The South Carolina REVIEW

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The South Carolina Review

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The South Carolina Review

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In Defense of Poetry: An Essay

When for instance you ask me why
Do you like poetry I always
Reply because
I do that's why why
Would you like to make
Something out of it wise
Guy and if the answer is yes
And sometimes it is then I give
You a chop in the kisser and since
I weigh this side of 200 lbs and since
I have given a dozen or so chops in the
Kisser to smart alecky doubting thomases
Defending poetry is less a problem now
Than ever before despite what critics
Say to the contrary I was defending
Poetry just yesterday in front of
The library his arms full of books
A young man was grinning up at his
Sweetie pie and I marched up to
Him and said what do you think
Of poetry and since the reply
Was not in the first degree
Affirmative I let him hold
One straight in the gaping schnozzle
With the added admonition I defend
Poetry wherever and whenever I
Find it threatened and
I do I do I do I do and I don't care if I do
Die
I'll defend it
TO THE DEATH
L
A
S

JOHN CHANDLER GRIFFIN

The *Review* Moves to Clemson

After this issue, *The South Carolina Review* will have a new home and a new pair of editors. After five years at Furman, it now moves to Clemson University, where it will be sponsored by the Department of English and the College of Liberal Arts. It will be edited by Richard J. Calhoun and Robert W. Hill. There will be no break in publication. Please send all manuscripts, all renewal checks, and all orders for copies of this issue to the new address:

The Editors
The South Carolina Review
Department of English
Clemson University
Clemson, South Carolina 29631

The new editors will explain their policy in the fall issue; the current editors' statement of discontinuation, planned for this page and already set in type, has been moved to the inside back cover. To that statement we here add our expression of pleasure that Clemson will keep the magazine going for the good of literary culture in the state and region. We wish the new editors success and urge all those who have supported us in the past five years to continue their support of the magazine under its new management.

May, 1973

Newspaper Office: Midnight

Now they can put their feet on the desks and exchange
stories and lies: the day a proofroom pull
spelled an obscenity in a leading headline,
the day the war broke out and They Were There,
the covering of the Ali-Frazier match
and the drinks and fighting afterwards. And women . . .
Smoke spirals up into the ticking clock,
teletypes slowly peck out UPI
news about stocks and fashions. It must be
true about printer's ink being newsmen's blood.
A copyboy says, "How come you guys are all
so smart but poor, and everybody else
is rich but stupid?" Laughing, he retreats
amid a shower of pencil stubs and ashes.

Poetry too is brutal, ribald, sad
with the beauty of late hours and much smoke,
forced interviews with the gods . . . but it sounds soft
to them. Over the barriers of our names
we talk and drink, not able to understand.

GAIL WHITE

The Literature of Laputa

Doris Betts

Teaching recent fiction is depressing, even boring.

There. I've said it.

For some years I have taped my mouth shut on this statement behind a stamped motto: *Art and uplift are separate categories.* I grow older. Now Tolstoy's words have begun to reverberate insistently in my aging head: "Art is a human activity having for its purpose the transmission to others of the highest and best feelings to which men have risen."

A contemporary heresy. I wince, picturing our libraries buried under tons of old copies of *Reader's Digest.* Instead of Tolstoy, perhaps I seek some confirmation of Faulkner's Nobel speech that the aim of the writer is to uplift the heart of man and, in this way, to say 'no' to death. That, too, is more sentimentalizing than I mean. I am trying to say that in recent fiction I miss the great energy and aliveness of a writer like D. H. Lawrence. I want to be able to say of some novelist what Picasso said of Matisse, that he has a "sun in his belly."

Instead, our view of the sun seems close to what Gulliver found in Laputa. We dread that it will swallow the earth. Or that the sun's surface, by degrees, "will be encrusted with its own effluvia and give no more light to the world." We are fascinated by entropy as the Laputans were, "that the sun, daily spending its rays without any nutriment to supply them, will at last be wholly consumed and annihilated." Gulliver found the Laputans so alarmed by apprehensions and impending dangers that they could "neither sleep quietly in their beds, nor have any relish for the common pleasures or amusements of life."

This sun, the waning one, is in the bellies of our authors, which seem further distended from self-imposed fasts. One might believe that Death was a twentieth-century invention, found by our population under the Christmas tree in lieu of a promised bike and viewed, not with adult grief and loss, but adolescent petulance. What if there is no Santa Claus at the North Pole, after all? The other eleven months of the year are hardly worth our energy. What if the sun may someday burn out? Let us stay indoors and write complaining books.

American and British fiction since 1945 has been obsessed by death but not disposed to argue with death's power nor prevail over it. Donleavy's *Ginger Man* runs and dances through the streets of Dublin, but he is only racing toward the harsh mortality which waits on the final page in a terrifying vision of perishing as wild horses perish. Bellow's *Herzog* whines in impeccable and literary fashion, but his whining alone is enough to fulfill Mailer's description of a guest you couldn't tolerate in your own home for thirty minutes. Even *Henderson the Rain King* stops in Newfoundland for a romp my undergraduates can hardly credit. For Truman Capote, Hickok and Smith murder a Kansas family of four "in cold blood"; his job is to record it, not to confront the psychopath who may be coming to our doors tonight. In his non-fiction novel, our non-fiction pity is trivialized. The outrage of Updike's *Poorhouse Fair* wanes to the peccadilloes of *Couples,* and *Rabbit Redux* is a boring place for Angstrom to have been running toward. Just after my class read Mailer's *American Dream,* its author appeared on campus promoting his film and its underlying theory of improvisation. He "improvised" at the University of North Carolina by the same invisible script used next day at nearby Duke University, even calling spontaneously for the same box to be fetched from the wings so he might stand tall enough for two impromptu podiums of equal heights. An *Advertisement* for himself — and where is our literary Ralph Nader? In the black center of the American Dream, why no *Heart of Darkness*? Is Marilyn Monroe the nearest *Madame Bovary* we've spawned? Sillitoe's *Long Distance Runner* was a sprinter after all. Last week a student told me Styron's *Confessions of Nat Turner* sounded tongue in cheek, as if narrated by Lenny Bruce. John Barth, no longer *Lost in the Funhouse,* lives there among carefully selected furnishings, and spins rational arguments against continuing existence while doggedly continuing both to exist and to publish. His fictional story speaks off the page and disavows the author's effort. Why is the effort so small? A little of Scheherezade's moxie, please.

What books shall I assign my classes? John Hawkes? The fragments of Jerzy Kozinski? Baldwin? I ask the students, and they opt for *Catch-22* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest,* which they swallow whole and digest into easy metaphors about their parents.

When Dwight MacDonald told a session at the New School in New York that good novels were written more out of spite, envy, and

malice than any other motives, Joseph Heller replied that the novelist had no problems today which the novelist in the past did not have. He added that today's schlepp or schlemiel had a connotation of pathos, pity, in justice. Is that where our fiction stops? When students ask me, "Is that all?" I turn to our writers asking wearily, "Well?" Is it? Like Caesar, are our "conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils. Shrunk to this little measure?"

What we see mirrored in fiction is, of course, the shrinkage of man himself. From Copernicus onward, history has nibbled away at man's self-esteem. Neither the Universe nor God seems particularly concerned with man's importance. As in Laputa, he has learned to live in second-hand abstractions and with prosperity, at the price of significant individual encounters and personal victories. Foci of interest have left his artist's canvases, his novels, and his life. Since existence is pointless, where are its turning points? For the behaviorist, who makes fatal choices? If man's life only matters to himself, why should another self-imprisoned man attend to the story of that small pilgrimage? Both are pawns; there is nothing to be learned. And the sun may be encrusted. The hero is everyman so he is nobody, problematic to himself alone. Technology makes many things possible, none of which are very important. Now that we are blessedly free of easy categories of right and wrong, life has flattened into a plane which man must cross as an ant crosses a superhighway, taking a risk without purpose toward an invented goal.

Our arts seem to rise out of these and related premises. In actual fact, across the planet, man continues to reproduce and persevere by the millions. When Tolstoy asked, "What would the peasants say?" he meant that human life is not continued on the basis of reasonableness nor apparent merit, but out of instinct and what an earlier age might have called faith. Psychology, via Karl Jung, balanced its own supra-rational tendences by asking of invisible and unknowable things, "Why should we deprive ourselves of views that would prove helpful in crisis and would give a meaning to our existence?" Our better writers seem to view such a fair-minded approach in literature as falsely optimistic and intellectually dishonest, so the option has been forfeited to hacks and opportunists. What could they have given us but *Marjorie Morningstar, Love Story,* and *Gone with the Wind?* Or Irving Wallace — our consumer-tested Dickens.

Where is this age's Blake, Rilke, Hopkins, Yeats? In England, William Golding has been willing to write moral allegory and still considers man important enough to be able to take a Faustian loss on his soul, but he cannot hold back from didacticism. John Fowles' *French Lieutenant's Woman*, which deserves to be much more widely studied than it is, at least poses honest questions of authenticity and freedom. Muriel Spark is almost too deft; even *Momento Mori* is so stylized that we can take neither the death's head nor its toothy grin very seriously. Philip Roth's fiction has been pecked to death by the women in it. Having blown the novel form to bits, William Burroughs – said Theodore Solotaroff – has come to a "brilliantly lit dead end." Flannery O'Connor died. Hubert Selby is to fiction what Samuel Peckinpah is to film, but he licks his chops louder in the sadistic parts. Salinger has not ventured out lately, and his work looks more and more like fragile lace. John Updike is all foreplay. If anyone ever doubted that Gore Vidal's fiction was ludicrous, *Myra Breckinridge* must have settled the matter. Vonnegut is no Kafka and Santiago's fish no Moby Dick.

And the overwhelming impression is of adolescence. Perhaps this is encouraging and we need only wait a while for growth. It didn't happen to Sherwood Anderson, who has so often been called an "adolescent's writer," with his Winesburg characters groping for vague ideas they have not the maturity to articulate. Yet his characters seem to matter more than Rojack or Peter Caldwell do. Anderson seems about 25 and stylistically limited; our contemporary authors 17 and tiresomely fluent about it. Holden Caulfield's windmills, now that they've weathered a bit, resemble tinkertoys. Innocence has been lost in public so many times one would hardly bend over to pluck it off the streets. Except for Ellison's *Invisible Man*, our *Notes from Underground* appear to be written in rumpus rooms. A case of existentialism looks more like poison ivy than anything else; the itch may be personally agonizing but scratching is a poor spectator sport. Tom Wolfe's Kesey is a portrait of the artist as teenybopper; we met the Combine first in Orphan Annie. Edmund Fuller has already said that our novelists lack a sense of evil, and Mailer's embattled God seems about the size of a harrassed executive at General Motors.

Size. The chief attribute of adolescence is that it has no sense of scale and perspective. A pimple is a castastrophe. So are Biafra and

the Bangladesh. The characters in our novels are small, their worlds small, their problems small, the solutions unimportant.

The excuses for this state of affairs are many, and have already been made at exhaustive length. "Eve gave me the apple and I did eat." Modern man's applesauce was made by master cooks like Darwin, Freud, Einstein, and simmered over the blazing Bomb. The Judaeo-Christian perspective has faded. Electronics have unsettled this age as the printing press inexorably altered the Elizabethan. For awhile Matthew Arnold's idea that literature provided the criticism for life in a secular society which the Bible offered to a religious one was held, but how many great books came out of it? Now we merely depict: history-as-the-novel, personal journalism. Or it's television's fault. Or perhaps our literature has matured to the status of symphonies and sculptures, which no longer "mean" but "are." (The comparison ignores one obvious difference, that components of color and sound do not, like language, originate in the social life of man.) It's the times, of course. Roth's essay on "Writing American Fiction" complained that national reality was so incredible *Life* magazine surpassed weekly anything a writer might ever invent. (So might he have said in the days of the Children's Crusades, Black Death, the Inquisition, or while peering over Kraft-Ebbing's shoulder.) When someone asked Mark Twain whether truth wasn't stranger than fiction he said, "Of *course* it is. Truth doesn't have to make sense." Neither does *Life*. (Pun intended.)

I am not sounding the familiar plea for "positive themes," or "rediscoveries of values"; *Life* has done that editorially in the past. This is no casting call for Lloyd C. Douglas or Pearl Buck; Horatio Alger need not apply. Indeed, I would welcome wickedness with a little volume and size to it, as in *MacBeth* and *Othello,* some tune played beyond the range of Middle C to G. The scope of a Kazantzakis or Solzhenitsyn, maybe the laughter of Joyce Cary or more of the extravagance of Lawrence Durrell. Some affirmation of D. H. Lawrence's view few tragedies that would really hurt, and some belly laughs besides. that if life could be lived to the full, art would grow out of it. A I wish the Glasses could sometimes grow up and visit some of Malamud's characters, and that Barth's labyrinth could take on the breadth he recognizes in that of Jorge Luis Borges.

When Gulliver got ready to leave Laputa, he viewed the inhabitants as "so abstracted and involved in speculation that I never met with such disagreeable companions," all of them confined to an island which could only travel over specific dominions and never rise above the height of four miles. The two main interests of the Laputans were mathematics and music, and they ate mutton cut into equilateral triangles, beef into rhomboids, pudding in cycloid shape. They measured Gulliver carefully by a quadrant, you will recall, and with rule and compasses described the outlines and dimensions of his body. The clothes they tailored for him, however, proved ill made and out of shape.

Maybe it's time for us to remeasure the shape of man and enlarge the size of the stories in which he lives.

Paternity

The old man squats
beside the flower
bed in January,
lights his pipe
and waits
as water trickles
from his hose.
He guides the nozzle
with a trembling hand,
helping the
artificial member
spew its liquid
onto the ground.
Satisfied,
the old man takes
his hose and goes
inside to wait
for the first signs
of life.

