading far more e-texts than they are print-on-demand books.

So how best to encourage teachers to supplement print anthologies using the new technologies? Have more sessions and panels at conferences stressing useful ways to introduce "new" texts and authors to students, with testimony about what works and what doesn't and why. Make available syllabi to share. Have more panels also devoted to giving new interpretations of the works in question, with a focus on how those new readings also change the questions we can ask about a historical period.

"New" old texts, when they are strange and new to us, are often best introduced by pairing them on syllabi with comparable texts that are canonical, or at least somewhat better known and more frequently taught. Dr. Moltke-Hansen's paper does a good job of suggesting some teaching strategies for a new Simms revival, but it's possible to imagine others. Why not pair Emerson's call for American cultural independence with how the challenge is framed in Simms' "Americanism in Literature"? Why not pair a Poe murder

story with “Grayling; or, ‘Murder Will Out’”? (Or, for today’s generation of students raised in contemporary horror/vampire genres, perhaps include a contemporary example of “horror” writing, or something by Lovecraft, then show them that similar writing was popular in the early 19th century, via Simms and Poe.) With Simms’s romance *Vasconcelos*, if the whole work can’t fit on a syllabus why not excerpt some of the scenes in which the heroine must change her gender and don blackface and pair them with, say, similar cross-dressing or gender-revising scenes in other U.S. romance fiction, such as (to give one example) E.D.E.N. Southworth’s *Hidden Hand* [1859/1888] and her heroine Capitola? (Or let them compare Simms’s heroine with Alcott’s Jo in *Little Women*.) Or juxtapose parts of *Vasconcelos* with relevant scenes from Cooper. Similar strategies should work for other Simms texts.

When print anthologies get revised and new authors added, or more familiar authors have their “representative” anthology texts markedly changed, it happens for a simple reason: because of conference panels and lots of action on scholarly networks, a critical mass of teachers and scholars begins to work with these new texts and approaches and eventually they influence anthology editorial boards. If it will happen — finally — with Simms, this is probably the route the changes will follow. But unlike a decade or so ago, scholars and teachers seeking changes now have new media at their disposal for putting pressure on print anthologies’ canons and how they are taught: print-on-demand, e-books, website databases like Documenting the American South, and other resources can all be combined to change the way things are done. New media won’t solve the problem of how to add one of Simms’s prolix romances to an undergraduate syllabus. But it may encourage those who would hesitate to load a whole novel onto a syllabus to experiment with excerpting powerful portions of Simms in ways that will get students reading and hearing Simms again in conversation and debate with his contemporaries.

Response 3:

Elephant or Chameleon?: Simms & Anthologies

Kenneth M. Roemer and Bethany Shaffer

Good responses begin forcefully. This one begins with apologies and admissions. Apology: Neither my colleague, Bethany Shaffer, nor I specializes in southern literature. Certainly we are not Simms experts, though I have taught *The Yemassee* in a course exploring concepts of American Indians in literature. Admission: I am associated with, or have connections to three of the anthologies mentioned by Professor David Moltke-Hansen in his provocative “Elephant Out of the Room” essay. I am one of the many contributing editors to Paul Lauter’s *Heath* anthology and have been associated with that project since its conception in 1980. I have met and corresponded with Robert Levine (*Norton Anthology*) and Susan Belasco (*Bedford Anthology*). Thus, we cannot pretend to bring “subject area” expertise and “total objectivity” to the discussion. What we do bring is our knowledge of a digital archive of American literature anthologies that I oversaw: “Covers, Titles, and Tables: The Formations of American Literary Canons” (www.uta.edu/english/roemer.ctt; see Brogan 2-3). The archive includes the tables of contents and selected covers for American literature anthologies published from 1891 to 2012; the collection includes all the anthologies examined in Joseph Csicsila’s *Canons by Consensus: Cultural Trends and American Literary Anthologies* (2004). The site also includes a very selective number of histories of American literature published from 1829 to 2009,¹ and supporting materials. The supporting materials include Evert and George Duyckinck’s two-volume 1855 *Cyclopaedia of American Literature*, which allots Simms almost as many pages as Cooper (5 vs. 8) and the indices of all the *American Literary Scholarship* volumes; surveying these indices enables scholars to track the scholarly interest in Simms from the 1960s to the present.

More apologies and admissions: The archive is far from complete and quite primitive by today’s Internet standards in part because the project has depended almost entirely on (very) part-time, volunteer labor.² Furthermore, the collection is almost entirely limited to general college anthologies with only a few specialized collections (e.g. poetry), only one expansive collection (the 1891 eleven volume “library”), and only one high school anthology (see 1933 below). I have also discovered flaws: a 1994 listing (Perkins) that should be 1999; a 1983 listing (Briggs) that should be 1933 (the list below corrects both errors), and some missing last digits on a 1955 contents page (Davis).

Even if our digital collection were comprehensive, completely searchable, and error free, there are conceptual problems. We certainly cannot assume that the changing contents of anthologies are accurate indices to changes in taste and culture. As appealing

as page and volume counts are, they obscure the obvious: all anthologies do not carry equal weight. Some are much more influential than others. For example, by virtue of its position as the first major college anthology, Fred Lewis Pattee's *Century Readings* (1919) established certain patters and expectations; because of the prestige of the editors, Perry Miller's *Major Writers* (1962) and Cleanth Brooks, R.W.B. Lewis, and Robert Penn Warren's *American Literature* (1973) gained immediate respect (Miller's association with Harvard also added authority to his anthology); the canon-challenging nature at a time ripe for canon challenging helped establish Paul Lauter's *Heath Anthology* (1990), now in its sixth edition; the visual appeal of Susan Belasco and Link Johnson's *Bedford Anthology* (2007) invited attention; and, of course, there is the respect that comes with longevity, for instance, George McMichael and James S. Leonard's *Anthology of American Literature* (2011) is in its tenth edition; George Perkin's *American Tradition in Literature* (2009) is in its twelfth edition, and, the best-known anthology of American Literature, Nina Baym and Robert Levine's *Norton Anthology of American Literature* (2012) is in its eighth edition.

Unfortunately measuring the influence of even the apparently influential anthologies is difficult. Influence is often hard to gauge because it is often difficult if not impossible to obtain sales figures and information about which colleges used which anthologies, especially for anthologies published decades ago. Even if it were possible to obtain these figures, that information (without the corresponding syllabi) would not reveal which selections from an anthology were actually taught in the courses, although the relatively recent trend toward custom anthologies that enable professors to select from extensive electronic files (e.g., the Pearson's files) might offer more accurate insights about the authors whom teachers pass from generation to generation, providing publishers are willing to share the relevant information.

Despite all these obstacles and challenges, I applaud Professor Moltke-Hansen's efforts to draw insights from anthologies about Simms's and southern literature's "out-of-the-room" status in the study and teaching of American literature. It's also clear that Ms. Shaffer and I would not have devoted hours of labor to the CTT archive if we didn't believe that anthologies could, at the very least, suggest important insights and raise significant questions. In the following discussion, we offer some possible insights and questions related to Professor Moltke-Hansen's article by first briefly commenting on the early allocation of space to Simms and well-known non-southern writers and the distributions of Antebellum and late nineteenth-century southern authors. We then specifically examine the inclusion and exclusion of Simms and comment on what these ins and outs might imply about critical and ideological trends, topical interests, and genre hierarchies. Our response to "The Elephant Out of the Room" concludes with a list of the anthologies from the archive. We indicate which volumes did not include Simms, which did, which selections were included, and, when the anthologies were divided into sections, which sections included the Simms entry.

A brief glance at what many scholars consider the first significant college American literature anthology, Pattee's *Century Readings* (1919), reveals how drastically literary canons have changed over the past century. Simms eleven-page excerpt from *The*

Partisan appears in “The New England Period, 1830-1860” section. That geographical mis-positioning might suggest a downplaying of southern literature, if it were not for the fact that in this anthology Poe’s page count (27) tops Longfellow’s (24) and Whitman’s (24), and Pattee offers a healthy number of nineteenth-century southern authors: Henry Timrod (3), Joel Chandler Harris (7), Sidney Lanier (6), and Constance Fenimore Woolson (9), whose North and South Carolina and Florida fiction and residence in the South during the 1870s at least made her part-southern. These page counts may seem slim until we place them in the contexts of a single-volume anthology with more than 100 authors and the discovery that Twain received only four pages and Melville only seven (Melville was on the threshold of his rediscovery beginning in his centennial year, 1919, when Pattee’s anthology was published).

The significant allocation to Poe in Pattee’s anthology signals a constant trend continuing through 2012 in the eighth edition of the *Norton* — 100 pages. Beginning in the 1980s Frederick Douglass was also a constant; Harriet Jacobs is more recent but now seems a fixture in the canon. Both obviously reflect the ascent of African American authors in the canon. Other Antebellum and post Civil War nineteenth-century authors suggest that there might have been more of a balance of Antebellum and post-bellum southern authors represented than Professor Moltke-Hansen suggests: for example, Antebellum — Henry Timrod (1891, 1919, 1951, 1956, 1987, 1999, 2004), John Pendleton Kennedy (1951, 1953, 1993), George Washington Harris (1979, 1978), and in the *Heath* editions, Francis Harper (1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2009), and William Wells Brown (1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2009); post-Civil War — Sidney Lanier (1919, 1933, 1951, 1952, 1969), Joel Chandler Harris (1919), and Constance Fenimore Woolson (1991).

How do Simms’s dates and numbers compare to these statistics? Of the 44 anthologies listed below, Simms appears in 14. Compared to Poe, and in recent anthologies to someone like Douglass, that is certainly a low count. But compared to the southern authors just listed, the frequency of his inclusion and the pages allotted compare favorably to the representation of the other nineteenth-century southern authors (see the page counts in the list below). And the frequencies of representation suggest broad trends. For example, from 1891 to the first anthology listed for 1955, eight out of twelve of the anthologies included Simms. As the century progressed, Simms inclusions dropped significantly, a trend that supports Professor Moltke-Hansen’s claims about the disappearing elephant, though he and our list indicate there have been recent reentries beginning in 2007 (*Norton*). We should, however, also take into account how our sample may exaggerate the decline. For example, our sample includes six editions of the *Heath* and the one concise *Heath* edition. None includes Simms. If we excluded those seven volumes, the statistic offered at the beginning of this paragraph would change to 14 out of 27 instead of 14 out of 44. Then again, the *Heath* was a very influential force in altering anthology canons, so eliminating that anthology would also be misleading; omitting the *Heath* would underrepresented the decline.

Considering the decline and the frequent focus on the Northeastern nineteenth-century writers, it is not surprising that anthologies, especially those published after

1955, that include the words “major,” “chief,” or “masters”; or anthologies limited to a very small number of authors (e.g., 1962, twelve; 1963, eight) do not include Simms. This tendency reinforces claims made by scholars such as Paul Lauter in *Reconstructing American Literature* (xvii-xviii) and *Canons and Contexts* (31-36), Jane Tompkins in *Sensational Designs* (187-90), and me in “Reconstructing the American Canon” (13-14) that emphasize the institutional need for American literature scholars to demonstrate that there were “major” American authors who could stand up to British and European “masters” in their ability to meet New Critical criteria of complexity, ambiguity, and irony while expressing “universal” themes. Csicsila warns against exaggerated claims about the shrinking of the numbers of authors represented in mid-twentieth century American literature anthologies during the height of New Criticism (xvi-xvii). But it is interesting to note that the editors who tended to include Simms — such as Pattee (1919), Hubbell (1949), and Blair and Hornberger (1953) — were more closely associated with literary history and American Studies than with New Criticism. Moreover, our limited sample of anthologies does suggest that the decline in Simms’s representation does coincide to some degree with the culminating of New Critical influence, and the decline is then continued later in the century with the challenges and opportunities posed by the criticism of the mid-twentieth century canon and the rediscoveries of many women, African American, Native American, and Latino authors who had received little recognition in anthologies even up into the late 1980s.

The novel that drew me to Simms — *The Yemassee* — suggests both the continuing appeal of Simms and the obstacles to his selection in recent anthologies. The appeal has lasted more than a century; *The Yemassee* appeared in the Duyckinck’s *Cyclopaedia* in 1855 and, as indicated below, appeared more frequently than any other Simms novel in our sample. I was drawn to the novel because its depiction of Indians is certainly superior to Cooper’s depictions; another appeal is that recently there has been increasing interest in Southeastern Indians. This is a welcome balance to the typical emphasis on Plains and Southwestern tribes. There is, however, an obvious obstacle to Simms’s inclusion. For many years non-Indian writers have represented Native Americans to readers. There is a clear and often compelling preference to counter this trend with selections of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction by Native writers. Another problem is that *The Yemassee* is a “romance.”

Genre issues are closely related to the issues raised by New Criticism and challenges to the canon. Simms’s association with romances, including historical romances of the frontier and the South, certainly would not endear him to New Critics; his defense of slavery wouldn’t endear him to many readers including those who challenged the mid-twentieth century canon. Also, the fact that he is most recognized as a novelist poses a problem: novels are often difficult to anthologize. Despite this difficulty at least eight of his inclusions in our sample have been novel excerpts: *The Yemassee* (1891, 1939, 1978), *The Forayers* (1949, 1953), *The Partisan* (1919, 1955), *Woodcraft* (1955). (*The Cassique of Kiawah*, identified by Professor Moltke-Hansen as one of Simms best, was not represented in our sample.)