SUSAN BARTELS

On a Student Killed in an Auto Accident

Sunday night.
Returning from home,
fresh mother-laundered clothes in suitcase,
still-warm cookies in a tin
on the front seat, probably into already.
Georgia rainshower and concrete bridge abutment
did the trick,
conspiracy of time and place,
Nature and civil engineering:
he simply brought the necessary dash of negligence.
I have travelled that interstate often.
The girl broke legs, back, pelvis, other things.
The steaming car in the rain
and the winding-down noise,
a wheel spinning in the dark.
Monday the empty desk
bland against the greenboard
as I returned themes.
A student told me at the end of the hour.
No wonder the class was so dead.
From his last theme:
"The American domestic goal today is
progress. We have industrial progress, where
we have not only expanded in our
own country but in countries abroad. This
progress is shown in the poem 'America'
where the author states about Russia, 'Her wants
our auto plants in Siberia.' We are growing
but maybe to much as stated in 'Shine
Perishing Republic.' What do we
have to progress for?"
It is slipshod prose, reckless
in the way of an eighteen-year-old.
I had scrawled at the bottom
in penmanship crabbed as his own

"Writing here, esp. mechanics, careless
but some good ideas
C–"
Other things beside where
he had filled the middle of the page.
He said he always sweated a theme.
I was the same at his age,
couldn't worry about details,
must have been charmed to have got this far.
He was a very good sort of very normal boy
who usually did his work
and wasn't grave.
If I were God I would have killed him
last of all the students in the class.
He was a virgin probably,
would have married for life.
Now that he is dead I realize how much I liked him.
And how far I failed to know him.
Nothing very unusual in that.
Do I fill the space
beside his name on the Course Grade Form
with an Incomplete or Deferred?
Or shall I leave it blank?
The registrar will want something.
For a moment
all I see is the headlight-slashed rain
and a wheel spinning stupidly;
then the noise winds down
and I see what I have done to the paper.

JOHN HUMMA

Headwaiters

MARGARET BOLSTERLI

Mama says that if you listen carefully to what Granny is saying during a visit you can hear a tune which begins like somebody picking out a melody with one hand on the piano until it grows into a full brass band playing John Philip Sousa, only what it is always turns out to be the same tune: COME ON HOME TO NAPOLEON ARKANSAS, AND RESUME YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES. She plays it for both of us; it started with Mama because she ran off to Paris to marry a Frenchman but it is getting louder for me because when I graduate from the university in June I am going to have to make a decision and I don't think I am going to cast my ballot for the Junior League and finger-painting classes at the Firehouse Art Center, these being the social and cultural offerings of Napoleon to date. Gramps is still buying land and fully expects me to have something to do with it – what exactly I don't know; I imagine seeing me float across the society page of the *Arkansas Gazette* in a Scarlett O'Hara dress is about as far as his vision extends. It wasn't good enough for Mama, although she was late in life finding it out, and it isn't good enough for me. Gramps blames this on Mama and Granny blames it on the university. As for myself, I don't see this discontent as cause for blaming anybody. To me it just looks like an interesting development and I would do what Mama did in a minute, given her looks and opportunities. In case you are wondering, my father doesn't come into this story much because my parents were divorced when I was about ten and Mama took me with her to live at my grandparents' house. She didn't remarry until recently because she said the burnt child shuns the fire. I think she was just being selective about the fire.

Actually, the only way Daddy does come into it a little bit is that when I was little and we were still a family we lived out at the river on the farm and he managed it, after a fashion. When he was sober enough, that is. I liked living out there and if I were a man I might just consider seriously taking it over to run, but I'm not a man, and let me tell you, *being* a cotton planter is a lot more interesting than being a cotton planter's wife, which is what Granny has in mind for me, of course. "Plenty of nice boys around here, honey. No reason for you to go running off to graduate school just because you're not married yet." Oh, Gran, you ought to be ashamed.

The counterpoint to the melody is usually, one way or another, about sex. "Save yourself," those little grace notes sing, "for that nice young man. There is the Sunday paper full of brides in white, Laura Lee, and we expect to see you there too." And I can't help thinking about Mama and Daddy doing all that up right — Daddy in a cutaway and striped pants and Mama in a white dress with a veil on it that hot June morning before I was probably even thought of. I *think* of all that because I have seen the wedding pictures and heard Granny describe the wedding a hundred times, but what I *remember* mostly when I think of them (us) together is the dull afternoons and grouchy mornings and my father woozy. It may sound peculiar, but when I think of marriage I smell the Delta and what it smells like is bourbon and cape jasmine stirred up together with a background odour of that musk that armyworms give off when they are eating cotton bolls. They all go together, and the grace notes are telling me to prepare myself for *that?* Strange ambition, but I guess it was what I expected to do until two years ago. It is even stranger to recall that my mother was president of the Junior League right up to the minute she left, and the following is the way she got out of it all.

The summer I was twenty when I got home from school for the long vacation Mama said, "Laura, honey, I've got a surprise for you. I have had all of this town I can stand; we are going to Europe." Now that was a surprise and all I could think of to say was what in the world were we going to do over there. She said that we were going to look at everything and try it all out. I found it hard to believe that Gramps was going to pay for this little expedition; he is filthy rich, but stingy. He doesn't believe in spending money except for things you can see; he thinks it is all right to spend freely for cars, jewelry, land and things like that because you get something to show for your money. Travel is just a waste if you go too far away from home for anybody to see you enjoying it. But she had prized the money out of him, had even bought the tickets. My mother is only forty, yet I was still a little dubious about being alone with her for three weeks because it might turn out to be a drag; I ought not to have given it a second thought. One thing about her, she manages all right wherever she is. Granny always preaches about poise and I guess she is right: if you've got poise the world is yours (that and money, but Gran doesn't put that part in).

The way Mama had convinced my grandfather that it was worth while to spend the money was to point out to him that it was a disgrace he had not sent her before and that he would indeed get something tangible for his money; it would be in the paper and all his friends would know it. The truth is we could have spent six months in Paris for what that three weeks ended up costing but that doesn't matter; it would have seemed like showing-off for my grandfather to send us to stay six months in Europe, but since he doesn't have the faintest notion what things like that cost, or even that there are two classes of air travel, we went first class all the way. Mama said we might as well make it as easy on ourselves as we could since we would have to cram it all into three weeks. It was to be the trip of a lifetime. Please remember that neither one of us had ever been much of anywhere except Little Rock and Memphis to shop and to Dallas to the Cotton Bowl and New Orleans to the Sugar Bowl when the Arkansas Razorbacks play in those games. There were so many things Mama wanted to do she didn't even know where to start making a list.

We went to London first and looked at a lot of things, but we were totally unprepared for the food; Mama said it was better in Memphis, so we picked up after about forty-eight hours and went to Paris, France, which was a different kettle of fish. Even the bread there is so good that at the first meal, breakfast, we ate so much we almost had to go back to bed, but we weren't there just for that and we truly did the town. We looked at all the pictures in the Louvre one by one (the only Museum in Arkansas is a little bitty one in Little Rock) and Mama said she just wished she had been a painter or at least had enough education to appreciate what she had a chance now to see. I decided to take a course in art history, which I am doing right now, to get ready for the next trip. We went to the Palace of Justice and felt the edge of the guillotine blade that cut off Marie Antoinette's head (according to the guidebook). We sat in sidewalk cafes and had strange and delicious drinks that Mama ordered by pointing to what other people were having. We walked by the Seine River and I decided then and there that Napoleon, Arkansas, wasn't big enough to hold me any longer and although we didn't discuss it, Mama must have been deciding the same thing for herself. Our methods are a little different, I guess, but each to her own tools and training.

One morning, after we had been there for a week, Mama said that much as she hated the thought, we ought to be moving on or we would never get everything done. She thought that since it was going to be our last day we ought to celebrate — instead of stopping to eat in just any old restaurant we ought to get dressed up and go to one of the ones recommended in the guidebook. So that afternoon we took a nap to rest up, then dressed carefully and sallied forth, as they say. I don't think I have mentioned it, but my mother is a striking-looking woman and people always look twice, but when she is dressed up they turn around and stare. I noticed it especially that night as we went out through the hotel lobby. Being in Paris made her look even better than usual; she seemed to be just a little taller, and to be wagging her hips just a little bit more. We took a taxi to a restaurant called Le Petit Prince and didn't even stop to read the menu on the door, just sailed on in. I thought, "Boy, if Gramps could only see this! He could buy half an acre of prime cotton land for what this is going to cost him." The headwaiter looked exactly like Charles Boyer, even spoke English like him, and he appreciated the way my mother looked. He seated us at a nice table, suggested a special kind of vermouth called Chambéry (which I guess you acquire a taste for), suggested some things he thought we might enjoy for dinner, and was always near. He completely neglected the rest of the dining room to take care of us. And, oh yes, before I forget it, Mama flirts; that is what I mean by *her* tools. When there is a man around, no matter what he looks like, she gives him her undivided attention and they both enjoy it. So, of course she flirted with the headwaiter, the way she does with everybody. I had never tasted such food before in my life, and flirt though she may, my mother likes to eat too and I suspect that she forgot that man when the food came, but when the meal was over and we had enjoyed every taste down to the last sop of crêpe and Mama had had a little glass of brandy and a tiny little cigar (which she wouldn't do outside the house at home) there was that Maitre d' again, helping her with her stole and hoping with all his heart that she had eaten with delight and would return. Then Mama asked him if he could recommend a nice bar where she and her daughter could go and listen to music for a while on their last night in Paris. Oh, but certainly he could, and he wrote down the name and address of a place for her. THEN she looked right into his eyes and smiled all the way to her ankles,

as only she knows how, complimented him on the meal, the charm of his country, the beauty of Paris, and ended up with an invitation for him to join us for the music. For about half a minute he kept his eyes on hers to see if she meant it and when he saw she did he said, "Madame, I will be enchanted," and walked straight out that door with us.

We had a marvellous time. It was like an evening out of a movie. I have tried many times to remember what all we talked about but I can't; just a few things come back. I remember her telling him at one point about how she was the only woman in Napoleon who could play the Minute Waltz in even three minutes and I especially remember that he didn't laugh, but seemed to appreciate it for the accomplishment it was (how could he have known that she was probably the only person in town who had even heard of it, let alone played it). One of the remarkable things was that although we sat in that bar for hours sipping drinks, nobody was drunk. Now, that would never happen any other place I have been, yet. It was distinctly pleasant, one of the most pleasant evenings I have ever spent, in fact. We saw him again for breakfast the next morning and the truth is that we didn't leave for Rome, as planned, then or ever. When our three weeks were up Mama sent me on home to explain to Gramps and Granny that she was staying in Paris to marry him, and she did.

So now I am mainly the one who listens to Granny's tune; at least I come home now more often than Mama does, but I have plans too. Not being a natural born flirt I have to take other measures; another way out of Napoleon is graduate school and when I graduate in June I am going off to work on a master's degree in something, somewhere. I keep explaining to Gramps that the more education I have, the better equipped I will be to handle things when he passes on. He doesn't object to my going to graduate school, nor even paying for it; after all, you can *see* a diploma with *Master of Arts* engraved on it; all he complains about is where I want to do it. *What*, he keeps asking, does Paris or New York have to offer that I can't get in Fayetteville, where the University of Arkansas is. It is on the tip of my tongue to answer him, "Headwaiters, Gramps." When you get down to it, that is about as good an answer as any; it is for sure the only one he would understand.

The Food Basket

Lee Brian

Whenever I pass the old Holster plant on Grand Forks Road, I remember a September morning back in the 30s when the company announced it was hiring one hundred men and a crowd estimated by the police at five thousand turned out. I don't know why that day stands out in my mind, but the men waiting in the street, patient, hopeful, some of them even joking, seemed to set the mood of those dark days.

People waited desperately for signs that the depression was over and they were to continue to wait and wait, and in the meantime bread-lines lengthened, and along Hartford Avenue in my neighborhood more and more *For Sale* signs appeared on the lovely, elegant old houses that had been built earlier in a more prosperous time.

They were spacious, these homes, with white porticos and Georgian gardens. Now for the most part they were unoccupied, the gardens overrun with weeds, with a chimney tumbling down or a side-porch swing pulled from a chain. An air of seedy despair hung over the avenue. Facades were all that were left, and if you starved, at least it was behind closed shutters.

It was pride that gave you dignity. Without it you couldn't have survived during those terrible years. We could attest to that fact. My father had lost his business, a foundry which he had inherited from my grandfather; and I had come home from the state university at Easter to find him stricken. My uncle Max told me how gravely ill he was. "You're not a rich man's son any longer," he said. "You'll have to quit college and get a job."

"Oh, I don't mind," I said, thinking he meant a part-time job and that I could finish out my freshman year.

"No," he said. "You don't understand. Your father is broke. You can't stay in school. The family will have to vacate the house. It has to be sold."

We'd all been born here. It was the only house we'd ever known, this large red brick place built on a high terrace in a garden of cedars and magnolias. The notion of living elsewhere struck us as something

of a lark, like camping out overnight. Actually the cottage we moved into was within four blocks of the old neighborhood, but a thousand miles separated the houses. We found fruit trees already ancient, a grape arbor, and a huge rotting oak in the backyard. The house itself had high ceilings but the rooms were dingy, the bathroom came off the backporch and the tub stood on brass posts. We lived in this uncomfortable, old-fashioned place for eight years and survived the depression here.

Later we would look back and laugh about the crowded house with its bulb hanging from a cord in the central hallway, its antiquated gas plugs, its dank smelling closets – but while we lived here we pretended it was high adventure.

When we read about people dying of starvation we thought it a bit unreal, newspaper exaggeration; and at the same time reading about suffering made us feel somewhat superior in our dream-induced affluence.

I remember the first time I passed an apple vendor on Commerce Street. He was a middle-aged man, clean-shaved, dressed in a fairly decent suit; and I asked myself, how could he lower himself to beg like that. I flipped a nickel into his box and when he held out a half-rotting apple, I shook my head. It felt good to give charity.

Each day brought fresh disasters to our neighborhood. There was Mr. Chalmers who had a grocery store on Pennsylvania and did a large credit business, with scores or even hundreds of credit customers, most of whom had been trading with him for years. But most of them were dead accounts and he had to file for bankruptcy.