Simms may be associated with the romance, but his ability to write in so many genres has helped sustain his inclusion. In Pattee's 1919 anthology, Simms poetry dominated; in the 2007 and 2012 *Norton* anthologies, an excerpt from an essay represents Simms. As Professor Moltke-Hansen notes, in the longest recent inclusion a ghostly short story helps to introduce students to the author Poe praised as a gothic writer. This versatility suggests that Simms might better be perceived as a chameleon than an elephant; that might gain him more entries into anthology "rooms."

In the following list several of the early volumes include a few comparisons to non-southern writers. Otherwise we focused on Simms inclusion or exclusion and several examples of the inclusion of nineteenth-century southern writers.

- 1891 *A Library of American Literature from Earliest Settlement to the Present Time*. Vol. 6 [of eleven volumes]. Eds. Edmund Clarence Stedman and Ellen Mackay Hutchinson. New York: Webster.
 "A Woman's Courage," "The Lost Pleiad," "The Burden of the Desert," "Song of March": 7pp. (270-77) (William Lloyd Garrison: 8 pp; Longfellow: 41 pp.)
- 1900 *An American Anthology: 1787-1900*. Ed. Edmund Clarence Stedman. Boston: Houghton. "Song in March," "The Decay of a People," "The Lost Pleiad," "The Swamp Fox" 3 pp. (106-108)
- 1916 *Chief American Prose Writers* [only nine]. Ed. Norman Foerster. Boston: Houghton.
 Not included. (Franklin, Irving, Cooper, Poe, Hawthorne, Emerson, Thoreau, Lowell, Holmes)
- 1919 *Century Readings for Course in American Literature*. Ed. Fred Lewis Pattee. New York: Century. [one of the first major anthologies; more than 100 authors] "The New England Period -1830-1860"
 [From] *The Partisan*: 11 pp. (229-40). (Of southern writers only Poe received more pages: Poe: 27 pp; Joel Chandler Harris: 7 pp.; Constance Fenimore Woolson: 9 pp.; Henry Timrod: 3 pp.; Sidney Lanier: 6 pp. Note others: Melville: 7 pp.; Twain: 4 pp. Longfellow: 24 pp.; Whitman: 26 pp.)
- 1933 *American Literature*. [innovative high school anthology]. Ed. Thomas H. Briggs, Max J. Herzberg, Emma Miller Bolenius. Boston: Houghton.
 Not included. (Mostly short entries; Sidney Lanier: 1 p.)
- 1939 *A College Book of American Literature*, Vol. 1. Eds. Milton Ellis, Louise Pound, George Weida Spohn. [58 authors]. New York: American Book
 "The Swamp Fox"; From *The Yemassee*: "The Romance of the Epic"; Chapter XXV "The Doom of Oconestoga": 10 pp. (907-17)
- 1949 *Masters of American Literature*, Vol. 1. Eds. Henry A Pochmann, Gay Wilson Allen. New York: MacMillan. (only 13 authors)
 Not included.
 Poe: 101 pp.
- 1949 *American Life in Literature* (1936), Rev. Ed. Jay B. Hubbell. New York: Harper.

- “American Renaissance, 1830-1870”
 (prose) From *The Forayers*, “How Porgy Feasted the Captains”; (poetry) “The Battle Feast,” “The Lost Pleiad,” “The Decay of a People,” “The Edge of the Swamp”: 14 pp. (355-69) (Daniel Webster: 4 pp; Lincoln: 15 pp.)
- 1951 *The Heritage of American Literature*, Vol. 1. Eds. Lyon Richardson, George Orians, Herbert R. Brown. New York: Ginn.
 Section: “Romantic Era in the Middle States and the South”
 “How Sharp Snaffles Got His Capital and His Wife”: 21 pp. (459-80)
 (John Pendleton Kennedy was the one other southern writer included in this section: 4 pp.; in the later Romanticism section: Henry Timrod: 6 pp.; Sidney Lanier: 12 pp.)
- 1952 *Major American Writers* [1935], 3rd ed. Ed. Howard Mumford Jones, Ernest E. Leisy, Richard M. Ludwig. New York: Harcourt.
 Not included. (Sidney Lanier: 18 pp.)
- 1953 *The Literature of the United States*, Vol. 1. Ed. Walter Blair, Theodore Hornberger, Randall Stewart. Chicago: Scott Foresman.
 The American Renaissance: 1829-1860
 Novelists of the Old South
 From *The Forayers*: XLIII “The Frog Concert and Campaign”; XLV “Doings in the Apollo Chamber”: 18 pp. (1070-88). (John Pendleton Kennedy: 14 pp.)
- 1955 *A Treasury of American Literature*, Vol. 1. Ed. Joe Lee Davis, John T. Frederick, Frank Luther Mott. Chicago: Spencer.
 Founding of a National Literature
 From *The Partisan*: “Porgy and the Terrapins”; From *Woodcraft*: “Porgy Philosophizes”: [last digit blocked; approximately 10 pp. (55[4]-74)]
- 1955 *American Heritage*, Vol. 1. Leon Howard, Louis B. Wright, Carl Bode. Boston: Heath.
 Not included.
- 1956 *The American Heritage in Literature*, Vol. 1. Ed. Sculley Bradley, Richmond Croom, Beatty, E. Hudson Long. New York: Norton.
 Not included. (Henry Timrod: 10 pp.)
- 1956 *The Growth of American Literature*, Vol. 1. Edwin Harrison Cady, Frederick J. Hoffman, Roy Harvey Pearce. New York: American Book.
 The Southern Tradition
 “The Swamp Fox”; “Oakatibbé”: 20 pp. (697-717)
- 1962 *Twelve American Writers*. William M. Gibson, George Arms. New York: MacMillan.
 Not included.
- 1962 *Major Writers of America*, Vol. 1. Perry Miller, et al. New York: Harpers.
 Not included.
- 1963 *Eight American Writers*. Ed. Norman Foerster, Robert P. Falk, et al. New York: Norton.
 Not included.

- 1969 *American Literature: Tradition & Innovation*. Vol. 1. Ed. Harrison T. Meserole, Walter Sutton, Brom Weber. Lexington: Heath.
Not included. (Sidney Lanier: 15 pp.)
- 1970 *American Literature*, Vol. 1. Ed. Richard Poirier, William L. Vance. Boston: Little Brown.
Not included
- 1973 *American Literature: The Makers and the Making*, Vol. 1. Ed. Cleanth Brooks, R. W. B. Lewis, Robert Penn Warren. New York: St. Martin's.
An Emergent Literature
The Novel: The Beginnings Through Irving and Cooper
From "Oakatibbé": 6 pp. (271-80).
- 1978 *America in Literature*, Vol. 1. Ed. Theodore Gross, David Levin. New York: Wiley.
The Life of the Imagination
Preface to *The Yemassee*: 3 pp. (1529-32)
- 1979 *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Vol. 1. Ed. Francis Murphy, Hershel Parker. New York: Norton.
Not included. (George Washington Harris: 14 pp.)
- 1987 *The Harper American Literature*, Vol. 1. Donald McQuade, et al. New York: Harper.
Not included. (Henry Timrod; 9 pp.; George Washington Harris: 7 pp.)
- 1990 *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*, Vol. 1. Ed. Paul Lauter, et al. Lexington: Heath.
Not included. (Frances Harper: 29 pp.; William Wells Brown: 12 pp.)
- 1991 *American Literature: A Prentice Hall Anthology*. Ed. Emory Elliott, et al. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
Not included. (Henry Timrod: 2 pp.)
- 1993 *The Harper American Literature*. Vol. 1. Ed. Donald McQuade, et al. New York: Harper.
Not Included. (John Pendleton Kennedy: 20 pp.)
- 1994 *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*, Vol. 1, 2nd ed. Ed. Paul Lauter, et al. Lexington: Heath.
Not included. (Frances Harper: 29 pp.; William Wells Brown: 12 pp.)
- 1998 *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* 5th ed., Vol. 1. Ed. Nina Baym, et al. New York: Norton.
Not Included.
- 1998 *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*. Vol. 1, 3rd ed. Ed. Paul Lauter, et al. Boston: Houghton.
Not Included. (Frances Harper: 19 pp.; William Wells Brown: 12 pp.)
- 1999 *The American Tradition in Literature*, Shorter Ed. Ed. George Perkins and Barbara Perkins. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
Not Included.

- 1999 *Three Centuries of American Poetry: 1620-1923*. Ed. Allen Mandelbaum, Robert Richardson. New York: Bantam
Not Included. (Henry Timrod: 5 pp.)
- 1999 *The Harper Single Volume American Literature*. Ed. Donald McQuade, et al. New York: Longman.
Not Included.
- 2002 *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*. Vol. 1, 4th ed. Ed. Paul Lauter, et al. Boston: Houghton.
Not Included. (Frances Harper: 17 pp.; William Wells Brown: 11 pp.)
- 2003 *The New Anthology of American Poetry*. Vol. 1. Ed. Steven Axelrod, et al. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP.
Not Included. (Henry Timrod: 1 p.)
- 2004 *American Literature*. Vol.1. William Cain. New York: Penguin-Longmans.
Not included.
- 2004 *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*, concise ed. Ed. Paul Lauter, et al. Boston: Houghton.
Not Included. (Frances Harper: 5 pp.)
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Section, Region, Nation, Hemisphere
From “Americanism in Literature”: 4 pp. (1288-92)
(Frances Harper: 15 pp.; William Wells Brown: 18 pp.)

Notes

¹ Five of the histories included are: Samuel L. Knapp's *Lectures on American Literature* (1829); Robert Spiller's *Literary History of the United States* (1946); Emory Elliott's *Columbia Literary History of the United States* (1988); Sacvan Bercovitch's *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, Vols. 1, 2, 7, 8 (1994); and Greil Marcus and Werner Sollors's *A New Literary History of America* (2009).

² In 2010 the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Texas at Arlington did provide funding, primarily for two graduate assistants; in 2009, I utilized my research allotment to support two graduate assistants; and in 2004, the Department of English provided a small stipend for a web designer. We are grateful for this support.

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Response 4:

Beyond Anthology Inventory

Laura Aull

David Moltke-Hansen's think-piece provokes significant, though preexisting, questions about anthologizing. A valuable part of Moltke-Hansen's iteration is that he locates these questions on the specific example of William Gilmore Simms, an author historically anthologized and subsequently excluded. Of course, Simms is not the only author to have been popular in past but not contemporary anthologies, but Moltke-Hansen fixes Simms' exclusion on the omission of white southern voices in antebellum anthology sections and, more broadly, on the exclusion of texts that represent "points of view many find deeply objectionable and morally reprehensible." Rightly, Moltke-Hansen wonders at the implications of such exclusions in anthologies claiming to contextualize literature and represent diverse perspectives, and in closing, he emphasizes the crucial role anthologies have in defining American literature for students, a point David Shumway and Gerald Graff also emphasized in the midst of twentieth-century canon debates. My response is most concerned with this pedagogical import, and it is plainly but purposefully modest: the way to make classroom anthology use meaningful is to make anthologizing itself — not the anthology inventory — the consequence. It is there that my own teaching and the past 30 years of anthology scholarship have led, or stopped short.

If we are in a "post-canonical age" in American literature anthologies, it is hopefully because the more conventional, exclusionary canon has been challenged, changed, and cast as ever-contingent. But it seems at least equally due to the fact there is no clear pedagogical response to twentieth-century canon debates beyond anthology inventory. Even understanding anthology inventory as both selection choices and historiography, it is in these teaching encounters that anthologies matter most, and so the question of including Simms is ever tied to instructors' efficacy in *teaching* Simms: in their efficacy in facilitating engagement with portrayals and perspectives now understood to be deeply objectionable.

For some time, American literary scholars have also advocated teaching texts that oppose the values underpinning canon revision. In 1997, Gregory Jay wrote that he taught proslavery texts and found them "the most useful instruments in the struggle against racism"(161). Like Moltke-Hansen, Jay did not want to exclude expressions of racism and thus "lose the point and its implications," or gloss over the paradoxes of a narrowly conceived advocacy pedagogy. Importantly, Jay's descriptions were contemporaneous with the publication of the Heath Anthology and heightened discussions of anthology revision, though we do not get a clear picture of how Jay's endeavors played out in the classroom.

It is my sense, then as now, that professors committed to diverse perspectives still grapple with the question of how to meaningfully engage deeply objectionable texts, not because they want to create a different kind of exclusionary canon, but because of the risks involved in how they are taken up and understood by students. These risks may feel particularly pronounced and unresolved, for example, in a southern university classroom in which the legacy of racial hierarchies feels particularly visible and problematic — e.g., in a stark imbalance of racial representation therein. In my experience, we are not in a post-canonical age pedagogically, insofar as students still bring canonical and social beliefs and experiences into the classroom that bear traces of essentialist and hierarchical understandings, and there are many spaces in which one, white and normative social lived experience is still the most dominant. In that context, how do we dialogue about Simms's narratives and character portrayals? At what risk?