And the Palace Drug Store had to shut down. We used to buy ice cream sodas for ten cents there and a double-dip ice cream cone for a nickel. There were swinging stools at the marble-topped tables, and a pervasive smell of chocolate hung over the place. After the Saturday matinee at the Colonial we would flock into the drug store and deluge Mr. Grossman with our requests. Sometimes we tried to re-enact the thrilling moments that we'd seen on the screen a short time before, and Mr. Grossman would have to retrieve glasses from the tables.

Now it was gone, and a *For Sale* sign displayed in the window.

There were other tragedies in our old neighborhood. The Lettermans lived in a large terra-cotta French Renaissance-style house on the corner at Augusta. They had gone to Paris to buy their furnishings, and they had entertained members of the Chicago Lyric Opera when the company came to town. They had a governess for the two Letterman children and Mr. Letterman drove a Packard. One spring night he went out to the servant house above the garage and turned on the gas jet. In the morning they found him dead.

His next-door neighbor, Marcus Tennant, had a house equally splendid. In fact, the story was that he wanted to outshine the Lettermans; the house had been built on three city lots and there was both a formal garden and what in those days was called a cutting garden. Tennant's contracting business could not survive two lean years, however, and one sunny April day he went upstairs to his den, done charmingly in light tan colors, and shot himself in the mouth.

The Forsters, who lived on the corner of Augusta and Holmes, just a block from us, fared better. They simply had to take in their son and his family. One afternoon we saw old man Forster's Mormon being driven away by a heavy-set man in a cowboy hat who waved at the children in the street. In those days he was a frequent visitor in the neighborhood, seeking to repossess cars. Now to see him preying upon the Forsters and their kin shamed us all. We didn't blame the Forsters for staying behind closed doors.

I worked in the Orchid Building on Commerce. Carfare was five cents — six tokens for a quarter. Without admitting the fact, however, I used to walk the two miles in order to save money. The two main thoroughfares going south were Evans and Classen, and as I walked down one of them, a dozen or more neighbors or former neighbors would whiz by me, many of them slowing to give a lift. But I was too proud to accept any such offer; and lest people think I had to walk out of necessity, I took to using the sidestreets, sometimes walking down the alley between Evans and Classen so that I would not be seen.

I was dating Ellen Hirston who had lived on Holmes in a gold stucco house that had two massive stone lions standing over the entrance. Hard luck came early during the depression years to the Hir-

stons, and no one talked about it; but it was rumored that her father had to flee to Canada to avoid investigation into the nature of his bankruptcy. If he profited, the results were not apparent, for the Hirstons moved into an apartment across from the City Park. To hear Ellen talk, you would think it was the latest thing in fashionable living. Actually the place was dark. The windows in the dining room faced a narrow alleyway and in the main foyer of the apartment there lingered a smell of broiling lamb chops.

Their furniture, which the Hirstons insisted upon moving with them, was massive, richly carved, ornate. In the summer it was covered by white cloth covers. It all looked out of place in the small apartment, and when you came into the apartment you had the feeling that the Hirstons were existing in a state of suspension, as if they were either moving out or moving in. Barrels filled with dishes stood in the hallway; beds were pushed together in the two small bedrooms, and large gilt-framed pictures were stacked against the walls, unhung.

When Ellen and I started going together, it was as if we had newly discovered one another, for though we had lived two blocks from each other and both had gone to Brown School, it wasn't until I saw her eating lunch at Thompson Cafeteria that I understood what had happened to her and to her family. No one ate at Thompson's unless he was driven to. You could buy a plate lunch for fifteen cents, coffee included.

She was eating the plate lunch when I came in. At Thompson's you took your tray to a desk-like chair with an arm attached. I could tell she didn't want to talk to me, but I made the discovery too late. Our eyes met. She nodded to me, and I sat down with my ten-cent sandwich.

"They make the best coffee in town," she said. "I walk two blocks out of my way to come here for their coffee."

"They use their own brand," I said. "It's homemade and it's delicious."

"Isn't it," she said. She had chestnut hair and eyes that opened wide in what seemed perpetual amazement. She had grown more attractive since high school too.

"What are you reading?" she asked, seeing my book.

It was Volume II of Churchill's *Life of Marlborough* that I had got from the library.

"You always were interested in history," she said. "And I certainly thought you'd go to college."

"I will . . . next year again," I said, though with Papa dying slowly it seemed the most unlikely prospect in the world. "But I thought I'd take this year off. You know . . . working . . . getting experience."

"Experience," she said. "That's what I'm getting. Mamma wanted me to start at Sophie Newcomb, but I said I'd like to see how the other half lives." She smiled at me. "You know what I mean. It's so much fun working . . . being one of the girls."

I asked her for a date for Saturday night. My brother and I were sharing a '28 Ford, which didn't run half the time or was perpetually having a flat. The first night I took Ellen out I held my breath for fear it wouldn't keep going.

We went to a dance at the Center. You dropped a quarter or whatever change you had into a glass jar at the door, and danced to Norton Jacobs' orchestra. We'd gone to high school with Norton and he often told us that he was going to study music in New York, then he was planning a career on the concert stage. But the depression caught up with him and he considered himself lucky to be earning seven dollars on a Saturday night.

The dances generally were held in the gym, and when the room became over-heated with human bodies, tightly pressed together and trying to move about, the place smelt like a locker room. Young couples sat in the balcony seats and necked while they sipped frozen ices sold in five-cent cartons, and Norton and his group played "I Can't Give You Anything But Love" and "Tip Toe Through the Tulips."

"He plays so soothingly," said Ellen. "I could listen to Norton all night."

"He's good all right," I agreed.

"Hymie Brockel at the Crystal Ballroom isn't half as good."

I gravely concurred.

"I had lunch there last week," said Ellen. "I took my aunt from Chicago and when Hymie saw me come in he struck up 'Rio Rita.' I love that music. He played it specially for me."

In that land of pretense and make-believe Ellen's eyes grew larger than they were, and she seemed radiant to me. We were dating regularly now. We took advantage of the concerts at Fair Park on Sunday afternoons. It was my introduction to the "Liebstod" and "Wotan's Farewell" and Brahms' "First"; we heard Leonora Coratti, the famous soprano, do "Casa Diva," and we debated the pros and cons of modern music and pretended to be more musically sophisticated than we were. But it was part of the fun of the act that kept our spirits from breaking during those despairing years of the 30s.

We also watched the dance marathons at the old State Fair Coliseum and pitied the weary and broken dancers. "What some people won't do for money," said Ellen.

Like others, we were caught up in the miniature golf fad sweeping the country. At a roadside course on Greenville Avenue you could play eighteen golf holes for ten cents. You hit the ball through tiny loops and across wooden spans. "Of course," said Ellen, "it's nothing like the course at the club." This was the Magellan Country Club to which our families had belonged for many pre-depression years.

Sometimes we strolled to the other end of the park and watched the tree-sitters. All over the country young boys, ten or twelve years old, were hoping to establish a record. In New England a boy had been knocked out of a tree by a bolt of lightning and we'd read about another boy who'd fallen asleep while in the tree and broken his arm when he fell. In those drab and uncertain days one did almost anything for a thrill.

When we grew tired of staring at the tree-sitters, we'd sit on the grass and talk music and art and save the money we didn't have.

In the meantime, Mr. Block, owner of the Colonial Theater, announced its reopening after a year of darkness; and as a means of bolstering attendance he offered a series of raffles. With each ticket purchased went the chance to win a pair of fryers or a food basket or sometimes only a free opportunity to get a five-gallon bucket of ice cream at the Ice Cream Parlor.

By unspoken agreement Ellen and I limited our movie-going to once a week. Back in the 30s you thought twice about spending twenty-five cents for a movie.

Prizes were given once a week. After the feature the lights would come up in the auditorium, and Mr. Block would step forward. "Ladies and gentlemen," he would say in his heavy voice, "tonight as part of the policy of the Colonial Theater to give its customers and patrons the best in entertainment and as a show of appreciation for your patronage we are going to give a twenty-five pound turkey to the lucky–"

"Some poor Joe," I said facetiously, "is drooling now at the prospect."

"The whole thing is ridiculous," said Ellen. "We came here to see a movie, not to attend a charity bazaar."

A hat was brought out, and Mr. Block held it up to show it was filled with stubs. Then he beckoned to his ten-year-old grandson to come forward; and presently the chubby little youngster, standing on tiptoes to reach the hat, pulled out a white ticket.

Expectantly Mr. Block inclined his hefty form and examined the ticket slowly before calling out, "Number six-ten. Six-ten." There was a moment of absolute silence. "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "number six-ten has been drawn by my grandson. Please examine your stubs to see if you are holding this lucky number."

A woman broke the silence with a delightful shriek. "Oh – here – here."

We saw a middle-aged woman lumber down the aisle and mount the stage, and from the wing marched an usher bearing the turkey.

"It's so terribly crude," said Ellen at my side.

The woman in her sack-like dress, standing there with her heels practically gone, seemed utterly comic to us. We watched her seize the basket from Mr. Black, for he was now holding it up for the audience to admire, assuring us by his facial gestures that the fowl rested inside the hamper; she put it on the floor and faced the audience. It took us a few minutes to realize that she wanted to address us.

"I just want to say . . . that we –" She had a midwestern ring to her voice – "I mean all of our farm was blown away." She stopped and caught her breath. "Just one afternoon it began to blow. Before night it was gone. The whole farm – even the fences – was blown away by the dust."

She glanced down at the hamper and her glance seemed to convey disbelief in the reality of the turkey. Then she raised her head again. The stamp of anguish had faded. "Thank you, Mr. Block," she said. "God Bless You." She walked down the steps, resisting the efforts of the usher to help her.

Mr. Block waited for the applause to die. "Next Friday we are giving away a whole basket of food," he said. "Come early and stay till the drawing. Somebody's going to be very lucky."

"Remind me not to come next Friday," I said. "We'll run into the peons."

"You won't be able to keep them away," said Ellen.

We had a date for Friday night and I asked Ellen to go to one of the indoor concerts in the park. Admission was fifty cents. The orchestra was playing the Schubert "Wanderer Fantasy," and Ellen said, "Unless it's played by a firstclass orchestra it's not worth listening to." I agreed with her. "What shall we do?" I asked. "You don't want to play miniature golf again."

"That's better than staying home and listening to Major Bowes," she said.

"Snow White" was on at the Colonial, but I had groaned at the the prospect of seeing it.

"The music's catchy," said Ellen and she started to whistle "Whistle While You Work."

I thought of the large basket of food that Mr. Block had placed in the lobby last week and idly speculated on the possibility of taking it home. It had been a bad week for us. Mr. Dickerman no longer delivered ice to us, for we owed him twelve dollars from the past month. Every other day my brother or I would go by the ice house to pick up a twenty-five pound block. Too, though we never admitted it and

complained about the service, our telephone had been temporarily disconnected.

When Ellen and I came to the theater, the lights were still on and we had trouble finding seats. The place was packed. Finally we were lucky to get two seats in the extreme rear of the theater. I made a show of passing the stubs to Ellen. "They're yours," I said. "Hope you win." Carefully she separated the two and handed one stub back to me.

The audience was restless throughout the movie, and even the natural optimism inherent in the picture couldn't keep down the subdued whispering and nervous giggling. There were a lot of hungry people in the theater that night.

Finally the intermission came. The lights brightened and the shabby old silver curtain descended slowly in a shower of dust particles. We adjusted our eyes to the light, waiting for Mr. Block. Presently he emerged, with his bald head shining like copper under the glaring lights. His grandson was with him, and just behind them came the usher in his blue tight-fitting uniform, carrying an enormous hamper of food.

Mr. Block rubbed his hands together in response to the vigorous applause that greeted him. "Ladies and gentlemen," he commenced in his beefy voice, "this is the event of the week. What you have been waiting for — this drawing of a colossal food basket." He turned to the usher and made a pretense of peering inside. "It contains two hams, a six pound sack of potatoes, four cans of corn, two cans of peas . . . five pounds of flour, ten pounds of sugar, a box of salt . . . two pounds of butter. . . ."

Spontaneous whistling and hand-clapping greeted his words. When I glanced around the theater I saw familiar faces. The Worthams — he had lost his position at Lentz Jewelry and was selling household disinfectants. Even from the distance that I sat I could see that he needed a shave.

There was old Mrs. Hilstock who used to live on the corner of South Boulevard in a white stucco house that had twelve rooms; she now occupied a three-room apartment on Forest. They said she lived on practically nothing, and when you passed her on the street she

seemed to glare at you with a kind of fierce intensity. I had seen others with the same look.

Mr. Block motioned to his grandson, who put his hand into the hat. Then he passed the ticket over to Mr. Block. Mr. Block looked at it and promptly called out, "Number two-twenty-two . . . two-twenty-two . . . has been called."

The number sounded familiar, and my blood seemed to chill in my veins. I didn't dare look at the stub in my hand. In fact, I had no need to look at it. "Two-twenty-two," Mr. Block called again. And now his voice sounded warm, inviting.

"Ellen," I said and touched her arm. "It's yours."

"No," she cried. "It's your number –"

Her hand under mine was shaking. "Here – here –" I tried to press the stub though her fingers.

But her fist held. "Arnold," she whispered, "go up and claim the basket –"

Mr. Block's voice came again. How expectant it was! "Is Number two-twenty-two in the house?" But now with repetition he sounded disappointed, and for a moment his bulky frame shielded the food basket from view. I could see them all – the Worthams, old Mrs. Hilstock, the Forsters. Their hungry, malevolent eyes seemed to feast upon me . . . upon my shame. "Who wants their crummy basket?" I muttered, and then as if from another planet I heard Mr. Block's voice calling to his grandson to take another ticket from the hat.

Another's Trouble

Long at my acre's border had perched black wings—
the same species always,
varying from season to year
in size and treachery.
Summerlong, sometimes, they pecked up seed,
encroached upon the house furrow by furrow,
with whirr and hum of insinuating feathers
defiled garden peace.
Once, twice, they swelled monstrous,
streamed across noon,
devouring sweet air with thunderous pinions.
But lately they had shrunk to twittering pets,
had bleached out in clear sun;
turning transparent, had seemed to die out
even from land's edge . . . .

From a property nextdoor today I heard
a slow, sly, stealthy flapping of dark wings.

NANCY ESTHER JAMES

The New Deputy

Guy Owen

It was nearly three o'clock when Doyle Hubbard parked his jeep beside Sam Eller's store by the ferry landing. Walking up the steps, he paused on the porch to look at the sullen Cape Fear River, sniffing the scent of snow on the wind. Before he opened the door he waited a moment, listening to the warm murmur of voices inside and hoping there would be no one present who would go out of his way to congratulate him on his new job as an officer of the law.

"Come in out of that infernal cold, Doyle boy," Mr. Sam said. "Thought I heard you drive up."

The old white-haired storekeeper was leaning on the counter and chewing a yellow sliver of cheese. He smiled at the new deputy, and Doll Boney, a big Negro in striped bib overalls and a faded lumber jacket, spoke quietly. Royal Flint, the wizened sawyer at the sawmill next door, was sitting cross-legged on a blue salt lick, sipping an R. C. Cola. The sawyer looked at the newcomer curiously.

"Cold as a possum's rinctum out there," Sam Eller observed. "Have to warm up to snow."

Doyle nodded, grateful for the talk of the weather. He walked to the drink box at the rear counter, opening a Coke, though he wasn't thirsty. Then he stood by the cast-iron stove, stocky and solid. The deputy was wearing his hunting clothes, a sheepskin-lined jacket and his old army trousers crammed into heavy combat boots.

"Looks like you got your work cut out for you, ain't you, Hubbard?" It was the runty sawyer. He hardly moved his thin lips when he spoke, drawling his words in a dry monotonous voice.

"What do you mean, Mr. Flint?"

"You say you've not heard, and you the new law in Eller's Bend?" For once his voice became charged with excitement.

Doyle glanced at Mr. Sam. "I've been over towards Queen City all morning."

"Why, old Caleb, that's what. He's been on another rampage, the infernal scoundrel."

"Maybe it's not all that bad, Flint," Sam Eller said placatingly.

Doyle set his nickel beside the cash register, frowning. "What's he been up to this time?" For the first time he realized that Caleb Webster's lawless gestures were now his concern.

"Nothing much," the sawyer said wryly. "Only stole one of Aunt Cressey Shaw's Duroc shoats that got loose and –"

"Any proof that Caleb –"

"Proof be damned," Royal Flint interrupted. "Who else would pull a stunt like that in this township, and him her near neighbor, his farm joining hers? Aunt Cressey said her oldest boy tracked the pig until he seen it crossed Caleb's line. He didn't go any further, didn't dare. I reckon he was scared spitless, not that I blame him a bit in this world – and him colored, too."

"Mistuh Caleb gets blamed for a whole lot he don't do," Doll Boney said.

Royal Flint snorted, uncrossing his laced-up boots. "Is that a fact? Well, maybe I oughtn't to mention he shot at Thurlow Ward yesterday. Was aiming to kill him, so Thurlow claims."

"Where was that, now?" the deputy inquired.

Obviously enjoying the details, the sawyer recounted how Thurlow was hunting across the river and strayed onto Caleb Webster's posted land. "Caleb run him off, and when he didn't move fast enough to suit him, that old scoundrel took a shot at him with his twelve-gauge."

"Ah now, Flint," Mr. Sam said. "You know how Thurlow stretches the truth sometimes."

"All right, then," Flint whined, turning sharply on Sam Eller. "By jingoes, I as much as expected it. You don't have to arrest him on my account, Doyle Hubbard. He's not harmed me or mine. I've not seen the confounded rogue in ten or twelve year. Thurlow said he went to see Norwood Wooten about the shooting and he said he wasn't the law in Ellers Bend any more. Said he'd allow Doyle Hubbard the pleasure of dealing with Caleb from now on."

The storekeeper said, "Huh."

"That tormented cuss ought to be locked up, I tell you, for his own good, if nobody else's. Either in jail or that asylum yonder in Raleigh. There must be something wrong with anybody who'd shut himself off from the world like he's done, living in that clearing back in the swamp all alone these many years."

"Maybe he's got his reasons, Flint," Mr. Sam said.

"No doubt he has, Sam, no doubt he has. I reckon he's got a reason for shooting and threatening and breaking the law every whipstitch and spreading mortal terror." Then he leaned forward and spoke quietly. "I hear tell the rascal has got a still back in yonder now." He turned his sour, outraged face toward the deputy.

Sam Eller winked at Doyle. "If he's got a still, my guess is he makes whisky strictly for home consumption. One thing sure, there ain't nobody in Cape Fear County got nerve enough to go in there and ask Caleb Webster to sell him a jar of white moon." The storekeeper and Doll Boney laughed together.

"Nor grit enough to go back in that swamp and serve a warrant on him for attempted murder," Royal Flint snapped. "I tell you Thurlow said –"

"All right," Doyle said firmly. "You don't have to go through it all again."

"You don't need to be in any big hurry, Doyle," Mr. Sam cautioned.

"I'll go have a talk with Mr. Caleb," Doyle said evenly. "I'll question him about what all Mr. Royal said." After that he would decide about a warrant.

For a moment he almost welcomed the meeting with the notorious hermit of Ellers Bend, grateful to him for this chance to prove himself. He put on his gloves, looking away from the sawyer's sardonic smile.

"Here, wait a minute, Doyle." Mr. Sam handed him two plugs of Black Maria chewing tobacco. "Give these to Caleb, will you? Tell him I sent 'em. I've not seen him, you know, here of late. He does his little trading across the river, has now for years."

Outside, he tried to pump some water for the jeep's leaky radiator, but the pump was frozen and he gave up. Cranking the sluggish jeep,

Doyle crossed the river on the little ferry. Driving quickly up the icy wooden ramp, he turned toward the swamp, the tool box rattling behind him.

A half hour later he stopped before the abandoned Bluefield Baptist Church. The jeep was running hot and he waited ten minutes to let it cool, thinking he would need to find some water soon. He shut the motor off and lit a cigarette, keeping his gloves on.

Through the cracked isinglass Doyle looked at the gray weather-textured church, its double doors bolted and locked, pinestraw patches brown against the shingled roof. Then he looked at the old graveyard, knee high in broomsedge, a few weathered stone monuments teetering above the orange sedge. Many of the markers were of wood or crumbly cement. Here and there he saw old vases or white seashells where someone had cleaned up around the sunken graves.

Doyle decided he must take the time soon to hoe around the graves of his mother and father, maybe plant a rosebush at the single big headstone. His mother had been fond of roses. His eyes played over the brooding sedge that hid their graves.

But it was not their relatively new headstone he was thinking of now. Doyle craned his neck to see the graves at the far side where the scaly-barked pines pushed up to the edge of the cemetery. If it weren't so cold he would get out and try to locate the grave of Matthew Hobbs, the sawmill owner Caleb Webster went to prison for shooting. The man had been dead nearly ten years before Doyle was born, yet he seemed to know him as well as a kinsman from the tales told to him by his mother.

When he was a boy and misbehaved, it was always the same threat. "You, Doyle, if you don't behave, I declare to goodness the booger man will come get you. Old Caleb will break out of prison and come carry you off to them swamps."

And later, when Caleb Webster had been freed, declared innocent after twenty years of prison when Monk Hobbs, Matt's own brother, had committed suicide, leaving a note confessing to the murder, his mother had said, "I don't care. If Caleb Webster hadn't been drinking and keeping such bad company, he never would've got in bad trouble. And him from a good family, too. Let that be a warning to you, son,

about evil companions." And the mothers of Ellers Bend went on frightening their children by evoking the name of Caleb.

There had followed a court battle that Doyle did remember (both of his parents were dead by then) – Caleb Webster's fight to clear his name. He had read about it in the papers. Once there was even a picture of Caleb standing, tall and gaunt, before the accusing tombstone which he had fought to have torn down, spending nearly all the money he got from the State for the twenty years spent in prison on Queen City lawyers.

In the end he had failed. The tombstone had not been removed or altered, because the Hobbs family was related to Sheriff Slade, and they had stubbornly maintained that Monk Hobbs was insane when he wrote the suicide note incriminating himself. Doyle remembered the tombstone with the carved words that had driven Caleb to such a fury: "Here lies Matthew Hobbs, murdered by Caleb Webster, June 13, 1917."

Doyle started the jeep, pushing the cigarette through the crack in the window. Two miles further on he turned right onto a narrow wagon road, driving slowly through a pine forest that had been cut over cruelly by a pulpwood gang. Twice he had to stop to throw rotting limbs out of the road, his alert eyes observing the way the woods had been ravaged.

When he came to the creek he stopped. The narrow slab bridge had been taken up, and he knew he had reached Caleb's land. On a poplar he saw a roughly painted sign: "Warning, Keep Out."

Cutting the motor, Doyle got out and walked to the shallow stream, almost afraid to jump it. For a moment he looked at the clear, flowing water, the skim of ice at the edge of the banks. Then he filled the radiator with the clean water, scooping it up with a coffee can he kept in the tool box.

Doyle lit a cigarette, took two puffs, then threw it into the icy water. He jumped the narrow creek, pulling himself up by a vine hanging like a cable from a water oak. Then he walked hurriedly up the road between the frozen weeds.

Suddenly, to his right, he heard the rattle of dry leaves, then the whirr of wings. He saw a half-dozen black turkey buzzards fly up awk-

wardly, flapping their ragged wings. They lit in a dead tree, staring at him obscenely, their beaks dripping.

Doyle sniffed the air, then walked toward the clearing below the startled birds.

"Well, I'll be damn," he said aloud, his breath like sudden smoke.

It was the Duroc shoat. He saw at a glance that its hind foot was caught in a steel trap, its body half-frozen now except where the buzzards had eaten into the gaping red belly.

Quickly he strode back to the rutted road, sensing, without looking over his shoulder, that the dark birds were swooping back to the ground.

Now he was walking out of the woods and into the rectangular clearing. He stopped for a moment, noting how the flat fields had grown up in fennel and blackberries. He remembered the place vaguely from hunting quail there with his father, while the owner was still in prison.

But something was wrong, like a picture out of focus. Then he saw what it was: the old two-story frame house with banistered porches had burned. There was only a crooked chimney under the seared oak and a squat outbuilding with three martin gourds on a cross above it. The log tobacco barn had rotted and fallen in, covered with a thick net of vines. Close by was a scarecrow guarding a barren garden plot and the hump of a potato bank. Walking into the yard, he saw that the ashes had been beaten and washed by a number of rains.

"Anybody home?" he called. He heard his voice echo in the dark woods and felt a cold wind at his neck. Self-consciously he unbuttoned the holster hidden by the bottom of his fur-lined coat. He had not yet become used to that weight on his hip.

Stepping under the scarred oak, Doyle saw smoke sleaving from a flue at the rear of the smokehouse. He stood by the charred well curb and looked at the ashes of the burnt house, then at the gourd dipper by his gloved hand.

"Hello," he called, louder.

The door of the smokehouse opened abruptly and a black-and-white spotted feist barked fiercely. The bent figure of Caleb Webster stood

in the doorway, a shotgun cradled in one arm. He held one hand over his eyes, peering out as if he were half blind, looking toward the road instead of at the deputy by the well curb. Doyle recognized him from the newspaper photograph, though he was now stooped and haggard.

"Who is it?" He bent to grab the collar of the excited dog. "You, sir!"

Doyle answered, giving his name, as the raw-boned man turned to face him, lifting the gun. "You ain't from the welfare?"

"No, sir. I'm from the law in Queen City."

"All right," the tall man replied, as if he had not heard. Perhaps with the dog yapping he did not hear. "If you're sure you ain't from the welfare, come on in out of the cold." He added that he'd been sick and should avoid the chilly wind.

Noting the raccoon and deer hides curing on the barn, Doyle stooped to enter the smokehouse, closing the door behind him. Inside, it was dark until his eyes became adjusted to the light from the small square window. It had been recently cut in the back wall, above a rough table covered with new oil cloth.

"Take that chair there." Caleb's voice did not sound weak.

"Thank you, sir." Feeling more at ease, Doyle sat in the home-made chair with a deerhide bottom, watching Caleb as he placed his gun on the two antlers over the solid door. The shotgun was old but well cared for. Then the old man sat on the neatly made army cot. He took a book off the ladder-back chair and the little feist jumped up on it and sat attentively, wagging its tail at the stranger.

Caleb leaned forward then, holding his hands before the trashburner that was giving off a feeble heat. His hands trembled slightly, as if from palsy, as he spoke of what a comfort his dog was, boasting of the tricks he could do. "You take your coat off?"

"No, thank you. I'll only stop a minute. I'm the law." He added that he had come looking for a Duroc shoat that was reported stolen.

"Don't rush off now. You set a spell with us, me and Job there. We don't get much company. We enjoy having company sometime. The right kind." As if he had not heard, he made no mention of the pig.

Instead he pointed to a wire cage on the table, the lower half filled with grass and pine straw. "That there's my flying squirrel. He's a cute little booger."

The deputy tapped the wire gently, but there was no response except the stirring of dry grass.

"A flying squirrel's a night critter. He don't come out much in the day. But he's a caution, with all his stunts and capers. And smart as a whip. Job there gets jealous sometime."

Doyle glanced around the smoke-darkened room. "I'm sorry to see your house burned." Soon he would ask about Thurlow Ward.

"It don't matter. It was too much house for an old man and one little bitty dog nohow. More trouble than it was worth." He gestured with a gnarled hand. "This smokehouse suits me and Job fine, and it's not half the trouble."

There was still loose salt in one corner of the hard-packed dirt floor, and Doyle saw two hams hanging from the cobwebbed rafters, along with a bunch of onions and dried red peppers. Across the rafters was an old leather valise, a stringless banjo, and some braided tobacco canvas.