I have only come to one answer for the classroom: that with students, we explicitly examine the promises and losses of particular anthology inclusions, instead of foregrounding a particular inclusion itself. This answer is based on the aforementioned questions about uptake as well as the premise that one way we enable limited but authoritative canons is by drawing traditional boundaries around what students critically analyze (Aull). My response is related to some of Moltke-Hansen's final questions but suggests we pose these very questions to students. Put another way, I think we best interrogate anthologies not when academics have a fruitful discussion about anthologizing Simms — to whichever end — but when we also engage that conversation with students. Moltke-Hansen's think-piece, indeed, might be a reading with which to launch some of these discussions, followed by students' own design and justification of an antebellum anthology. I am still searching for a more robust answer, but it is only in interrogating every canon as an argument for what is American and Literature, instead of what that canon includes, that I have found the problematics of anthologies are outweighed by their possibilities.

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Response 5:

Generic Issues in Teaching Anthologies: Simms and the Example of Walter Scott

Patrick Scott

David Moltke-Hansen paints a persuasive contrast between the growth over the past fifty years of serious scholarship on William Gilmore Simms and the marginal place that Simms has in the major undergraduate teaching anthologies. There is a further factor worth considering, alongside the socio-political or ideological, regional or sectional, and disciplinary/pedagogic factors to which he traces Simms's marginalization. Though Simms scholars have explored and revalued Simms's work in a wide variety of literary genres, his most significant accomplishment for most literary historians is still his full-length historical fiction. Teaching anthologies have traditionally focused on poetry, supplemented by thematic selections of non-fiction prose ("background"), and, particularly for twentieth century authors, by short stories. As Moltke-Hansen himself suggests, for Simms to get a more secure role in undergraduate surveys, Simmsians will need to adjust their generic focus away from Simms as novelist, towards his non-fiction prose and short fiction.

A comparison with how the anthologists have dealt with Simms's great precursor Sir Walter Scott is instructive in factoring the relationship between ideological, regional, and generic issues. Every literary historian recognizes the worldwide and transformative impact of Scott's *Waverley* novels, yet for half a century Scott has been allotted only minimal space in the major teaching anthology, the *Norton Anthology of English Literature* (nine editions, since 1962), and his work in the novel still gets short shrift. This is surprising, because, though the primary editor for the relevant section was the redoubtable American Romanticist M. H. Abrams, the original Norton editorial team included the major Scott scholar of the mid-twentieth century, David Daiches. One can therefore discount regional disdain or neglect. Despite the Norton title-emphasis on *English* literature, the Norton had no intrinsic bias against Scottish writers — the Romantic section opened in 1962 with over twenty pages of Robert Burns, on whom Daiches also wrote, and by the third edition (1974), the twentieth-century section, edited by Daiches, gave sixteen pages to the Scots nationalist poet Hugh MacDiarmid, another Daiches specialty.

But for over thirty years Scott did not appear among the major Romantic-period authors, and was represented only by three short poems, tucked into a general section of minor Romantic Lyric Poets. The poems themselves varied a little ("Jock o'

Hazeldean” and “Proud Maisie” held their places but “Coronach” was replaced in 1974 by “The Dreary Change”), yet they gave the teacher or student no hint or clue to Scott’s real achievement, and I doubt they were often even assigned for outside reading.

The change came with the sixth edition (1993). Abrams had earlier handed on the Romantic section to a new editor, Jack Stillinger, and the Scott section was upgraded in two ways. First it was taken out of the catchall minor poets section, and promoted to equal billing if not equal space with other major Romantic-period writers, and second, for the first time, it featured a substantial piece of Scott’s fiction, upping his allotted page-count from three to twenty-three. Along with some of the same short poems, the sixth edition included Scott’s short story “The Two Drovers,” a wonderful epitome of themes (tradition vs. modernization, highland vs. lowland, superstition vs. rationality, honor vs. law) that Scott dealt with in his full-length novels. For the seventh edition (2000), perhaps to claw back a few pages, the prose selection was an extract from a major Scott novel, ch. 1 of *The Heart of Midlothian*, and for the eighth edition (2006), the editors substituted “Wandering Willie’s Tale,” a stand-alone supernatural folk-tale, extracted from Scott’s *Redgauntlet*, that had often been included in Scottish short story collections. The Norton’s most recent iteration, the ninth edition (2012), retains “Wandering Willie’s Tale” and “Proud Maisie,” together with Scott’s Introduction to his *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and adds a section from Scott’s historical poem *Marmion* among the supplementary items in the e-book version.

Scott’s exclusion was not so much ideological (liberal suspicion of a self-proclaimed Tory, nationalist suspicion of a leading unionist), or regional (London or Oxbridge-based neglect of a leading Scottish writer), as generic; his most distinctive works, the novels, were inherently unanthologizable, and his most-anthologizable writings (the short lyrics) failed both as teachable texts and as introductions to his major work and significance. The record of Scott’s shameful exclusion, and then partial reinsertion, into the available teaching canon reinforces Dr. Moltke-Hansen’s finding that the best way to promote the teaching of an author is to put forward and promote works that are evidently teachable—essays or prose extracts that connect with a theme of current teaching interest (such as the idea of self-consciously American authorship in the 1830s and 40s), or short stories that are rich literary works in their own right but also encapsulate wider themes both for the author and for the interpretation of the historical period and literary development. Certainly, the example of Scott suggests that it will be wise to take account of generic constraints, not just ideological or literary commitments, in efforts to promote Smms’s work more widely.

Review of:

The Partisan: A Romance of the Revolution

By William Gilmore Simms

Edited by Stephen E. Meats

Explanatory Notes by Dianne C. Luce

James L.W. West III, General Editor

(University of Arkansas Press, 2011; 554 pages)

Abigail Lundelius Smith

As Jeffery Rogers notes in his review of the “Arkansas Simms” 2010 publication of *Backwoods Tales*, the true value of the Simms Series by the University of Arkansas Press lies in the ability, and credibility, it lends to the “sustained study of Simms” (108). With such a commendation, it remains for this review to explore what makes the most recent edition of *The Partisan* so helpful an addition to Simms scholarship; namely, Stephen Meats’s fine introduction. Writing with precision and clarity, Meats begins by establishing the importance of *The Partisan* within the Simms canon, moves next into an exploration of the text’s literary structure, and concludes with a suggestion as to novel’s larger purpose within its contemporary cultural setting. With Meats as its advocate, *The Partisan* takes its place as essential to a thorough understanding of Simms and the South he loved.