"You've fixed it up comfortable here."

"I've lived in a heap worse." He seemed to smile. Lifting the lid, he spat into the little heater.

Then the deputy remembered the plugs of tobacco. "Mr. Sam Eller said give you these."

"I'm much obliged to him. You tell him I'm much obliged." Caleb smelled the dark plugs, then placed them beside the tin plate on the shelf over his head. "That's one good man, Sam Eller. Use to send me tobacco all along, while I was away, you know — and other things. He never doubted me once."

Doyle started to mention again that he was the law, remembering the thin cynical face of the sawyer in Mr. Sam's store. He could forget about the missing pig, but there was the matter of shooting at Thurlow Ward. That couldn't be easily ignored.

But first he brought up the dead shoat in the steel trap, omitting Aunt Creesey's unsubstantiated charge.

"I've been sick," Caleb said, "not able to check my traps regular." He coughed, then went on talking, telling the deputy how he was bothered with rheumatism, though his voice was uncomplaining. He talked in a rush of words, as though eager for a listener. "I reckon I can't complain. I'm still alive and kicking, when others like me are long dead."

Doyle Hubbard looked at the old man covertly as he talked. In the dim light he saw the liver spots on his face, the thin iron-gray hair, the white stubble on the sunken cheeks. Caleb Webster's neck was crisscrossed with deep wrinkles and his right eye was nearly covered over with a cataract. As he spoke, he unconsciously rubbed his shin, one hand rubbing the blue skin above his ankle where the chains had been clamped years ago. The deputy stared at the scaly blue skin, glancing away when the man on the cot stopped talking.

"Hold on, here. You never said yet who you are."

"I'm Doyle Hubbard, the new deputy and I've come to –"

"You're not by any chance John Hubbard's boy?"

Doyle nodded his head, yes.

Suddenly the old man stood up, smiling. He reached out and grabbed his hand, shaking it and unleashing a torrent of words. Turning to Job, he said, "Now, sir, what do you think of that, eh? The son of my old friend coming to pay us a nice visit. Why, I've hunted this whole county over with your pa, deer and quail many a time. Not to mention black bear in Dismal Swamp."

He shook the deputy's hand again, his lean face wreathed in a smile. "I'm proud to know you, sir. You won't remember me, I reckon, but your pa would. I'm pleased you've come for a visit. I'd be proud if you'd stay for a bite of supper." There would be squirrel and rice stew warmed over.

Doyle let his hand drop and looked at the hard dirt floor of the smokehouse; Caleb Webster opened the lid of the stove and threw in a piece of lightwood stump.

Doyle Hubbard said he couldn't stay. It was threatening snow and he would have to leave soon. He asked about the game now and Caleb shook his head sorrowfully. It was not like in the old days when John Hubbard and he were young. Most of the game had gone from Cape Fear County, along with the rich stands of timber.

Doyle stood up.

"To be sure, you're not going yet. Why, you've just got here. Let me take your coat now."

The deputy shook his head firmly. He started to say something, then thought better of it.

"Then you'll have a glass of something with me before you go. You'll have a drink with the old friend of your father's. Why, I taught your pa all he knew about hunting."

"All right." He would drink and then he would mention his reason for coming.

"What'll it be?" Caleb set two clean glasses on the table. "Wine or something a mite stronger?" He had made the wine from his own scuppernongs.

"Wine would be fine," Doyle replied, remembering what Royal Flint had said about the illicit still. The wine would not be against the law, and he wanted no proof of the other. As Caleb Webster poured wine from the jug he lifted from under his cot, his hand trembled so that he spilled some of it on the oil cloth. Then he set the jug by the sooty kerosene lamp and handed the tumbler to the deputy.

"Here you are, sir." Then he turned to the obedient Job. "I never once dreamed I'd live to see the day I'd drink with John Hubbard's son, and a fine strapping young fella too." He raised his glass, and the wine dripped down his stubbly chin. He sighed, wiping the drops away with the back of his hand.

Doyle set his empty glass down. "That's good wine," he said truthfully. "They don't make it that way anymore."

"I hope to tell you it's good wine," Caleb said proudly. "None of your weak plum-nelly for me. That's pure scuppernong, growed on my own vine out back. You'll have a drop more?"

The visitor shook his head, "Some other time maybe. I have to get on before it sets into snow."

When he had bowed his head out of the low door, Caleb Webster suddenly touched Doyle's arm. "You won't tell," his voice seemed to croak.

"Tell what?"

"You won't tell them welfare folks the house burnt. They say I'm not to stay here now. They're after me to move in a home with old folks, cripples and such," he said with contempt. "Yesterday I caught one snooping around at the creek. I shot close by him, just to scare him off." Caleb pointed to his discolored eye. "I can't hit much any-more." He let his hand fall away and the little feist leapt out of the chair and through the door.

"I won't mention it in Queen City."

"I'm much obliged to you."

"Not at all. There's no occasion to mention it."

When the deputy walked out of the yard, the old man called after him. "You come again, young fella. I knew your pa, so don't you be too proud to come for a visit with me and Job."

"I'll be sure to do that the first chance I get."

At the edge of the ruined field, Doyle saw the buzzards flapping up again. They swirled higher this time over the pines, like a dark funnel in the cold, grey sky. He turned. The gaunt man was standing with one hand on the charred well curb, holding the spotted dog in his arms. The deputy took his hand out of his pocket and waved. Caleb nodded, then turned and shut the door of the squat smokehouse behind him.

When Doyle Hubbard parked in front of the Baptist Church, it had begun to snow. He reached behind him and took a hammer and cold chisel from the tool box. Leaving the motor running, he strode directly through the frozen weeds and broomsedge, breaking his stride only to avoid stepping on a grave.

When he reached the sunken grave of Matthew Hobbs, he knelt before the headstone. The gray marble was splotched with black mold,

but the words were clearly defined in the waning light: MURDERED BY CALEB WEBSTER. Without hesitating or looking around him, he set to work chipping at the dark letters with the hammer and chisel.

It was snowing in earnest now, huge soft flakes, but Doyle did not stop to brush them away from his neck. Once in the swirling configuration of flakes he seemed to see the sour face of Royal Flint.

"You go to hell!" he said through clenched teeth. The words were shaped by a violent explosion of breath.

Then he resumed the work of his furious hammer.

Lot's Daughters

Sister, what are men like? – Dear, how should I know,
having shared your darkness where no live things grow.
–Yet men must be pleasant, something tells me so.

Do you remember, sister, being older than I,
how the young men of Sodom would go riding by
so proud on their horses, with their foreheads high?

Now we have no mother to tell us these things,
She's like a statue by the cattle springs
and they lick the salt traces of our wanderings.

But consider our father, although he's old
and keeps us hidden in the dark and cold,
he knows men's secrets and has never told.

If we could confuse him an hour or so
with wine in his head to make his thinking slow
there is no secret that we could not then know.

I as the eldest shall see the wine through
and lie dressed in yellow coins as harlots do.
And what I learn, dear heart, I will share with you.

GAIL WHITE

Do Me Now, Sweet Perish

do me now, sweet
perish, do me now with
sunlight bearding through the trees

here in the little
trembling spot of shadow
where a thousand motions make their dance,
dance me

dance me in camera
or in eyes
or in a word you save for
some dark time
when i am standing at a window
watching rain

oh do me in the moment of the now
the only now forever is
here in the forest of the dream
the fairy tale of truth
the honest scream against my eyes

sweet perish, do my love
with pantomime so understood
the blind could know of love
by feeling smiles or wilderness
or both of us
in wordless speak

know how the mockingbird
survives his name
how endlessly he variates
his circumstance with song

with song?
oh we are song
written by joy at times

so sing me, sing me loved
before i climb my mind
for its next weep

JOYCE ODAM

Minstrel Coming Your Way

i protester of sorrows
go about saying joy

i have been to the
agonizers and complainers
and i tell you their faces
are like dead flowers

i have brought stems
put leaves on them give me
the buds of your children
listen for bees
hear the wind saying
golden . . . golden . . .

i will make songs for you
you will tell me the words
we will sing them together
with mauve voices
green voices
no voices

i am coming tomorrow with my
wonderful news

send me a map
on some old page of winter
use a white crayon
and tell me your names

JOYCE ODAM

High Water

HOWARD FRANK MOSHER

Whenever somebody would tell Pa that the plank bridge over our brook was weak, Pa would answer back that it had held up for twenty years and more and that was proof enough for him that it warn't going out today or tomorrow. So last October when my brother Waterman and I started out onto it in the rain and the right front wheel dropped through a rotted board, we was totally unprepared. Waterman gunned the truck back and forth a few inches in hopes of grinding the tire up onto solid plank again, but he was in too deep.

The bridge boards are wide cedar, running crossways. There are some timbers underneath, but we had not happened to land on one. When we got out and went up to look at the hole we see that the broke board had just give way under the tire and still looked to be sound at both ends. If we could just get out of that hole we would be all right. Waterman looked at it a long while, standing there in the rain in his jeans and Tee shirt, wondering what to do. Then I see him look up in the back of the truck at his '49 Chevy, chained and blocked up there where Pa usually carries heifers or hay, and ready to race at last after being worked on all summer for the day that Waterman would turn twenty-one and be able to compete against the professional stock car drivers in Sherbrooke. He had wanted to do that for as long as I could remember being his sister, and now that that day had come he stood watching the rain stream off of the fresh yellow paint on the Chevy, going no place. Without a word I headed back up the hill after Pa's John Deere.

The hill is blue clay, mostly, very greasy when wet. I come near losing my footing a dozen times. When I got to the dooryard I see Pa setting at the kitchen window watching me.

"I see it all from right here," he says before I was any more than through the woodshed door. "The only thing for it is to walk out to Kittredge's and call Lonnie to come up and winch you out."

He had the stove fired up red hot and the air in the kitchen was so close on me after the cold that for a minute I couldn't draw breath to answer him.

"That is the only thing for it," he says again, peering out into the driving-down rain.

"We don't have time to call Lonnie," I said. "It's getting on six-thirty now. We have to sign in there by eight or forfeit our place. We have to try to get it out with the John Deere."

"No," he says, "you don't. Not with my livelihood depending on that tractor. I can't and won't have you down there fooling with it and burning out the clutch."

"All right," I said, "but I want you to know one thing. Waterman will get it out anyway. With your help or without it. With your John Deere or without it."

I had thought to shame Pa into giving me the key, but he only says, "It will have to be without it, I am afraid. You go along and call Lonnie."

I was so mad my heart was going fast. "All right," I said. "But don't you think for one minute that Waterman can't do it, tractor or no. I guess Waterman can do whatever he puts his mind to."

"Yes," says Pa. "I guess he put his mind to driving through that bridge in the first place just so's he might have a go at destroying my tractor too in getting it out. Well, I regret that I must deprive him of the chance. Why is it that he is the only one around this place that breaks machines?"

"Maybe because he is the only one that uses them," I said on my way out the woodshed.

The last thing I hear Pa say was, "The trouble with Waterman is, he don't think."

It is a one-lane bridge not greatly longer than the truck itself. Below it runs a brook that the alders cover like a roof, leaning out towards each other from both banks and locking branches all the way up and downstream as far as you can see. Upstream a hundred yards and around a bend there is a beaver dam with a bog backed up behind it. Downstream where it branches around Pa's pasture there is a clearing slashed through the alders so the heifers can get into it to drink and cool off. In July and August it dries up so you cannot hear it running

even when you stand on the bridge, but now in the fall of the year it was high and rising. Well before I had reached the bridge I could hear it tearing along, loud and full as April.

When I come onto the bridge again Waterman had the jack out and was jacking up the front end of the truck as near the trapped wheel as he could get the jack. I see what he intended right off. He wanted to raise up that tire clear of the hole and then slide another plank in under it across the bridge boards. Which would have worked perfect, only just when the wheel was nearly high enough the whole rig, truck and jack and all, slid left and forward a little.

"Watch yourself!" I shouted. I believed for certain that the jack would kick out and slice Waterman clean in two.

But it didn't. It balanced there with three corners off the bridge and one corner dug an inch down into the wood. Waterman stepped out around it careful like he was stepping barefoot through broken glass. I run back off the bridge while he clim up into the cab. He started up the engine and I see him turn his head to check in the outside mirror that I was clear and far enough back. Then he shifted into reverse and backed fast down off the jack the way I had see him do before to get out of a mudhole, and that right wheel went smashing clean down through the next plank back, splitting it all the way across the bridge and leaving the truck pitched down to the right into a bigger hole yet, and in danger of falling through the boards on the left side as well.

Waterman got out of the truck and went up front and picked up the jack and brought it back by the Chevy.

"Do you want me to make another try at the John Deere?" I said.

He shook his head and pointed behind me back up the hill. There was Pa, coming as fast as ever I see him move, nearly running down along the edge of the lane in his slicker and cap.

"I see it from the window," he says even before he was on the bridge. "Will you call Lonnie, or do you intend to have her all the way down into the water before you are satisfied? I see all your maneuvering from the window." He was still wearing his kitchen slippers, he was so eager to be present at our misfortune.

Waterman never looked once at Pa. He up over the rear wheel of that truck and unchained the tailgate and let it drop with a bang. He slid out one of the two big ramp planks he used for getting the Chevy in and out of the truck and was sliding out the other when Pa stepped up.

"What are you doing now?" Pa shouted, pushing back on the plank toward Waterman.

"Getting my machine out of this deathtrap," Waterman says, pushing Pa along on the end of the plank. "Get out of the way."

Pa looked helpless at him and stepped back. No doubt he thought that if the truck fell through then the Chevy should go accordingly. Waterman slid out the second plank. The bridge boards was slippery as though they had been oiled, but the ramp planks extended just beyond them into the gravel washed down off the hill. Waterman unblocked the wheels, squeezed into the Chevy, and backed fast down out of the truck and off the bridge with a roar.

"Now what is he going to do?" Pa says. "How does he propose to get across this bridge with a three-ton farm truck on it, is all I want to know?"

Waterman run past us up to the front of the truck and looked at the hole. I went up and stood by him. The water rushing along under the bridge seemed closer to the tire now. Pa come up, and we all looked in the hole.

I never disbelieved in Waterman for a second. All the while he was staring into that hole I knowed that his mind was going fast as that brook water below. I knowed he would think of something all right. So I was not surprised when he was moving again, heading fast around behind the truck and coming back fast with a ramp plank. With never a pause he wedged one end into the hole under the tire. It just fit, angling up in line with the truck and maybe four feet above the ground at the other end, where it jut off the bridge. Waterman went out to the end and placed his hands on either side and bent his knees and arched his back, like he intended to lever that wheel right out of the hole. He pulled down on the plank and it flexed a little but not much, being an inch through and broad as a stock-car tire and a good ten foot long.

Pa run up to him. "What are you about?" he says. "Do you want to throw out your back and put me in the poorhouse with hospital bills?"

Waterman ignored him. "Get in the truck," he says to me. "Start her. Bring her forward easy when I give the word. If you jerk her I am in trouble."

"Don't you worry," I said. "I guess a girl that has got but one brother ain't about to cripple him." I stepped onto the running board and opened the cab door.

"Here now," Pa says. I think he was beginning to fear that we might get her out after all. I got in and shut the door and rolled down the window so I could hear Waterman.

"Step aside," Waterman shouted at Pa. Pa run up near Waterman and put a hand on the plank like it was glass and would shatter. I started her up and turned on the wipers.

Waterman leaned back on his bent legs, bowing over the board as far as he could, and the cords along his arms stood out like log chains. Though he is little, Waterman is as strong as any man in Kingdom County.

"Take her out," he shouted, and I throwed her in first and begun letting out the clutch slow. I felt the back wheels grab and I see the knots in Waterman's shoulders stand out straining under his soaked Tee shirt. His feet was spread wide apart and he was bent over pulling down on the end of that plank, little but strong as a steel spring, his fingers fastened onto the wood like brads. The plank begun to bend as the tire inched up her. Then it begun to vibrate, and Pa snatched away his hand and jumped back like it had electricity running through it. Waterman's arms was quivering like high tension wires in the wind and his whole body was quivering as the tire crept up and the truck moved forward, and I knowed that if I give in to the impulse to gun her Waterman would lose his grip and that bent plank would spring straight and fling him over the truck, or maybe fly into his chin and tear off his head. I let out that clutch easy as drawing a foot out of quicksand. The plank tipped down toward the bridge slow and we was out.

Waterman let loose and jumped back out of the way like I had seen him do when he was littler and trying to open a beaver trap of Pa's that was too much for him, and the board slammed down flat and I drove on across, taking care not to drop the rear wheel into the hole.

By the time I was out of the cab Waterman had the ramp planks set up against the truck again and was heading toward the Chevy. The planks was slick now with mud and rain but he come roaring out across the bridge and up into the truck fast and sure. I thought he would slam straight on through the cab and out the other side, too, but he didn't. He stopped an inch short of it sudden as though he had been snubbed up by a chain.

I never see a man so disappointed as Pa. All the while Waterman was pulling the planks into the truck and blocking the wheels and chaining up the tailgate, Pa just stood off to one side shaking his head. Every few seconds he would open his mouth as if to say something and then close it again. He never spoke a word until Waterman jumped down from the back and headed for the cab.

Then Pa says, "He ain't continuing, is he?"

Pa give the truck a questioning look, like it could answer something that perplexed him. Then, like a cat that does not really want to go into a dark hole but goes in anyway because it cannot stand not to know what is in there, Pa followed around behind me and got into the cab. Behind us in the dusking evening, the brook was ripping along full, a river, and loud as I ever hear it.

We got up the hill on the other side of the bridge and down to Kittredge's on the county road without further incident. We made the twenty-mile trip to the border in twenty minutes flat by Pa's pocket-watch.

"I did not know that the race had began already," Pa says at the crossing, snapping shut his watch. "But evidently you have win. They is nobody else in sight."

He was right. The crossing was deserted. The man come out of his little house into the rain and Waterman showed him the papers on the Chevy. "Are you all American citizens?" he asked.

I was scared but Pa leaned across the seat and answered up sharp. "We are," he says. "Civil Air Defense, 1938-1944. Is that American enough for you?" He was referring to his war duty as a civilian plane spotter, when he had set on the porch for six years watching the sky for enemy planes to appear. He did not add that during that time he had seen action only once, when a Forestry Department plane had flew over the mountain behind the house and he put two bullet holes through its wings with his deer rifle. After that he was retired, though not before receiving several letters from Washington with big words in them that he still has framed in the kitchen.

The man give Pa a queer look and passed us on across. Waterman had been to Canada before as a paying spectator at the stock car races, and Pa had been plenty of times, especially during Prohibition, but I had never been outside Vermont before. Now I was outside Vermont and outside the entire United States. It felt odd, like somebody else was the traveler and not me. I wished it daylight so I could see what Canada looked like.

We made excellent time until we arrove at the Sherbrooke limits, where we got in behind a bus that would not let us by. Every time we tried, it would pull over in front of us and Pa would say "There!" like he had predicted it would happen.

Finally Waterman passed on the right, and the front wheel that had give us all the trouble back at the bridge run up over the curb onto the sidewalk and when Waterman brought her back down onto the road again she blew. We swerved and Pa hollered "Into the trenches!" and dove under the dash and we come over close enough to the bus to look up and see what color eyes the people looking out the glass had. Somehow Waterman held us off the bus until it had passed us again. We limped along a little ways on the flat tire until we had to stop or ruin the wheel.

"What time is it?" Waterman asks quick.

"Ten minutes to eight," says Pa, coming up off the floorboards pleased as I ever see him.

He had not even closed his mouth before Waterman was out of the cab. By the time Pa and I was out he had the tailgate down and

was unblocking the wheels. He shoved out the ramp planks and backed the Chevy fast down out of the truck.

"Get in if you are going," Waterman says to me out his window. I run around to the other side and reached through where the pane would be in a regular car and opened the door from the inside and got in.

Pa run up to Waterman's window. "No," he says. "You ain't. Not without no windshield and lights. Not without no in-surance and plates." Waterman gunned the engine. Pa had forgot without no muffler.

Waterman was jamming his racing helmet down onto his head. He looked funny, little as he is and with that big helmet fixed onto his head like a moonman. He pulled down his goggles.

"I have told you not to," Pa shouted over the engine. "Remember, I have told you not to."

Waterman let her out with never another glance at him. Next I knowed we was rushing along with the rain whipping in against us, past litup pumping stations and hamburger places and car lots with Christmas lights strung around them on wires. We come to a building with a clock on it that said five to eight and when Waterman see that, he begun driving in earnest, driving that racing machine the way he had built it to be drove, in and out of cars eighty miles an hour, all noise and color and speed like a fair ride going faster than you would believe it could go and still stay on the track. We braked into a corner and it was like the wet road was black ice sliding and tilting under the tires, and the pole light just turned aside to let us by at the last instant. And I see that Waterman's years driving cutdown trucks around hay bales in fields and driving on the froze stock pond behind the house whenever Pa was away in the winter had paid off. I knowed he would get there on time and win that race.

But he didn't. Because when we come up to the tall wooden fence around the track the grandstand loomed up dark and the car lot was empty and the only light was over a little signboard by the ticket gate that said something in French and under it in English "Closed for the Season."

Waterman never spoke a word. For minute after minute he just

set there with the engine running, staring at that sign. Finally he took off his helmet and throwed it in back and I see he was crying, twenty-one years old and crying for the first time I ever remember.

"Because of a little shower of rain," he says. "Because of a little rainfall that wouldn't no more than lay the dust on the track." Then I was crying too, for Waterman to have missed winning it and for me to have missed seeing him win. I knowed he would have all right. At least I knowed that.

We cut around the main part of town to avoid the police and come out on the truck with the tire still down and Pa setting hunched in the cab. Waterman drove up the ramp and blocked the wheels and pulled up the boards. He got down the jack and rolled out the big spare and we changed the tire in the rain. When we was done and had got in the cab Pa never asked a word about the race, but once on the way back I looked sideways at him and thought I see a smile on his face. I looked away fast. The rain drum down on the cab roof and nobody spoke a word except to tell the border man we didn't have nothing to declare. He passed us through safe and I set back and let out my breath.

The first hill on the lane was bad. The tires spun and ground and we slid over into the washed bank twice and had to back down and try again both times. We did not make it until the third attempt, and when we come over the crest and started down the other side with the lights pointing down where the bridge should have been all we could see was water tearing along even with the bank. Waterman hit the brakes and stopped us on the hill and the first time since we had left him standing by the truck in Sherbrooke Pa spoke.

"Now even you must be satisfied," he says. "You have cut me off from my young stock and they will drown."

"What are you talking about?" Waterman says. "How will they drown? The brook will be a brook again by tomorrow afternoon and we can get over to them on the beaver dam."

"Much good that will do," Pa says. "The stock is fenced in the lower pasture. Can't you see that the water will be over the bank inside of an hour and flood that field?"

"They will move higher up then."

"Through that bobwire fence? First year calves that don't know enough to stay out of a little swamp bottom in a field? They will get through that fence?"

"If it is your fence they will find a way through it," Waterman says. But he had mended that fence himself last April and I see he was worried. He set still a minute looking down at where the bridge had gone out. Then he reached across me and Pa and opened the dash and pulled out a flashlight.

"All right," he says. "I will go up and cross over the dam tonight and go down and open the gate for them."

"Good luck to you," Pa says. "You will need it, to find them heifers and drive them up in the dark and rain."

But Waterman was out of the cab before Pa had stopped talking, and I was right behind him. "Go back!" he shouted at me. I shook my head, and struck into the dark field behind him, running to keep up.

He cut straight for the bend where the dam was, and when we got there that was out too. He shined the light downstream where the alders was thrashing up and down with the water tossing up into them, took one look, and started back through the field. This time he outstripped me, and when I come running up to the truck he already had let down the tailgate and for the third time that evening he was backing out the Chevy. Leaving her running behind the truck, he took a ramp plank under each arm and started down the hill in the lights.

By then Pa was out of the cab. "No," he says, running along beside Waterman in his kitchen slippers. "Are you crazy? Them plank ain't long enough to span that water. They ain't half long enough."

Waterman kept going, dragging the boards through the runoff water sheeting down the hill. At the place where the bridge had been he dropped the planks in the lane and started back up the hill in truck lights, then out of the lights into the field. In a minute he appeared in the lights again carrying a huge flat fieldstone in his arms that must have weigh close to a hundred pounds, near as much as Waterman himself. He dropped it a foot back from where the brook and the bank

feathered off even, and started back up the hill through the lights again. A little longer went by this time before he come into the lights with another stone. This one must have outweigh him by twenty pounds. He was stooped over swinging it slow back and forth out in front of his legs, slipping down the hill with quick little steps. He dropped it twice before he got it up even with the other, and when he straightened up, his back crackled all along his spine. The stones was about six feet apart. He laid the planks parallel to each other along the lane, one end up on each stone, making a ramp pointing straight out over the brook.

I had knowed what he intended to do for some time, but only now did Pa see. For once I believe he was concerned for Waterman. "No," he says. "Forget them. They ain't worth it."

"You're right," Waterman says. "They ain't."

He was already in motion, running up the hill ahead of us, and by the time Pa and I was up to the truck he was out around it in the Chevy, thundering into the lane in the truck lights with that rebuilt engine that he had worked on all summer until one and two in the morning whining louder and louder over the rain and the roaring brook, picking up speed going down that hill that was now more mudslide than hill, dipping almost out of sight at the foot so all we could see was a flash of yellow roof, then up the planks into the truck lights again, and for one instant out over the water all yellow with the engine one long explosion, exactly the way I had knowed it would be when he come out of the last turn at Sherbrooke and crossed the finish line ahead of them all in the lights and the roaring crowd, with me watching.

Then he was into the black across the brook and all I could hear was the sound of water. I run down and listened and once I thought I heard the engine trying to get up the hill on the other side, but I couldn't be sure. I waited for a long time. When I finally turned around to start back up to the truck I looked down at my feet and see that the water was over the bank now and lapping at my ankles. Pa was beside me looking anxious across into the dark.

I backed the truck up to the top of the hill and tried to shine the lights across to hit the lane on the other side, but it was raining

too hard to see. There was nothing to do until morning. I turned the truck around in the field and drove down to Kittredge's, where we spent the night.

In the morning the rain had stopped. When I woke up the sun was out bright and it looked like a whole different world. I wondered how last night could ever have happened. The ruts in the lane up the first hill was regular gullies now, so we had to walk up, and when we come to the top and look down it was hard to recognize as ours. The brook had flooded out over the entire lower pasture and come part way up the lane on both sides. It was still moving fast, too, big as it was, and making a low steady growling noise that you didn't connect with the water at first. For a minute I was so astonished I even forgot Waterman.

Then I see him, standing still as stone in the bluish mud where the lane emerged up out of the water over across. And I see Pa's heifers safe on the hill above him. I shouted to him and throwed up my hand but he was staring downstream and did not take notice. I looked down where he was staring and at first all I see was the high water, rolling along like a river of chocolate, with the green hills above. Then a flash out in the bend where the brook branched caught my eye. It flashed again, bright yellow, and a sickness come over me.

"Pa," I says, pointing.

"Yes," he says. "It has caused us trouble enough. There is where it will stay."

"I guess it won't," I said. Because even through my tears I had already spotted the links of chain laying at Waterman's feet in the blue clay, where he stood waiting for the flood to go down.

A City Scene

Despite what tourists know,
cities own more than row
on row of dull-red bricks,
sharp elbows, and a haze
of dust. They own, and show
their dwellers, settings thick
with beauty . . . . As on days

when, like a hardnose guy
suddenly soft, the sky
mellows to snow. And flakes,
bright as cake-icing, make
sidewalks – paths of pillows;
bathe lamp posts till they glow
like the bark on rain-soaked trees.