Published in 1835, *The Partisan* is a romance tale set in occupied Charleston, South Carolina. Opening in 1780, shortly before British forces captured the port city in May, and ending with the patriot defeat at Camden in August, Simms’s “real concern, and consequently his chief emphasis in the novel, is the rapid growth of patriot resistance and militia strength after the fall of Charleston” (Wimsatt 71). More than delineating South Carolina’s role in America’s journey toward freedom, however, *The Partisan* secured independence for Simms himself, both in his personal and literary life. As Meats notes, “*The Partisan* was a pivotal work in determining the direction [Simms’s] life and literary career would take” (xvii). In the first instance, success with *The Partisan* enabled Simms to pay off some outstanding debts and cleared the path to his advantageous marriage with Chevilette Eliza Roach. More than fostering marital bliss, however, *The Partisan* solidified Simms’s place within the fellowship of authors – both in his own mind, and in that of his literary milieu. This is not to say that *The Partisan* appeared before the world free from flaws. Contemporary reception of Simms’s historical romance offered equal parts affirmation and condemnation – often within the same review. Difficulties arise for *The Partisan* as it seeks to reconcile the creation of romantic characters with

the physical reality of the novel's place, "the tidewater and eastern piedmont sections of South Carolina" (Idol 12), and the historical reality of the novel's narrative, which flow from Simms's "extensive use of official histories; letters, diaries, and other documents; family traditions; and unpublished and publish memoirs" (Meats xix). In a review of *The Partisan* for the January 1836 issue of *Southern Literary Messenger*, Edgar Allan Poe agreed. After scathing treatment of the cast of Simms's characters, Poe concludes his review, "Its historical details are replete with interest. The concluding scenes are well drawn. Some passages descriptive of swamp scenery are exquisite. Mr. Simms has evidently the eye of a painter. Perhaps, in sober truth, he would succeed better in sketching a landscape than he has done in writing a novel" (qtd in Guilds 66).

Simms himself, in his introduction to a later edition of the novel, acknowledges weaknesses within the original text; he writes, "It was successful far beyond its merits. Its pages were charged with many crudities — there were some serious faults of design and development — the style was careless, and the incidents characterized by coarseness, and an ambitious effort at effect [I am] compelled to recognize the justice of the most severe judgments uttered by my critics" (4). And yet, *The Partisan* remains a story to which Simms was curiously committed throughout his career. According to John C. Guilds, *The Partisan* was a reincarnation of a novelette published serially and completed some years before (21). That the tale would find reincarnation as a full-length novel suggests a more carefully crafted text than is often assumed. Furthermore, that Simms would revise this story yet again, nearly twenty years later, shows the importance of this particular story to the Simms literary canon — at least in the mind of the author.

Nonetheless, *The Partisan* remains a difficult text, whether for 19th- or 21st-century readers. The reason, according to Meats, is a tension in the very structure of the novel: "Simms in *The Partisan* was experimenting with mixing romance and realism ... trying to write an interesting story ... that yet remained true to the history ... [and] also attempting to employ aesthetic elements that would make of the novel a satisfying work of literary art" (xxvii). Where many critics simply dismiss *The Partisan* as an historical success and artistic failure, Meats argues for a more charitable reading, suggesting that one literary element "that Simms does not often get credit for is his use of symbols" (xxvii). Initially, Meats focuses his symbolic reading of the novel on elements within the landscape — namely, the town of Dorchester that provides local fodder for Simms's imagination, the Cypress Swamp representing the British difficulties with the South's terrain and people, and a storm that foreshadows the coming conflict. Though far more generously, Meats affirms what Poe recognized nearly two centuries ago — that Simms's literary prowess appears most readily in the descriptive and symbolic force of the novel's setting.

Meats, however, challenges Poe's assertion that Porgy "is a most insufferable bore ... a backwoods imitation of Sir Somebody" (qtd. in Guilds 66). Meats suggests that in the 1854 edition of *The Partisan*, Simms achieves a final, and more subtle, symbol that "is perhaps key to understanding a new intention for the novel that Simms may have developed as he revised it for the 1854 edition" (xxvii). The addition, a scene wherein Lieutenant Porgy orders Tom, his slave, to bob the tail of Slink, Porgy's dog, is an unusual

passage and one that Meats argues is rich with symbolic meaning far beyond the confines of the narrative. Given that the revision occurred after Simms's literary reputation was firmly established, not to mention in the years immediately preceding the Civil War, Meats suggests that the scene is best understood in the "context of the political realities of 1854" (xxx). If so, *The Partisan* suddenly becomes more than a romance of the past for the entertainment of the present, it stands as "a reconstruction of the past as an exemplar for the present" (Ridgely 61). Notwithstanding Poe, Meats asks Simms's contemporary readers to consider the literary merits of this oft-overlooked story.

Challenging nearly two centuries of criticism, this edition of Simms's *The Partisan* invites today's audience, with what Simms calls "the eyes of a wholly new generation" (3), to reconsider its canonical value, its artistic merit, and its cultural import — making it, as Meats concludes, "an important, if imperfect, literary document" (xxxi).

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Review of:

*Knights of the Quill:
Confederate Correspondents and their Civil War Reporting*
Edited by Patricia G. McNeely,
Debra Reddin van Tuyl, and Henry H. Schulte
(Purdue University Press, 2010; 599 pages)

Sarah E. Gardner

The editors of *Knights of the Quill* are on a rescue mission. Confederate correspondents, the editors point out, suffer from both scholarly inattention and hoary stereotypes, resulting in a profound misunderstanding of the work southern journalists rendered to the Confederacy and the reforms they pioneered in journalism. These two problems are related. The editors maintain that historians' work on the Confederate press has been unduly influenced by Hilton Rowan Helper's 1857 *The Impending Crisis*, which lambasted the southern press for its failure to criticize slavery. According to Helper, southern newspapers were "tainted 'by the imbecility and inertia which attaches to everything which slavery touches'" (xi). Twentieth-century historians readily accepted Helper's indictment, the editors argue, because it is convenient. Responding to a need to condemn historical actors whose views they find morally bankrupt, historians have found in Helper a kindred spirit. George Henry Payne, author of the sweeping *History of Journalism in the United States*, earns a pointed rebuke from the editors of *Knights of the Quill*: "Instead of relying on primary sources," they scold, "Payne adopted Helper's conclusions and wrote that the influence of slavery held back southern journalism by causing a 'lack of enterprise and lack of freedom which made them seem inferior to their brethren in the North. [...] There can be no great editors or journals,'" they continue to quote, "'where brute force and material wealth so completely control, and the result was that southern men of idealism were ignored in their own communities, or they went north'" (xii). Payne's study appeared in 1920. This view, the editors suggest, nevertheless has come to dominate the historiography. Rendered irrelevant as apologists of slavery, nineteenth-century southern journalists have been dismissed and ignored. *Knights of the Quill* is meant to serve as a corrective. On some levels, it succeeds.