And when you also see
each walker dabbed flake-white,
each spurred to quickly hide
his snow-wet cheeks inside
lapels pulled visor-tight –
each touched by the same plight:
the scene can flush in flight

not just a love for all
the earth, stone-slabbed or bare,
but for all men, the heirs
to scenes both fair and grim,
a love that, steeple-tall,
churchgoers used to share
during the closing hymn.

KENNETH JOHNSON

I Am Stone

I am stone.   Crush me
I will breathe new life
Comfort me with pity   I perish.

Love is a wedge between the teeth.

I defy softness with a wrench and grease across my face.
I am cold and I like

I dance my naked summons before hostile
and embarrassed eyes
that do not please to know me.

I feel every pulse, every nerve
of this inverted time   my dance needs no revisions.

I love my monsters all   and feed them.
The desire that I ignore would bay me to the wall and clutch
        There is a wall somewhere
        I can not climb.

My hair parted neatly,
Red dripping from my teeth,
a fish in my palm,
I race to meet the world.

FRANCES P. THOMAS

William Gilmore Simms and the American Indian

ELMO HOWELL

The history of the white American's attitude towards the Indian ranges the full gamut of human emotions. He hated the red man while he was still a threat to his existence and idealized him when the threat was removed, and in some cases heaped on the white man bitter accusations for the rape of a continent. The Puritan settler of New England saw the Indian as an agent of the Devil, a view later translated into secular terms as the frontier moved west. As late as 1867, the Topeka *Weekly Leader* called the Indians "a set of miserable, dirty, lousy, blanketed, thieving, lying, sneaking, murdering, graceless faithless, gut-eating skunks" and called frankly for their extermination.[1] But before the end of the century other voices were also being heard, Helen Hunt Jackson's, for example, which called a nation to account for "the stain of a century of dishonor."[2] Today, the Indian along with other minority groups has assumed a new dignity in the national life, as reflected in the news media, for example, or in films and fiction, where he is no longer the convenient villain of the old days of the Western. And today's Boy Scout is reminded of "the many thousands of beautiful and desirable things" in the lives of these primitive people, and, in order to win a merit badge, required to memorize the Omaha Tribal Prayer.[3]

These vacillations in a comparatively short history suggest not only moral confusion but the inability of the American to view clear-headedly an issue where head and heart tug in different directions. Charles Brockden Brown gives a frank picture of red brutality in his novels of the 1790's, but a generation later when the Indian had been liquidated on the Eastern Seaboard, Philip Freneau, and others, made him a creature of romance and sentiment, in the old world tradition of the Noble Savage. Even James Fenimore Cooper, whose mind was of firmer texture and who had no illusions about human nature, succumbed to the cult of the vanishing American, with its attendant nostalgia and ill-defined feelings of self-reproach. And so the stage was set for the coming of Hiawatha and all

[1]Robert Taft, *Artists and Illustrators of the Old West*, 1850-1900 (New York, 1953), p. 66.

[2]Helen Hunt Jackson, *A Century of Dishonor* (Boston, 1903), p. 30.

[3]A. Irving Hallowell, "The Backwash of the Frontier: The Impact of the Indian on American Culture," *The Frontier in Perspective*, eds. Walker D. Wyman and Clifton B. Koreber (Madison, Wis., 1957), p. 233.

the other mythical red heroes who played so large a part in the Victorian imagination. Sentiment leads easily into the more positive role of the humanitarian, like Helen Hunt Jackson, and to the moral qualms of modern Americans. "Is there any real difference in principle," asks Edmund Wilson in a recent dispute between the New York Iroquois and the local government, "between uprooting whole communities of well-to-do Russian farmers and shipping them off to the Urals, and depriving the Senecas of the use of their lands?"[4]

James Fenimore Cooper, who made the Indian an intimate figure in American literature, was a formative influence on William Gilmore Simms, whose *The Yemassee* appeared only nine years after *The Last of the Mohicans*. Their common approach, however, is not due to Simms' imitation so much as to a spiritual kinship of the two authors, who were men of large views and catholic interests, both firmly committed to a traditional organization of society. Reading *The Yemassee* is in some respects like doing Cooper again in a Southern setting, and yet there is a basic difference in their handling of the Indian.

Like Simms, Cooper grew up in a section of the country that had for the most part disposed of the Indian population. His imagination was fired, not by the few stragglers and half-breeds left around Otsego Lake and Cooperstown, but by a book, the Rev. John Heckewelder's *Indian Nations,* in which that devout Moravian missionary paints a noble picture of the Delawares. Cooper brought a more solid mind to bear on the matter, but it was a truism in his own day that his Indians were "of the school of Mr. Heckewelder and not of the school of nature."[5] Simms' experience was broader. His mother died when he was a child and his father left him with his maternal grandmother in Charleston, while he went off to Tennessee to join General Jackson's campaign against the Creeks, and eventually wound up as a well-to-do planter in Mississippi. As a boy, Simms made at least two long visits with his father, during which time he became intimate with life in the Southwest.[6] The Indians were still in the country, the Chickasaws, Choctaws, Cherokees and Creeks, the naked Creeks on the streets of Mobile first attracting his attention. He visited

[4]Edmund Wilson, *Apologies to the Iroquois* (New York, 1960), p. 274.

[5]Gregory Lansing Paine, "The Indians of the Leather-Stocking Tales," *Studies in Philology*, XXIII (Jan., 1926), 28.

[6]Hampton M. Jarrell, "Simms' Visits to the Southwest," *American Literature,* V (March, 1933), 29-35.

them in their homes and even dabbled with their languages.[7] Along with his father, he penetrated the Choctaw fastness of the Yazoo and Mississippi bottoms, "through swamps and creeks and bayous, half the time swimming and wading through mud and water waist deep."[8] His border novels about the Southwest are based on "very early personal experience," he recalled in later life. "I have seen the life – have *lived* it."[9] In this respect, Simms had an advantage over Cooper, not only in first-hand knowledge of savage life, but in the sense that the Indian problem had not yet been settled, that history was still being accomplished. Though Cooper moved his characters west to the prairie, he lacked the sense of mission which binds the east and west together in Simms, who viewed the Southwest first of all as a new increment to Southern civilization. As a product of Charleston, he could indulge in the romance of a vanished race, like Cooper; but romance was tempered with the knowledge that the vast region where his father's plantation lay still looked on the Indian as a potential threat that must be dealt with in a practical manner.

II

The first of Simms' novels dealing with Indians conforms to the tastes of his generation, at least in surface rendering. The Yemassee of South Carolina, once a threat to an infant colony, are down to the last man: like Chingachgook, Sanutee is "a blazed pine in a clearing of the pale faces." But Simms had a mind and imagination of his own, and the effect of the two books is different. Both authors were practical men, fully aware of the seamy side of savage life. The massacre at Fort William Henry is brutally real in Cooper's pages and so is Magua the malignant Huron; but Cooper somehow gives the impression that there are good Indians and bad Indians without relation to their savage state, and Magua's treachery is directly related to the ill treatment he received from whites. In all of this there is subtle extenuation of Indian shortcomings, which leaves the reader in a receptive mood for the romance of the Mohicans. There is nothing of this in *The Yemassee*. The whites often condemn the Indians unfairly, Simms admits. It is the custom, for example, to regard their surly, inexpressive faces as an index to character; but we

[7] *Letters of William Gilmore Simms*, eds. Mary C. Simms Oliphant, Alfred Taylor Odell and T. C. Duncan Eaves (Columbia, S. C., 1952), IV, 178.

[8] *Ibid.*, I, 37.

[9] William Gilmore Simms, *The Wigwam and the Cabin* (New York, 1856), pp. 4-5.

should be careful, he adds, not to speak of them as we casually see them, "when, conscious of our superiority, and unfamiliar with our language, they are necessarily taciturn."[10] Conscious of "our superiority" – there is the phrase which sets Simms' attitude in perspective. On the surface, it can be misleading, because he refers to race, not in any inherent sense, but to the Indians' standing with the whites in terms of civilization. In that respect, they are inferior, Simms says, a fact which sentiment and romance are never allowed to gild over in his pages. In this matter-of-fact approach to a difficult social question where head and heart are carefully balanced, Simms is unique among major American writers of the nineteenth century.

In "Oakatibbe, or the Choctaw Sampson," he writes about a young brave who has all the qualities that would grace a hero of romance. Having killed another Indian, a drunken bully and trouble-maker, Oakatibbe is condemned to die by tribal law. Colonel Harris, a white planter among the Choctaws, admires the young man and encourages him to escape rather than die willingly for an act, which according to the white man's view was justified as self-defense. Oakatibbe is doubtful but finally accepts a horse and slips away from the settlement on the night before he is to be executed. The result is confusion among the Choctaws, since the next of kin must be killed in his place. But Oakatibbe returns in time to vindicate his honor and die according to the law of his nation.

Oakatibbe is the Noble Savage – but the exception, says Simms, not the rule. The real interest in the story is not in the hero but in the white Southern planter transplanted hundreds of miles into an Indian jungle. The fertile land, newly cleared with the dead ringed trees standing like ghosts in the fields, grows more cotton than the Negroes can pick, and so the Choctaws are called in to help out. The experiment is a failure. Only women and children and a few men are willing to work, for most of the males lurk in the background ready to rob or cheat the workers on payday. As a whole, Simms concludes, the Indians in their present state are a lazy, undependable race, whom even the Negro slaves of Colonel Harris look down on.[11]

Simms' most mature handling of the Indian comes in a late novel,

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[10]William Gilmore Simms, *The Yemassee: A Romance of Carolina* (New York 1878), p. 300.

[11]*Ibid.*, pp. 179-182.

The Cassique of Kiawah, in 1859, where the infant colony of Charleston in the reign of Charles II is surrounded by the potentially hostile Kiawahs. Attitude towards them ranges from friendly acceptance to fear and suspicion, dramatically represented in two brothers. Colonel Berkeley, who has just arrived from England to take possession of a vast plantation along the Ashley River outside Charleston, insists that the Indians will respond to fair treatment. He has had no experience with savages, however, as his more practical brother Captain Calvert reminds him. For the most part, Calvert, along with his woodsman and scout, old Gowdy, represents Simms' attitude. Colonel Berkeley has a notion, says Gowdy, "that these red devils are real humans, and never would do wrong if they worn't pushed to the wall."

> "They'll feed on him all they can, and he'll never content 'em so long as he's got anything left; and when he won't give any more, they'll take; and the first fine chance, when they sees that his barony's full of good things, they'll make a midnight dash at 'em, and he'll never know his danger till he feels their fingers in his hair . . . .
>
> "He says it's all our fault; that we treated the Injuns badly, and made 'em what they are; that they're 'Nature's noblemen,' and Christians . . . talking like a man in a dream."[12]

The old scout is right. The Indians attack on a dark night, and the Berkeley family escape massacre only through the intervention of Gowdy and Captain Calvert. People newly out from the old country, says Gowdy, are not prepared to deal with savages.

> "They've got the notion in their heads that all these redskins are a sort of natural Christians that only wants a leetle sprinkling to become convarts to our religion, and grow into honest, sober, home-keeping Christians. But water aint going to do it, your honor — no, nor soap and water, nor all the preaching from London down to Vera Cruz. It's whipping, and hard work, and l'arning how to eat good bread and meat well cooked, and gitting a taste for vegetables as well as venison; this is the way to

[12]William Gilmore Simms, *The Cassique of Kiawah: A Colonial Romance* (New York, 1859), p. 193.

teach a savage how to git religion. The cook-pot is a great convarter of the heathen — that and the whipping-post."[13]

Simms' novel is by no means a denigration of the Kiawahs. Gowdy and Berkeley move comfortably among them, with respect on both sides; and the idealist Colonel Berkeley is in one respect a man after Simms' own heart. He takes the long view of the life of the colony, and his head is full of projects. "He's always at something new. Now he's for draining all these swamps — he says they'll make the best meadows in the world; then he's for great cattle-ranges and sheepwalks; and for making wine out of the grapes."[14] Moreover, his trust in the savages is not altogether misplaced. Against the advice of his brother, he employed the chief's son on his plantation, where he would have access to his house and family; and during the uprising the young Indian remained loyal to his white master. Simms tries to strike a balance and be fair to both sides. But one point underlies all his writing about the Indians: in spite of the appeal of romance, or the claims of the humanitarians, the first object is the firm establishment of white control of the new continent. To Simms, savage life is human nature reduced to lowest terms, and it is the white man's destiny to civilize and, in keeping with this mission, to prepare the Indian for participation in civilized life.

III

Although the vocabulary of Simms may appear strange today, his attitude towards the Indian is characterized by a moderation unusual in his time and by a philosophical detachment which the modern generation with its causes and crusades rarely achieves. As for his own age, one has only to read a best-seller of 1837, Robert Montgomery Bird's *Nick of the Woods,* to understand the deep-seated hatred of the red man still felt perhaps by a majority of Americans. Writing of Kentucky's "dark and bloody ground," Bird gives his pages a dark fascination. From a distance, the wigwam village is part of an idyllic landscape; inside, there is appalling savagery: "unmeaning shrieks, roaring laughter, the squeaking of women and the gibbering of children, with the barking of curs"; and finally "the wild demoniacal glitter of eye" as victims are readied for an orgy of torture.[15] Bird's Indians are "the most merciless and brutal of all

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 192.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 193.
[15] Robert Montgomery Bird, *Nick of the Woods, or The Jibbenainosay* (New Haven, Conn., 1967), p. 265.

the races of men."[16] Writing a generation later, Mark Twain agrees with Bird. The Goshoots that he came across on his way to the West in 1861 were "treacherous, filthy, and repulsive," and "wherever one finds an Indian tribe he has only found Goshoots more or less modified by circumstances and surroundings — but Goshoots after all."[17]

Simms had as much direct experience with Indians as Bird, a prosperous Philadelphia physician who went down to Kentucky to get material for his novel, and more than Mark Twain. He was also aware of Indian atrocities, which did not blind him, however, to savage virtues — of the discipline of the young, for example, into manhood. "In the complacency of our civilization we rate the red men somewhat below humanity," and yet in this respect at least we are "wanting somewhat in the wisdom of the red man."[18] But virtue to Simms was always measured in terms of his own culture. He had no illusions about the natural state. The white man was superior to the Indian because a civilized man is superior to a savage. Simms, who has been called everything from racist to crackpot and fool by those who are inimical to anything in the Old South, was an unabashed sponsor of Western civilization, and in particular of the civilization of his own state; but his defense was not based on any narrow views of race or nationality. His mind was far-ranging, and everything he wrote was touched with a sense of history. Civilization to him was a precarious state achieved with difficulty over a long period of time; and there was a time when the most advanced races ranged the forest like the Yemassee and Kiawahs. A race is not to be measured by intrinsic merit but by the degrees to which it has risen to the civilized state. Consequently, the nineteenth century Indian that Simms saw in the Southwest did not rate very high, though his capabilities were immense. "The Saxon boor when first scourged by the Norman into manhood and stature, moral and physical, had given scarcely more proofs of intellectual endowment than the red men of the great Appalachian chain." They are as "noble a specimen of crude humanity as we can find."[19]

The whites have not lived up to their obligation, Simms feels, in their failure to assist the red man to civilization. It could not have been done

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[16] *Ibid.*, p. 189.
[17] Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (New Haven, Conn., 1901), pp. 157-58.
[18] *The Cassique of Kiawah*, p. 250.
[19] William Gilmore Simms, "Literature and Art Among the American Aborigines," *Views and Reviews in American Literature, History and Fiction*, ed. C. Hugh Holman (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), pp. 136, 140.

on the individual level, since the individual Indian taken from his people and educated among the whites will revert through sympathy to the interests of his own kind. It should have been a collective action at the beginning of our history applied to the whole race, by force if necessary, as the Saxons were "scourged into manhood" by the Normans.

> And what would have been the effect upon our Indians – decidedly the noblest race of aborigines that the world has ever known – if, instead of buying their scalps at prices varying from five to fifty pounds each, we had conquered and subjected them? Will anyone pretend to say that they would not . . . by this time, have formed a highly valuable and noble integral in the formation of our national strength and character?[20]

Simm's view of Indian capability is a reflection of his generous nature, particularly in view of the fact that he saw the Indian of the Southwest in a pathetic state just before their removal to the West. On one of his trips to Mississippi his vehicle stuck in the mud and nearby Indians were called in to help pull it out. One of them brought his Negro slave, who actually assumed control of the operation and ordered his master about, as well as the other Indians. The Negro gains caste among the Indians, Simms says, even in slavery. But why? Is it that he brings along with him white associations that the Indian respects?[21] At any rate, the Indians Simms knew were a pitiable remnant of a people with little of the tribal consciousness and pride that he wrote about in *The Yemassee*. Like Cooper, he felt the sadness at the passing of a race, which the aggressiveness and indifference of the whites made inevitable. But the red man could not be allowed to maintain his ground in a savage state. At this point, Simms gives over the romantic pose in his hard pragmatic line that civilization must go forward and that the wild man along with the wilderness must give way. He would prefer that he be instructed and assisted into the corporate life of the new nation, to which he would make his own contribution. But he must not stand in the way. In taking the long-range view of a difficult social problem, which few Americans then or later have faced without passion, Simms presents the Indian with an objectivity unusual in American fiction.

[20]*The Wigwam and the Cabin*, p. 185.
[21]*Letters of William Gilmore Simms*, I, 28.

Wet

For days now it's rained
and the pine grove
reeks of birds,
feathers and lime.

Each evening at supper
they return, their screams
muffled by tight winter windows.

I hate them at night
when they rustle
among themselves,
still settling in,
the long rain
flooding up their stink
that floats over the house
like a huge death.

ROGER PFINGSTON

Fallfire

Stare, pale sinners, down windful valleys. The earth,
Look you, is afire. Each singlest bush flames,
Leaf lusters, salmon-socked hedgerow shames
The nakedest blush of maiden's secret hearth.
Ah, the earth is all woman, all warmth,
All deepdownest simmer of lover aburn,
Her glimmering red and golden-glowing arms
And breasts bared scarlet for the sky's pressed mouth.

Who nurtures this fireflesh wildmouth we wonder
At, this flameabed strains our hungriest eyes
Erect, honeyheat we plunder? Who under
God's gaudiest heaven but thirsting Christ,
Who nips the bright nubs of the mother
And feasts the sons on her love for the Father?

RODNEY O. ROGERS

Review

Rayburn S. Moore, *Paul Hamilton Hayne*. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1972, 193 pp.

The four best known Southern poets of the nineteenth century, in order of their birth, are Edgar Allan Poe, Henry Timrod, Paul Hamilton Hayne, and Sidney Lanier. With the exception of Poe, who died in 1849, the other three lived through and beyond the Civil War, which profoundly affected each of them. Two years after the close of hostilities Timrod died in 1867, but Hayne and Lanier were destined to survive through Reconstruction and into the 1880's.

Life for the professional writer is never easy in a land that has been defeated in war, that is stricken with poverty, and that is subservient politically and economically to its recent foes. For the professional poet who has no income other than that which his pen produces the prospects are indeed bleak. The Civil War left both Lanier and Hayne broken in health and penniless. Lanier, after a few years of unsuccessfully trying to earn a living in various positions including the practice of law in Macon, Georgia, made a firm commitment to poetry and music and moved to Baltimore, where he supplemented his income from writing by playing the flute in a symphony orchestra and by lecturing at Johns Hopkins University.

Paul Hamilton Hayne, born in Charleston in 1830 and trained in the law, had early determined that he was going to be a writer. His first volume of poems had been published in Boston in 1855. At that time his inherited wealth and his impeccable family connections seemed to give every assurance that he would never have to depend upon his writings for his livelihood. But the Civil War, during which his fortune was wiped out, changed all of that. It did not, however, alter Hayne's conviction that he must continue as a writer and that he would remain in the South.

With his wife, his mother, and his young son, Hayne left Charleston and established in April, 1866, his home in an extremely modest cottage situated in the pine barrens near Augusta, Georgia. Here for the next twenty years, until his death in 1886, Hayne and his family lived precariously upon an income derived primarily from his writings and supplemented by what he was able to produce in a carefully tended veg-

etable garden. If ever there are reasons for a poet to forsake his craft or at least to move to a more favorable environment, Hayne appears to have had them. Yet he chose for his portion both the profession of poetry and life in the South.

In this excellent study, Professor Rayburn S. Moore has concentrated on Hayne as poet. Approximately the first fourth of his book gives a biographical sketch of the poet's life and discusses his poetry up to 1865. In the remaining three-fourths, Moore analyzes and critically examines the poems which Hayne wrote between the end of the Civil War and his death.

The analysis and commentary are thorough, judicious, complete, and sympathetic. They will not need to be done again soon. Here for the first time the student of nineteenth-century American poetry has a scholarly and skillful examination of the entire body of Hayne's poetry which he can place beside those already completed on Poe, Timrod, and Lanier. With this significant study of Hayne the poet, the history of poetic endeavor in the South before the twentieth century is essentially complete.

Paul Hamilton Hayne is not a great poet, even by the modest standards which existed in the South and in the nation during his lifetime. Nowhere does Rayburn Moore pretend that he is better than he is. Looking for poetic contemporaries outside the South with whom Hayne may be compared, Moore asserts that Hayne's poetry "may properly be considered along with that of Stedman, Stoddard, Aldrich, Boker, and Taylor, though in the 1880's there was a disposition on the part of some qualified critics to rank him with Whittier, Holmes, and Bryant." In contrasting him with Poe, Timrod, and Lanier, Moore believes that Hayne lacked Poe's sense of art and critical acumen, Timrod's theme and control, and Lanier's inventiveness and fertility.

In an admirable last chapter, entitled "A Summing Up," Moore frankly discusses what would generally be considered the three principal weaknesses of Hayne's poetry — its derivative nature, its lack of intellectual force and vigor, and its failure to express adequately the substance of life. A first reading or a re-reading of any adequate sampling of Hayne's poems would confirm the truth and justice of these criticisms. Such a reading would also affirm Moore's belief that Hayne is at his best in his sonnets and short poems.

The value of such a study as this goes beyond what is actually said about Hayne's poetry, much of which will remain unfamiliar and unknown to all except a very few. As the portrait of a writer determined to practice his art and maintain its integrity in almost the worst of times for him, it says much about literature in both the South and the North during the twenty years following the Civil War. The market for poetry of the quality which Hayne was writing was almost non-existent in the South and in the North was almost entirely pre-empted by poets who did not have Hayne's sectional and geographical handicaps. The extended correspondence which Hayne carried on with editors, publishers, fellow poets, and friends as he sought to get his poems into print is an interesting but tragic commentary on a poet who was living at the wrong time in the wrong place.

Had Hayne's talents as a poet been greater his environment would have mattered less. But such was not the case. In sharing with us the information and the insights about Hayne which he gained through this study, Moore has said much about the post-Civil War South and the Gilded Age.

CLAUD B. GREEN

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MARGARET BOLSTERLI teaches English at the University of Arkansas. Her most recent story, "The Art of Existence," has been accepted by *Carleton Miscellany*.

LEE BRIAN, a native of Texas, has taught for some years in the Northwest and is currently residing in Houston. His stories have appeared in numerous literary journals in the past several years. He has also written plays which have been presented at campus theatres in the West.

CLAUD B. GREEN is a professor of English and Dean of Undergraduate Studies at Clemson University. He is the author of numerous articles, book reviews, and monographs on Southern literature.

JOHN CHANDLER GRIFFIN, a native of McColl, teaches at the University of South Carolina, where he is writing his dissertation on Jean Toomer. "In Defense of Poetry" is his first publication.

ELMO HOWELL teaches English at Memphis State University. He is a frequent contributor of articles on Southern writers to such periodicals as *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, *Georgia Review*, and *Mississippi Quarterly*.

JOHN HUMMA teaches at Georgia Southern College in Statesboro. He has published a poem in the *New Republic* and a short story in the *Southern Humanities Review*. His articles on Hawthorne and James have appeared in scholarly journals.

NANCY E. JAMES teaches at Westminster College in Pennsylvania. Her poems have appeared in *The Journal of General Education*, *Pivot*, and *The New Laurel Review*.

KENNETH JOHNSON is an associate professor of English at Suffolk University in Boston. His essay on Richard Wilbur recently appeared in *The Fifties*. He has had poems published in several magazines.

HOWARD FRANK MOSHER lives on a farm in northern Vermont, where he is working full-time on a novel. His stories have appeared in *Cimarron Review* and *Colorado Quarterly*.

JOYCE ODAM lives in Sacramento, California. In 1971 she took second place in the Oregon State Poetry Association contest. Dozens of her poems have been published in little magazines around the country.

GUY OWEN teaches at N. C. State University, where he edits *Southern Poetry Review*. He is the author of two books of poems and five novels, including *The Ballad of the Flim-Flam Man* and *Journey for Joedel*.

ROGER PFINGSTON lives in Bloomington, Indiana, where he teaches photography and creative writing at a local high school. His poems and photographs have appeared in over sixty publications. He has had several one-man shows around the Midwest.

RODNEY O. ROGERS teaches English at Clemson University. His essay "Stephen Crane and Impressionism" was published in 1969 in *Nineteenth Century Fiction* and reprinted in 1972 in *Stephen Crane's Career: Perspectives and Evaluations*, edited by Thomas Gullason.

FRANCES THOMAS is a high school English teacher in Rains, South Carolina. She has had a story and several poems published in *Miscellany '69*, the literary magazine of Georgia Southern College.

GAIL WHITE is from New Orleans, Louisiana. She has published poems in several little magazines. Her latest collection, *Irreverent Parables*, is being published by Zetetic Press.

EDITORIAL: Our Last Number at Furman

With this issue, *The South Carolina Review* comes to an end. After five years and ten numbers, we've exhausted our resources—both human and financial. We set out to spark a little interest in serious writing in our state, and we think we succeeded while simultaneously publishing good writing from all over the nation. On many occasions we stepped from the curtain of anonymity in our rejection notices and offered critical advice. We thus took the classroom out into the world at large. Our proudest achievement, we think, is the assistance we gave to hitherto unpublished or scarcely published writers by providing an outlet and necessary encouragement. Four of our twenty-three stories up to now have received honorable mention among the best stories of their years by the Foley-Burnett judges: Doris Betts' "Burning the Bed" (May, 1969), Elizabeth Boatwright Coker's "The Wishing Bone" (November, 1969), Robert Alt's "Air Conditioning" (May, 1970), and Bennie Lee Sinclair's "At the Heart of the Prodigal" (December, 1971).

Our history is thus brief, but it scarcely begins to tell of the tedium of editing, publishing, and managing a magazine—almost as a professional hobby. And therein lies the reason for our discontinuing. We never had enough money—nor time to raise it. As the issues came and went, we realized more and more that running a magazine is too much like a business; our interests are chiefly literary and educational. We've enjoyed our little experiment, but we cannot keep it up. We saw a need and tried to meet it, and we believe it continues to exist. Perhaps someone else, now aware of the need, will emerge to take over. To paraphrase the statement of Thoreau when he left his hut at Walden Pond after a brief stay, we are giving up the magazine for the same reason we started it. We've tried this experiment. There are other things to do.

We wish to express our gratitude once more to all those who supported us—the administration of Furman University, the South Carolina Arts Commission, the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines, several private citizens in Greenville who helped us get a grant from this Council, all our subscribers and well-wishers, dozens of writers who let us publish their work, and several thousand more whose works we read but did not select to publish. Once again we pay final respects to our friend and co-editor of our first three years, Frank Durham, who helped us get the magazine started but did not live to see it end.

April, 1973