Knights of the Quill collects twenty-eight "heavily researched" biographies of Confederate correspondents (xii). This format, the editors believe, renders these men and women "more real" (598). Chiding historians for lacking empathy and for their inability to "understand what led their subjects to be the way they were," the editors sense that biographical essays best convey the historical and cultural influences that shaped these correspondents' worldviews. Collectively, the biographies "confirm" that correspondents

came disproportionately from the southern elite (598). Many were slaveowners or came from slaveowning families, had accumulated substantial wealth, had earned college or professional degrees, and enjoyed professional careers before they joined the ranks of the Confederate press. These prosopographical data, the editors believe, explain the correspondents' support for the Confederacy: "Their demographics placed them with the social class of those who had vested interests to protect" (598). To dismiss them as propagandists of the Confederacy misses the point. These correspondents believed what Confederate soldiers and generals told them and believed in the viability of the Confederate nation. In short, "their backgrounds had taught them how to interpret events" (598).

The book's structure allows readers to trace the development of the correspondents' craft. Many essays contain lengthy excerpts from their subjects' writings, thus highlighting the ways in which the vicissitudes of the war affected that writing. Some, for example, who witnessed increased privation and hardship as the war wore on, became the soldiers' advocates, hoping to influence Confederate policy. The *Charleston Mercury's* William Ashmead Courtenay became appalled at the soldiers' poor diet. Although Ashmead submitted his recommendations through proper military channels, he became increasingly frustrated with the Confederate Army's inefficiency. He thus resorted to bombarding his readers with his "unending ideas," including a plea to the "hometown folks" to "send some of that good food in the soldiers' direction" (34). Similarly, Felix Gregory de Fontaine, who wrote for the *Charleston Courier*, despaired of the high mortality rates from "diarrhea, dysentery, bowel and other kindred complaint, which, in their early stages might have been made to yield to the simplest medicines" (67). Fontaine proposed an "Army Vegetable Society" to deliver fresh produce to the combatants and recommended that soldiers be equipped with medicine to combat these ailments. These biographies, then, showcase the ways in which individual correspondents responded to the realities of war and how they translated those responses in their writing.

The book's structure is less successful, however, in conveying the degree to which Confederate correspondents reformed southern journalism. Because scholars have dismissed these journalists as propagandists they have assumed that the correspondents continued to write "personal, opinion-based journalism" that had dominated the press, both North and South, in earlier decades. In an effort to demonstrate that southern journalism did not lag behind the professionalization efforts in the North, these essays emphasize individual correspondents' willingness to criticize Confederate leaders and military strategy. That Confederate editors published these stories demonstrates their initial understanding of "their obligations to hold political leaders accountable, showing evidence that they were not immune to the movements toward professional standards and values that were occurring elsewhere" (6). Jefferson Davis, in particular, earned the journalists' censure. George William Bagby, who wrote for the *Charleston Mercury*, criticized Davis for his tentativeness in prosecuting the war. "There is too much reason to believe," he wrote early in the war, "that the people, unless they approve of dilly-dally and a Yankee league, will have to take the war into their own hands and drive the Administration as well as the Yankees" (503). Davis was, however, low hanging

fruit. Because there was no legitimate form of opposition in the Confederacy, criticism often took the form petty backbiting and stinging commentary. Bagby's charges were consistent with other forms of public and private disapproval of Davis. The degree to which the publication of these charges demonstrates a move toward professionalization (rather than participation in Confederate political discourse) remains unclear. That Bagby tended "to criticize actions and policies that did not square with his principles" does not bolster the editors' claims of a move away from personal, opinion-based journalism. The editors speculate that southern journalism might "suddenly have been pushed toward new standards because of an influx of a new type of journalist — men who were from the upper reaches of society, who brought the outlook of professionals, albeit from other fields, to their newspaper work" (x). Because few of the essays address the ways in which the correspondents' previous occupations had been professionalized in the early decades of the nineteenth century, they fail to speak directly to the question raised by the editors. The connection between the exigencies of reporting during wartime and the changes in standards and practices in southern journalism deserves our attention. *Knights of the Quill* raises the issue but fails to offer fully developed explanation of this relationship.

There is much information to be gleaned from these biographies. Definite patterns emerge: journalists suffered the same hardships and ailments as combatants; many felt compelled to respond directly to the needs and desires of their readers; all felt the logistical problems in publishing a newspaper during wartime; many felt it their duty to bolster morale; all were beset by problems associated with rumor and inaccurate information; some struggled with the military's need to keep information classified. The structure of the book, however, forces readers to determine which patterns are meaningful. The introductory essay outlines these patterns, but too much of the burden is placed in the reader to do the hard work. Many of the essays are descriptive, driven by the need to deliver content, rather than analytical. The study, then, rewards the patient, attentive, and diligent reader.

Editor's Note

In his monumental Conjectures of Order: Intellectual Life and the American South, 1810-1860, Michael O'Brien emphasized the importance of periodicals, such as those William Gilmore Simms edited, in the South's cultural development (I:529-53). But he explicitly excluded newspapers from his consideration. Not so Simms, who insisted: "There are, really, for us in the South but two great sources of popular tuition, apart from Schools and Colleges: one is ... a free circulation of a various literature through the medium of the periodical" (Letters 2:517). Among the periodicals to which he contributed, as editor or as columnist, poet, and reviewer, were numerous newspapers. This was especially true in the run up to, during, and after the Civil War. One would not know this of him or of Henry Timrod or of other important writers and editors of those years from Michael Bernath's recent Confederate Minds: The Struggle for Intellectual Independence in the Civil War South. That is why the volume reviewed here becomes an important point of departure, even if it too fails to include Simms, except incidentally.

Contributors

Benjamin. B. Alexander, a native of Ridge Spring, South Carolina, is Professor of English and Humanities at Franciscan University of Steubenville, where he chaired the English department from 1992-1997. He has taught William Gilmore Simms and antebellum American literature for twenty-five years at colleges above the Mason-Dixon line. He assisted John Paul II Library at Franciscan University acquire a handsome collection of Simms's writings. He is editing *Flannery O'Connor and Friends*, a collection of O'Connor's unpublished letters, as well as Walker Percy's unpublished essays and book reviews, *Confessions of a "Miseducated" Novelist*.

Laura Aull is Assistant Professor of English at Wake Forest University. Her work focuses on institutional practices and artifacts, corpus linguistic analysis, and rhetorical genre theory. Her interest in *The Simms Review* anthology forum stems from her current research, a corpus linguistic analysis of the apparatus of anthologies over the past 40 years. This apparatus examination suggests that responses to US canon debates remain largely restricted to anthology scholarship and inventory, with still-needed attention to the narratives and use of materials directed at students.

Sean R. Busick is an associate professor of history at Athens State University in Athens, Alabama. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of South Carolina in 2001 and is the president of the William Gilmore Simms Society. In 2005 he published "*A Sober Desire for History*": *William Gilmore Simms as Historian* with the University of South Carolina Press, and he also has written introductions for new editions of Simms's *The Cassique of Kiawah* (History Press, 2005) and *Life of Francis Marion* (History Press, 2007).

Kevin Collins serves on the faculty of Southwestern Oklahoma State University, where he is president of the faculty senate and the managing editor of *Westview: A Journal of Western Oklahoma*. He is the president-elect of the Simms Society. He has researched Simms as the Diane C. Blair Fellow for Southern Studies at the University of Arkansas, as the Simms Visiting Research Professor at the University of South Carolina, and as an NEH scholar at Notre Dame's seminar on Anglo-Irish identities. His edition of *The Cassique of Kiawah* was released by the University of Arkansas Press in 2003, and a second title from the same press, *Vasconcelos*, is scheduled for release in 2012.

Ton Fafianie is a Dutch historian (an alumnus of the University of Amsterdam) and translator, an independent researcher with a long-standing interest in the literature of American Romanticism, the "American Renaissance" in general, and Poe in particular. He is the compiler of a compendium of the life and works of Poe in Dutch, with historical, critical, and continuous design aspects (not yet published).

Brian Fennessy was born in Cranston, Rhode Island. He became interested in the history of the American South at an early age and will be graduating from Sewanee: The University of the South in May 2012. As an outsider to the region he studies, he is continually fascinated by men and women who felt like outsiders in the nineteenth-century South—African Americans, Civil War Unionists, “Southern Yankees,” and alienated intellectuals. He has benefited greatly from the mentorship of John M. McCardell, Jr., who has provided him with research and teaching opportunities in preparation for his graduate work.

Sarah E. Gardner is professor of history and director of the southern studies department at Mercer University, Macon, Georgia. Her research interests include the intellectual and cultural history of the American South. Author of *Blood and Irony: Southern White Women's Narratives of the Civil War* (2006), she is currently finishing a book-length manuscript titled “Reviewing the South: Readers, Writers, Critics, and the Idea of an American Region. 1925-1950.”

John Grammer is Professor of English at the University of the South, where he teaches classes in British and American literature and directs the Sewanee School of Letters. His essays and reviews have appeared in *American Literary History*, *Mississippi Quarterly*, *The Oxford American*, and other periodicals, and in the *Blackwell's Companion to the Literature and Culture of the American South* and *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*. His book *Pastoral and Politics in the Old South* was published in 1997 and won the C. Hugh Holman award for that year.

David Moltke-Hansen directed the South Carolina Historical Society from 1985-88, before becoming director of the Southern Historical Collection at the UNC in 1989 and, then, president to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1999. In 2007 he became an independent scholar, publishing numerous articles, serving as general editor of the five-volume selected essays of Elizabeth Fox-Genovese from the USC Press, and, since June 2010, leading the Simms Initiatives. Co-editor with Michael O'Brien of *Intellectual Life in Antebellum Charleston* (1986) and editor of the forthcoming *William Gilmore Simms's Unfinished Civil War* (2012), his work has focused on southern intellectual history in the long 19th-century. He and Mark Smith edit *Cambridge Studies on the American South*.

Kenneth M. Roemer is a Distinguished Scholar and Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Arlington. He established the anthologies website www.uta.edu/english/roemer/ctt. He has guest lectured at Harvard and in thirteen countries and was a Senior Science Fellow in Japan. *Michibata de Deatta Nippon* is his personal narrative about Japan. His articles have appeared in journals such as *American Literature*, *American Literary History*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, and *Technology and Culture*. Three of his books, including the *Cambridge Companion to Native American Literature*, focus on American Indian literature; four focus on utopian literature, including *The Obsolete Necessity*, which was nominated for a Pulitzer.

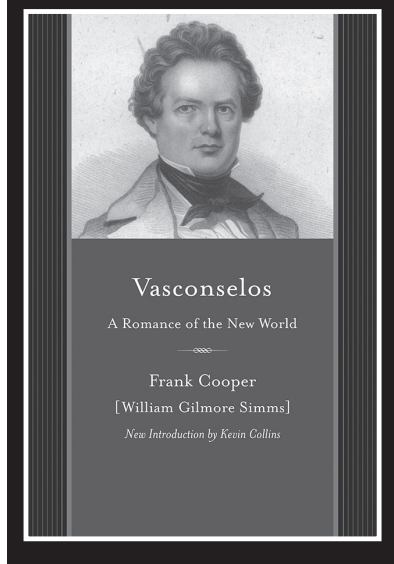
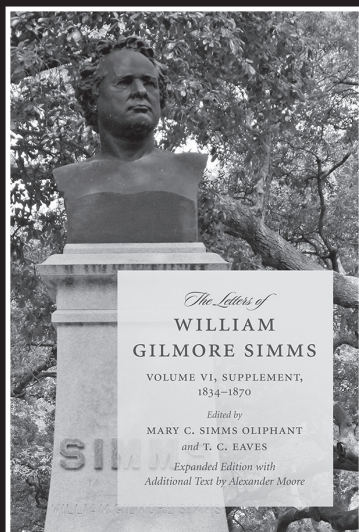
Peter Schmidt is the William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of English Literature at Swarthmore College. He teaches courses in U.S. literature and literary history, with a particular focus on fiction and poetry in the twentieth century. He has published a book on William Carlos Williams's poetry and experimental prose, one on Eudora Welty's short fiction, and an anthology, co-edited with Amrijit Singh, entitled *Postcolonial Theory and the U.S.: Race, Ethnicity, and Literature*. His most recent book is *Sitting in Darkness: New South Fiction, Education, and the Rise of Jim Crow Colonialism, 1865-1920*.

Patrick Scott recently retired as Director of the Irvin Department of Rare Books & Special Collections, University of South Carolina Libraries, and Distinguished Professor of English, Emeritus. His publications on Victorian literature include a reprint of William North's *City of the Jugglers* (USC Press, 2008) and the introductory essay and a co-authored bibliography in a special William North issue of *Victorian Newsletter* (2009).

Bethany Shaffer is the Assistant Director of First Year English at the University of Texas at Arlington. She assisted Dr. Ken Roemer in transitioning "Covers, Titles, and Tables: The Formations of American Literary Canons" into a more user-friendly interface and is currently updating the website with new anthologies and archives (www.uta.edu/english/roemer/ctt). Her fictional short story, "Things I Should Have Told You," was published in *The Lumen* literary magazine.

Abigail Lundelius Smith earned a Ph.D. in Colonial & 19th-Century American Literature from the University of South Carolina, with emphases in Southern Literature and Women's Studies. Her current project, entitled "Shall We Gather at the Table?," is an examination of the symbolic, material, and cultural significance of the table in 19th-century American life and letters, with particular attention to questions of gender and region. An eager interdisciplinary, Smith regularly explores texts that invite a host of readings and pursues projects that blur the distinctions between departments.

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